

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 6, 2022

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, Landon Padrnos and George Ebbers.

Council Members Absent: None.

Others present: Dan Coughlin, City Administrator; Aaron Walton, City Attorney; Kendra Lyngaas, SEH; Jeff Vosika, resident; Josh Vosika, resident; Tesa Tomaschett, Finance Director (via Zoom); Scott Tedrick, Register Editor (via Zoom) and Nikki Pregler, Deputy Clerk.

AGENDA

Motion by Ferguson, second by Ebbers: to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Regular Meeting Minutes of May 16, 2022 and Special Meeting of May 23, 2022
- Resolution 2022-55, Affirmation of Employment Agreement with Tesa Tomaschett
- Resolution 2022-56, Approval of Grant Funds to the Olivia Fire Department
- Resolution 2022-57, End of Probation Period & Scheduled Step Increase for Craig Mages
- Airfield Lighting Improvement Project Pay Request #1 from Neo Electrical Solutions, LLC
- June Payables #1 and May Check Register

Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION / BUSINESS ITEMS

Public Hearing on Hwy 212 Water Main Project– Kendra Lyngaas

At 7:03 P.M. Mayor Hawkinson temporarily recessed the regular meeting and opened a public hearing on the Highway 212 Water Main Project. Lyngaas revisited a presentation she shared during the feasibility report process which highlighted the pertinent information and project options regarding the water main project. This included a project summary, existing conditions, proposed improvements, project coordination; potential scheduling, temporary closures or restrictions, continued usage and utilities, projected costs, and potential financing options. She also explained the proposed rates of assessments to those affected and how they were calculated.

Community members present asked about reducing the size of the connection to their properties. They were concerned about the potential for bursting or flooding from such a large connection. Lyngaas explained that the size of the connection can be revisited and discussed however it would not likely change the assessment costs. Lyngaas stated that properties without current services were not being assessed.

The public members stated that they were concerned that the total projected cost was going to be evenly distributed among the nine properties along the service line. They were relieved to know the cost was being calculated by linear foot of water main per the individual properties.

Coughlin and Walton asked about the properties that are not being assessed because they do not currently have connections for service. They asked if the lots were buildable, perhaps now is the time to create connections for future use. Walton stated that it would be a value to a potential property owner. Conversely, it seemed unfair to not assess a property that could still receive the benefits of the new water main. Mayor Hawkinson was not receptive to the idea of assessing the two properties in question however Kalahar agreed that they should be fairly assessed. Walton then suggested consulting the County regarding a deferred assessment to those two properties, to which Council responded positively. On the same topic, Lyngaas asked if the City owned drainage lot would then add a service connection, which Council rejected as the lot would not be buildable in the future. Padrnos asked if this assessment process was consistent with past practice, to which Walton agreed and affirmed that each situation is different therefore any written policy would not be practicable. Lyngaas stated that she could make the requested updates at this point in the process, which is preferable rather than later in the process.

No further public comments were offered. Mayor Hawkinson closed the hearing at 7:30 P.M. and reopened the regular meeting.

Consideration of Resolution 2022-58, Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans

Motion by Ebbers, second by Kalahar: to approve Resolution 2022-58, Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans. Motion passed unanimously.

DePue Avenue Project – Kendra Lyngaas

- Consideration of Resolution 2022-59, Accepting Bid for DePue Avenue Improvement

Lyngaas reiterated what Justin Black shared at the previous Council meeting, that five bids were received for the project. She suggested awarding the job to Hjerpe contingent upon USDA approval and additional grant funding solutions, to lock in Hjerpe and start initial processing with the contractor. Doug Greenberg from the USDA confirmed that the City could move forward with the contingencies in place, including the USDA waiver and funding being approved, to which Walton also agreed.

Motion by Kalahar, second by Ferguson: to approve Resolution 2022-59, Accepting Bid for DePue Avenue Improvement under contingency of USDA approval. Motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance 2022-05, Regarding Changes for Emergency Services – Aaron Walton

Walton shared that this was the second reading of the Ordinance and explained the reasoning for the update to the Ordinance language was to clarify and site statutes regarding the permissible assessment

for emergency services. He stated that he had not received any comments or questions regarding this Ordinance since the first reading.

