

## **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, December 6, 2021

### **CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

The Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Olivia, Minnesota, was called to order by Mayor Hawkinson at 7:00 P.M.

Council Members Present: Jon Hawkinson, Tom Kalahar, Blanca Ferguson, and Landon Padrnos.

Council Members Absent: George Ebbers

Others present via Zoom: Dan Coughlin, City Administrator; Trenton Dammann, Assistant City Attorney; Amber Dale, Utilities Coordinator/Accounts Manager; Chief Krumheuer, OPD; Craig Mages, resident; Laura Nesburg, resident; Todd Howard, resident; Nicole Coughlin, BOLD Student; Victoria Holthaus, AEM consultant (via Zoom); Susie Lang, EDA director (via Zoom); Scott Tedrick, Editor, Renville County Register (via Zoom); an anonymous / unidentified participant (via Zoom); and Nikki Pregler, Deputy Clerk.

A brief moment of silence was observed to recognize the passing of Carter Bremseth, a BOLD student representative on the city's Technology Board and a deeply valued community volunteer.

### **AGENDA**

**Motion by Ferguson, second by Padrnos:** to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion by Kalahar, second by Padrnos:** to approve the presented Consent Agenda items:

- A. Regular Meeting Minutes of November 15, 2021
- B. Confirm Mayoral Appointment of Michelle Hanson to the Economic Development Authority
- C. 2022 Safe Assure Safety Training Agreement
- D. Resolution 2021-107, Corporate Authorization Resolution 4M/PMA 2021 Signatories
- E. Resolution 2021-108, Corporate Authorization Resolution FM Bank 2021 Signatories
- F. Resolution 2021-109, Corporate Authorization Resolution HomeTown Bank 2021 Signatories
- G. Resolution 2021-110, Corporate Authorization Resolution MBS 2021 Signatories
- H. Resolution 2021-111, Corporate Authorization Resolution RBC/Aegis 2021 Signatories
- I. Resolution 2021-112, Edward Jones Corporate Resolution Certification 2021 Signatories
- J. Resolution 2021-113, Resolution to Accept ARPA funds 2021
- K. Resolution 2021-114, Authorizing Annual Step Increase for Jasmine Miller
- L. December Payables #1 and **November Check Register**

Motion passed unanimously.

## 2022 Budget Truth in Taxation Presentation

At 7:02 p.m. Mayor Hawkinson temporarily recessed the regular meeting and opened a public hearing on Truth in Taxation including a Zoom presentation.

Victoria Holthaus presented the proposed final budget and property tax levy for 2022 for potential approval at the next City Council meeting followed by filing with the Renville County Auditor-Treasurer's Office. Holthaus identified a few changes from the preliminary levy which was adopted in September. A 7.9% increase over the 2021 budget was originally estimated, which was ultimately able to be decreased to 7.4% due to a few different factors including some insurance costs coming in slightly less than originally anticipated.

It was noted that the police department budget increases encompassed a large portion of the proposed levy increase with over 80% of the jump being attributed to increased training needs, relocation assistance, and personnel costs including the recently created administrative assistant position.

The City of Olivia is fortunate to receive a transfer of funds from the electrical fund as well as local government aid into the general fund which helped to reduce the need for additional levied funds. Certain elements of the budget have stayed relatively flat; specifically, the library, the Fire Department / TRT and the debt service levy. Additionally, the 2014 Equipment Certificate will be paid off entirely this year. It was noted that there was a \$5000 increase to capital improvements due to an increase in the library capital improvement plan.

Holthaus shared examples of the impact of the 2022 budget on an equivalent monthly basis for various valuations of homes per month. Coughlin shared that in order to put things into perspective he highlighted the fact that while the estimated cost of our police department operations was calculated at about \$17 per month, the cheapest security company package he was able to find was \$45 per month and all they basically do is call the \$17 cops.

Holthaus said she welcomed questions or comments from the Council or the public. No public comments were offered.

