

**CITY OF LE CENTER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2009 - 7:00 PM**

**** MINUTES ****

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Mayor Wetzel, Dorothy Dinwiddie, Emmett Krenik, Josh Fredrickson, Jason Squires
Absent: None

***City Clerk Collins administered the Oath of Office to: Mayor Lance Wetzel and new Council-members Jason Squires & Josh Fredrickson.**

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A) Motion by Krenik, Second by Dinwiddie, minutes from December 9, 2008 Truth-In-Taxation Hearing be approved. Approved unanimously.
- B) Motion by Dinwiddie, Second by Krenik, minutes from December 9, 2008 Regular Council Meeting be approved. Approved unanimously.
- C) Council change to proposed Agenda: ADD: AMIN. D) Le Center Ambulance

III. APPROVAL OF BILLS TO BE PAID

Council reviewed the bills to be paid. Motion by Dinwiddie, Second by Fredrickson, to pay the bills listed and due. Approved unanimously.

IV. REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES, & DEPARTMENTS

- A) E.D.A. Report- Don Hayden
 - 1) TIF district for the Central Health Care update: so far, City has not been involved much; mostly CHC & Northland Securities are working together.
 - 2) Motel update- March 1, 2009 opening. Phone #1-888-357-2239 for reservations.
 - 3) Drug Express is closing within weeks. Wind storm damages & repairs around the building played a part in the closing. Checking out Hermann Drug and possibly Rademacher's Grocery store. No chance for the EDA to subsidize anything with the Otto family at Drug Express. Still trying to work something out on main street.
- B) P & Z Report- Corey Block

Building Official Block gave a Weber Building report from the "building permit" perspective. Block reported the City had over \$836,000 total damage so far from the summer wind storm according to insurance adjusters.

1) Rental Inspection Letter- Ed Griffin Building: terrible shape/ building may need to be condemned. Attorney Moran recommends giving him a time limit to correct the problems; then possibly condemn the building. City may become liable if we don't condemn the entire building. Bug problem besides. Moran suggests pictures and documentation after the time limit is reached before the city does anything. After that, where does city go? What about businesses on the first floor? May have to deem it "Not fit to rent as a residential living quarters." Block suggests focus on the living quarters first; then worry about the first floor businesses. Fire code may allow for the closing of the entire building. Building may be too far gone to save. Attorney Moran recommended the condemnation process as the quicker route to evacuate the residents from this building. Motion by Squires, Second by Dinwiddie, building inspector pursue whichever is the quickest and best process in the city's interest. Approved unanimously.

2) Notice of Public Hearings. Mayor Wetzel read a "Waive mailed notice" statement for amending Article 15 (Off Street Parking) Section 46-601 of the Zoning Book concerning driveway design; to be held January 29 @ 5:30 pm at city hall.

Mayor Wetzel read a "Waive mailed notice" statement for adding Article 14 (Building Requirements) Section 46-573 of the Zoning Book concerning damage to existing buildings; to be held January 29 @ 5:30 pm at city hall.

Council requested staff send clean-up letter to owner of 198 North Cordova Avenue to remove all brush from the property.

3) 80 ft. wide buildable lot requirements in the old part of town: P & Z needs to work on the issue.

C) Municipal Liquor Store

On-Sale Manager Mike Nelson gave the December report: Sales were \$79,221.41; up \$10,500 from November. Nelson gave a year-end report: remove the remodeling expenses from 2008 liquor report- and Municipal is more profitable than in 2007. Will start opening Saturdays at 9 AM like during the week/ will re-do the cleaning list requirements which may result in more \$ cost/ Nelson requested P/T bartender Frank W. receive \$9.00 per hour as lead part-timer- Motion by Krenik, Second by Squires, to give Frank W. a \$1.00 raise to \$9.00 per hour. Approved unanimously. Much discussion on the absent popcorn machine and also why someone is needed to come in to stock beer coolers instead of the bartender being able to do it.

D) Police Department

Police Chief Pfarr reported on the police activities for month of December: 169 calls/ 2,704 miles patrolled/ Pfarr reported installation and training for the squad car computer had been completed- total cost \$8,795.98.

1) Year-end report: P/T hours are up due to extra training needed for the new p/t help/ 88,228 miles on the speed-o-meter/ arrests & complaints are down approx. 15%.

2) Motorized golf cart ordinance: set public hearing for Tues., February 10 @ 6:30 pm.

E) Water, Sewer, Streets, Parks

Public Works Superintendent Curt Roemhildt gave his monthly report:

Streets: snow plowing starts usually around 2:00 am so can be done by around 6:00 am for traffic. See refuse report: down 18 tons over 2007/ recycling down.

F) Bolton & Menk Engineering- Joel Hawbaker

- 1) 2006 Street & Utility Project: nothing new- must wait til spring to shoot Sharon street due to the freeze/thaw condition.
- 2) 2009 Street Project (proposed): on hold for now; but Bolton & Menk pursue it far enough to be eligible for any federal stimulus package that becomes available.
- 3) 2010 Minnesota Street Project: about 50% of the design is done. Need several property owner/resident meetings in the next 30-40 days to go much further.

V. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no petitions, requests, or communications from the public.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A) Motion by Krenik, Second by Dinwiddie, to approve the 1st Reading of the Electric Franchise Ordinance No. 2009-1 (with Alliant Energy). Approved unanimously.
- B) Downtown & other blight properties- Council agreed to form a plan at a workshop meeting to be held the first week in March. Set the date at Feb. council meeting.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Hire new office assistant: Clerk Collins offered with the bad economy and reduction in LGA the City would receive from the State, his office could get by another year without an additional person. Council felt strongly about getting some help for the Administration Dept. and Police Dept. Motion by Squires, Second by Dinwiddie, to approve the advertising of a new office assistant/ applications due by March 1st/ and advertise in the LC Leader, Valley Shopper, & Free Press. Approved unanimously.
- B) Motion by Krenik, Second by Squires, to approve certifying the special assessment list to the county auditor for collection with 2009 taxes. Approved unanimously.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION & MISC.

- A) Clerk Collins noted that he had received the property tax reimbursement check from Menu Inspirations for \$27,274 to cover property taxes at their plant.

- B) Clerk Collins explained the introduction letter from I & S Engineering of Mankato. With Council and residents very unhappy about the 2006 Street Project on the west end of town, they are hoping to get a foot in the door for some future projects. City Engineer Joel Hawbaker & Principle Engineer Tim Loose of Bolton & Menk Engineering were present to acknowledge the problems incurred. Mr. Loose explained what Bolton & Menk could offer vs. I & S. Bolton & Menk is strictly a municipal entity partner. They basically charge 18% fee to Le Center just as they do on a MNDOT project. They would be more than willing to negotiate their fee charged in these tough times. Mayor Wetzel reiterated his unhappiness with the results of the 2006 Street and Utility Improvement Project.
- C) Motion by Krenik, Second by Squires, to approve the 2009 Mayoral Appointments list as written. Approved unanimously.
- D) Motion by Krenik, Second by Fredrickson, to adopt Resolution No. 2009A, thereby approving the request by Le Center Ambulance for LMCIT to provide liability coverage for the ambulance service at a cheaper rate. Approved unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Motion by Krenik, Second by Squires, for Mayor Wetzel to adjourn the meeting. Approved unanimously.

Chris L. Collins, City Clerk, City of Le Center, MN