Motion by Ebbers, second by Padrnos: to approve Ordinance 2022-05, Regarding Changes for Emergency Services. Motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance 2022-06, Regarding the Regulation of Animals – Aaron Walton

Walton shared that this too was a second reading of the Ordinance in which he worked to clarify the language regarding exclusions to non-domestic / farm animals in city limits not to include areas designated as agricultural districts. He stated that he had not received any comments or questions regarding this Ordinance since the first reading. Kalahar asked about the removal of any chickens already in town. Coughlin offered to check with Chief Krumheuer on that. Walton said that once the Ordinance is passed, a 30-day notice could be sent.

Motion by Padrnos, second by Kalahar: to approve Ordinance 2022-06, Regarding the Regulation of Animals. Motion passed unanimously.

Authorization to Post Administrative Assistant Position Opening

Mayor Hawkinson shared the notice of resignation from Jess, as Administrative Assistant. He wanted to recognize her contributions in that role and commend her teamwork over the last year plus. Conversely, that notice then leads to the potential for a job posting and hiring process. Mayor Hawkinson asked if posting the job was the consensus of the Council. Kalahar referenced the difficulty of retaining a person in this position and also inquired about cost efficiencies to potentially outsourcing the utility billing, which is a large part of that position. Kalahar asked if doing so would ultimately be cheaper for the City and suggested exploring the option and holding off posting the position. Coughlin shared that it is an option that could be explored with Kandiyohi Cooperative and that other cities do something similar in their cities. Kalahar reiterated that it was worth exploring the feasibility of such a change and how it could work. Ferguson inquired if the number of utility tasks were reduced, could it potentially be a posted as a part time position; to which Coughlin stated that initially it was a part time position.

Consensus was reached among the Council members to pause in posting the Administrative Assistant position until options like outsourcing utility billing and reassigning tasks to other staff was explored further.

Acknowledgement of Mayoral Proclamation Designating June 19th as Juneteenth Freedom Day

Mayor Hawkinson read the entire Mayoral Proclamation aloud.

AGENDA ADDITIONS / NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

Resolution 2022-60, Gambling Exempt Permit for ACTS, Inc.

Mayor Hawkinson explained that additionally a gambling permit was received from ACTS.

Motion by Ferguson, second by Padrnos: to approve Resolution 2022-60, Gambling Exempt Permit for ACTS, Inc. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Hawkinson temporarily suspended the regular meeting and opened the public forum at 7:49 P.M. He clarified the amount of time allocated for public comments and the decorum expectations for those who participate in the Public Forum.

Tesa Tomaschett joined the meeting via Zoom and thanked the Council for the opportunity to share a bit about her experiences and discussions had on the previous Friday when she was on site in Olivia. Tesa acknowledged that there will be some uncertainty that would probably occur as well as task shifting expected in the next six months. She hopes to have some temporary procedures in writing for review at the next Council meeting. Mayor Hawkinson and Kalahar thanked Tomaschett and stated that they look forward to working with her.

No other public comments were offered so Mayor Hawkinson reopened the regular meeting at 7:52 P.M.

REPORTS

Comprehensive Plan Kickoff Meeting – May 25

Mayor Hawkinson shared that roughly 40 people were in attendance including community and Council members. It was a brainstorming session for all and he encouraged everyone to visit the website to share comments and input online. Kalahar stated that he was hoping for a larger turnout and asked if it would be possible to hold a similar event after Corn Capital Days to allow more people to be individually involved. Coughlin said he could follow up with Antonio regarding a second event. Ferguson shared that it was a fun conversation and a great way to share your opinions. Ebbers stated that there was a timing conflict with the local baseball schedule, so that may have impacted attendance. Mayor Hawkinson offered that often conversation does initiate more ideas so a second meeting was a solid idea.

Greater MN Parks & Trails Board – May 23 and 25

Coughlin serves on this board and they collectively lobbied to express the needs of this area as an out-state trail areas versus the metro areas. The second meeting focused on grant funding opportunities for our community and will lead to discussing those opportunities with the Park Board at their next meeting.