Kalahar mentioned that he really appreciated the breakdown of the personal impact of the levy right down to the day; because relative to all other costs we incur, \$1.57 per day is a bargain for the services received. He said, overall, an increase is to be expected as we continue to see many other daily use items rise in cost. Coughlin shared that if the needed police department funding adjustments for 2022 were pulled out of the overall calculations, the remaining portion of the levy adjustment was approximately 1.4% over last year – which is well below the current inflation rate. Ferguson agreed that the monthly and daily breakdowns definitely help to put things in perspective. Mayor Hawkinson thanked Holthaus and city staff for their input and dedicated work in helping assemble the 2022 budget.

Mayor Hawkinson closed the public hearing on truth in taxation at 7:21 p.m. and reopened the regular meeting.

## Resolution 2021-115, Employment Authorization for Craig Mages – FT Public Works Worker

Mayor Hawkinson shared a bit about the interview and hiring process which was held to back fill a previously vacated position. The recommended finalist Craig Mages was in attendance and he thanked the Council for their consideration.

**Motion by Kalahar, second by Padrnos:** to approve Resolution 2021-115 the Employment Authorization for Craig Mages – FT Public Works Worker. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2021-116, Employment Authorization for Laura Nesburg – FT Patrol Officer

Mayor Hawkinson shared appreciation for the addition of Laura Nesburg to the OPD in a full-time capacity. He explained that this hiring process was held to rebuild staffing levels in the OPD. Nesburg was in attendance at the meeting and expressed appreciation for being considered for the position.

**Motion by Padrnos, second by Ferguson:** to approve Resolution 2021-116, Employment Authorization for Laura Nesburg – FT Patrol Officer. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Hawkinson welcomed both Mages and Nesburg and shared the Council's collective excitement to have them aboard.

Resolution 2021-117, Temporary Wage Adjustment and Time Off Availability for Police Chief

Mayor Hawkinson shared some background information regarding the exempt status of the Police Chief position. Specifically, this position is not allowed to accrue overtime nor is additional monetary compensation allowed. Historically, the City of Olivia has sought to reward staff that perform above job performance expectations. After the events on July 4<sup>th</sup> and the retirement of the Assistant Chief, the Chief has taken on many additional duties. Therefore, a temporary step increase is proposed to provide some modest additional compensation for the added responsibilities the Chief has taken on. Additionally, in order to help account for the significant amount of added work hours the Chief has shouldered due to staffing shortages, a temporary compensatory time bank is also proposed which would allow for up to 8 hours of hours worked each pay period that are beyond normal scheduling to be banked and used at a later date. The Mayor noted that these banked hours do not have any cash value but can be used as personal / vacation time in the future once the Chief's schedule returns to normal.

Padrnos thanked the Chief for his dedication during these very stressful times, to which Coughlin agreed.

**Motion by Kalahar, second by Padrnos:** to approve Resolution 2021-117, Temporary Wage Adjustment and Time Off Availability for Police Chief. Motion passed unanimously.

Facility Memo of Understanding with Olivia Rehabilitation & Healthcare

Mayor Hawkinson explained that if a disaster struck, the city is obliged to provide non-potable water to Olivia Rehabilitation & Healthcare.

Coughlin shared that this agreement began about five years ago stemming from a federal requirement for the facility to have an agreement like this on file as part of their emergency procedures plan. He

said that between the Water Department and the Fire Department, the city should have no problem providing this service on the outside chance it is ever required.

**Motion by Ferguson, second by Padmos:** to recognize and approve the Facility Memo of Understanding with Olivia Rehabilitation & Healthcare regarding non-potable water. Motion passed unanimously.

#### Annual Lead & Copper Water Testing Report

Coughlin shared that particular homes are purposely selected to be tested, based upon their location throughout the service system. All communities throughout Minnesota participate in this kind of lead/copper annual testing in conjunction with the Department of Public Health.

**Motion by Kalahar, second by Padmos:** to acknowledge receipt of the annual lead and copper testing report.

#### Agenda Additions/New Business

None.

#### Public Forum

Mayor Hawkinson temporarily recessed the regular meeting and opened the public forum at 7:33 p.m.

Todd Howard, resident, asked a question about the truth in taxation presentation and the future of broadband/fiber internet coming to this community. Coughlin shared that he understood that Lightbeam Internet's long term plan included a fiber-to-the-home component. Howard stated that fiber internet can be a draw to people and businesses as well. He asked if economic development opportunities and/or grants are being sought, which Coughlin confirmed there are several initiatives along those lines and while the grants are very competitive, he still tries to go after them. He added that there are fiber backbone connections within the community however it is cost prohibitive to extend individual lateral connections from that main cable without a broader plan to roll things out community-wide.

Howard stated that he personally would like to see the public forum segment of the meeting to come earlier on the agenda.

Howard then shared some information pertaining to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law which he obtained from the Association of Minnesota Counties. He referenced a portion related to interactive television and open meetings.

Howard shared his ongoing concerns about the digital sign being installed at the BOLD school campus.

With no additional public comments, Mayor Hawkinson reopened the regular meeting at 7:42 p.m.

EDA – November 24

Mayor Hawkinson shared that a representative from Traditions! spoke with the committee and reiterated that they continue to grow and reach out to the community. A 2022 meeting schedule was presented and staff provided a Bayberry Apartments update.

#### Holiday Happenings – December 2

Mayor Hawkinson shared his appreciation to be able to celebrate the holidays with the community and thanked all of the volunteers involved with the event. Coughlin shared a bit about the Renville County Choir "sing along" opportunity organized by Gladys Hagen and the Olivia Lions Club which temporarily took the place of the traditional Christmas Cantata which was shelved this year due to Covid concerns. It was a great opportunity for those who felt comfortable to participate.

#### ATP District 8 – December 3

Coughlin shared some information about the Area Transportation Partnership in association with MNDOT area engineers. He said that participating in meetings with these groups not only provides an inside track to relevant information but, the relationships that get established through our attendance helps keep Olivia high on MnDOT's radar in terms of grants and other assistance. Coughlin said the group meets 4 times per year and that it is well worth the time to attend those meetings. Ferguson stated that she would like more information about the meetings, which Coughlin said he would forward to her.

#### Corn Capital Days – December 6, 2021

Coughlin shared that the meeting was cancelled due to illness and it would be rescheduled for a later date.

#### Parks & Trails Update - meeting tomorrow

Coughlin stated that Jackie Edwards will attend and talk about their initiatives and the potential to work with the YMCA. The YMCA could bring opportunities, programming and resources to this region, in conjunction with Health Partners, such as healthy eating resources and exercise opportunities.

Kalahar shared that the emerald ash borer is now in the county. He estimated that in the next 20-30 years they could have a significant impact on trees in the region. This may significantly decrease the number of trees in this area so he suggested that some future planning should begin with the Parks Department to plant other varieties of trees to create greater biodiversity. Coughlin agreed and shared that several years ago in response to the emerald ash borer threat the City adopted a policy to require rotation of tree planting in the City in order to help achieve a greater diversity of tree varieties in our community moving forward.

#### BOLD Community Pool Report

Mayor Hawkinson shared Tracy's letter with the Council. She stated that she continues to coordinate gym classes, a.m. and p.m. lap swim, and the Orcas have been practicing there. She stated that she hopes to have a joint powers meeting in December. She would also like to plan 2 open swim days over winter break and multiple Sunday free swim opportunities in January and February.


Other Reports of Council / Staff

Coughlin shared some follow up information regarding the equipment grant for the airport. The grant has been tentatively approved pending receipt of final documentation and calculations. They require an appraisal of current equipment if the city intends to retain those assets and then adjust any grant request by subtracting 60% of the appraised valuation from the request. This is to account for the original grant award provided by the State when the existing equipment was first purchased. Coughlin shared that now the grant funding levels are at a 90/10 split. He estimated that the net grant request that will be submitted to the State will be in the ballpark of \$150,000.

Ferguson shared a Tweet from Dick Bremer in which he shared about a past visit to Olivia, Minnesota.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Ferguson, second by Kalahar:** to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Attest:   
Dan Coughlin, City Administrator

  
Mayor Hawkinson