Emergency Management Discussion Meeting – June 1

Mayor Hawkinson shared that Coughlin, the Renville County Sheriff and Emergency Management Coordinator, OPD Chief and Sergeant, and OFD Chief and fire fighter met to discuss rethinking the way all of these emergency management partners work together. Coughlin stated that this was an important meeting to open the doors of communication. Hennen stated that he would like to get all agencies on the same plan format to better facilitate emergency response when supporting each other. Coughlin stated that more conversations are definitely to come. Kalahar confirmed that when staffing changes, it is an opportunity to look for smart solutions and efficiencies.

BOLD Community Pool Report – May 2022

Mayor Hawkinson stated that the report was in the packet. Padrnos confirmed a meeting was not held recently however a meeting it needed to resolve the final budget.

Other Reports of Council / Staff

No additional reports were presented.

NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Corncade/Next Step Creativity/Inventshop Soft Open tentatively set for 4-6 P.M.on June 10, 2022 (Possible Quorum of the City Council)
- Community Response Group has set a night in the park for Wednesday, June 29 5-7 P.M.at Henton Park. Games, entertainment and a possible picnic option are being planned. Hopefully, this will be the first of multiple events in the future. (Possible Quorum of the City Council)
- Staff Cookout Friday, June 10, 2022 at 10:45 at the Public Works building to welcome Tesa. It is also Jess's last day, and we may also thank her for the amazing job she has done. (Possible Quorum of the City Council)
- Memorial Day Dedication was fantastic. Roughly 100+ people from the community attended. Kalahar stated it is the most impressive project he has seen in years. The Council commented how quickly it was completed and commended Dominique Klaseman and his family for their work.
- Performance evaluations check-in from Padrnos, Coughlin stated that they had begun.
- Mayor Hawkinson shared a resignation notice he had received from City Administrator Dan Coughlin. Mayor Hawkinson thanked Coughlin for sharing a decade of his time and service to this community and noted that he will be missed. Coughlin thanked the Mayor for his comments. His letter stated that it was an honor to have served the community and that Olivia would always remain close in his heart. Coughlin indicated his last day would be Friday, August 5, 2022. He indicated this was to provide a measure of time for the transition process to get underway, assist with Corn Capital Days events, help with the kickoff & handoff of large infrastructure projects, and work with new finance director Tesa Tomaschett to help with her onboarding process.

Coughlin said he would help with the transition as much as the Council wished. He suggested that the Council direct staff to work with David Drown & Associates to begin a search process without delay. Padrnos asked about scheduling a special work session with Council and staff present to discuss transition plans. After a brief discussion the consensus of the council was to schedule a work session for June 14, 2022 at 5:30 P.M.

No additional notices or communications were presented.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Kalahar, second by Ferguson: to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 P.M. Motion passed unanimously.

WORK SESSION MINUTES

Tuesday, June 14, 2022

WORK SESSION

A quorum of the City Council, many City Staff members and Gary Weiers from David Drown and Associates held a work session from 5:32 P.M. to approximately 6:30 P.M. to discuss City Hall staffing and duty fulfillment.

City Hall Duty Fulfillment

Mayor Hawkinson provided a discussion outline to organize the flow of the conversation. A respectful open forum was encouraged for staff and Council to share their needs and concerns through the current and forthcoming months of staffing changes. Council suggested further investigation regarding utility billing options, temporary/intern/summer administration assistance, and interim City Administrator options. Weiers joined the workshop via Zoom to answer any questions that the group had regarding the Search Proposal he had provided.

Tesa Tomaschett supplied a document for consideration at the next Council meeting regarding Purchasing Policy and Agenda Requests, an example of an action item memo that could help streamline council packet assembly for staff, and she offered a recommendation that the Council grant the staff an additional measure of understanding and limit its expectations during coming months with staff transitions, family leaves being taken, and temporary staffing helping to fill the gaps.

In closing, Mayor Hawkinson encouraged flexibility and greater allowances for grace throughout this time of transition; and then thanked the staff for taking time out of their day to participate in the discussion time.

Attest: 
Dan Coughlin, City Administrator


Jon Hawkinson, Mayor