

**CITY OF LE CENTER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2011 - 7:00 PM**

**** MINUTES ****

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Mayor Wetzel, Bob Emmers, Brad Collins, Josh Fredrickson, Emmett Krenik
Absent: None

**** Public Hearing on Final 2012 Net Tax Levy and Total Budget ****

There were several residents present with questions for the council members: Gary Meidlinger questioned an error on the League of Minnesota site information that equates to a 30.71% increase by the city; not the 25% rate as reported. He had printed off several statements from the League site. Administrator Collins noted that the city certified the 25% rate and \$914,449.00 amount to the county in Sept.

Greg Traxler stated he owned both a residence and a business in the city. He was very concerned about the plummeting home values and the excessive tax increases on the commercial property in Le Center. He asked if the Council had cut every allowable dollar from the 2012 budget as was possible? There were no other speakers from the general public.

Administrator Collins reported that Mayor Wetzel, Councilman Krenik, & he had met with the county auditor's staff to get an explanation for some of these questions. Collins tried to explain the new tax statements from the State were showing a property's "knocked down value" after their homestead credit had been applied. This was indicative of their taxable market value only; not the actual market value. Only residential properties were eligible for this credit. Therefore, commercial property in this and every community was picking up a greater portion of the levied taxes in 2012. Collins also pointed out that the "per person" levy of Le Center was still much lower than most of the county: Le Center = \$365.93 p/p Le Sueur = \$410.00 p/p Waterville = 413.70 p/p LS County = \$506.16 p/p Montgomery = \$593.21 p/p and Elysian = \$720.86 (figures based on 2010 US Census and 2012 preliminary levies).

Mayor Wetzel, Council-members Krenik & Fredrickson weighed in discussion. Again pointed out was the fact that the city residents as a whole pick up 75% of the street projects being done within the city (as part of the levy); with 25% being assessed to the benefiting property owners. There were no further questions from the general public.

- 1) Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Krenik, to approve Final 2012 Tax Levy of 25.0% (or not to exceed \$914,449). Approved by 4-1 vote; Wetzel voting No.*
- 2) Motion by Krenik, Seconded by Collins, to approve Final 2012 Total Budget of \$3,200,408. Approved unanimously by 5-0 vote.*

There being no further business; Mayor Wetzel closed the public hearing.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A) Motion by Emmers, Seconded by Fredrickson, Minutes from November 8, 2011 Regular Council Meeting be approved. Approved unanimously.
- B) Motion by Collins, Seconded by Krenik, Notes from November 18, 2011 Workshop Meeting be approved. Approved unanimously.
- C) Motion by Krenik, Seconded by Collins, Minutes from December 1, 2011 Assessment Hearing be approved. Approved by 4-0 vote; Emmers abstained.
- D) Council changes to proposed Agenda: Add: ADMIN. E) AT&T antenna site

III. APPROVAL OF BILLS TO BE PAID

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

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

A) E.D.A. Report

- 1) Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Krenik, to adopt Resolution No. 2011M, thereby calling for public hearing to consider LJP Mfg. request to terminate JOBZ Agreement. Public Hearing set for January 10, 2012 at 6:30 pm. Approved unanimously.

B) P & Z Report

- 1) Building Official Block presented a variance request from Rodney Schramm (225 So. Lexington Ave.) to add on to existing detached garage. Addition would be larger than allowed under zoning ordinance. P & Z Board unanimously passed and recommended allowing variance based on the following:
 - a) All setbacks can be met by the proposal
 - b) Green space/ lot coverage requirement can be met
 - c) Larger than proposed structure could be built attached to the dwelling
 - d) Larger than proposed structure could be built as 2nd detached accessory structure

** Board also mandates residential use & storage only; must not be used as repair shop or any other commercial use. Based upon this information: Motion by Emmers, Seconded by Collins, to approve the variance request as written. Approved unanimously.

C) Municipal Liquor Store

On-Sale Mgr. Mike Nelson gave a brief November report: Sales were \$63,514.00: down \$6,000 from Oct. '11 and down \$4,300 from Nov. '10/ back apt. still not rented/ LC Leader to do a feature article on the Municipal/ need to strip and re-wax floors.

- 1) Consider new F/T liquor employee hire/ two applicants were interviewed/ interview committee recommends to council hire Bradley Collins as Asst. Manager starting Jan. 1st at wage to be determined. After much more discussion on the title and duties of the prospective new hire;

Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Emmers, to offer the position to Collins. Approved by 3-1 vote; Krenik voting No/ Collins abstained. Wage committee of Fredrickson, Emmers, Attorney Moran settle the wage offer with Bradley Collins.

D) Police Department

Police Chief Pfarr reported on the police activities for month of November: 125 calls/ 2,739 miles patrolled. Pfarr also reported: calls down .02% while miles patrolled up .02%/ DARE Graduation coming up soon/ animal boarding costs are way down.

E) Water, Sewer, Streets, Parks

Maintenance Supervisor Wally Blaschko gave the monthly report:

- ❖ Water Treatment Plant- everything is running smoothly.
- ❖ Sewer Plant- everything is running smoothly. Many more sewer mains being cleaned out with the nice weather holding/ using new root cutter attached to jetter truck.
- ❖ Streets- first snowplowing went very well.
- ❖ Parks- skating rink was nice; slush now/ but all else ready to go.

F) Bolton & Menk Engineering (Joel Hawbaker, Engineer)

- 1) 2010 Minnesota Street & Waterville Ave. Project- based upon recommendation by Attorney Moran; Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Krenik, to approve the appraisal contract agreement (for two appraisal reports) with Trevor Brovold & Company of Mankato for \$3900.00 fee. Approved by 4-0 vote. Emmers abstained.
- 2) 2012 Lexington Ave. Project- Council advised Engineer Hawbaker to “put this project on hold” incurring no more costs for now.

V. PUBLIC FORUM

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

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A) Set public hearing date & time to consider “Pawnbroker’s Ordinance & Application”- Motion by Wetzel, Seconded by Emmers, set hearing date for Tuesday, January 10th @ 6:00 pm at city hall. Approved unanimously.
- B) BCM Const. Final Payment #16 for \$20,051.28 from 2006 Street Project- Hawbaker: yes paperwork fully completed and final punch-list items taken care of. Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Krenik, to approve the final payment. Approved unanimously.
- C) Set committee to consider sewer ordinance changes pertaining to sump pump issues: Committee = Mayor Wetzel, Admin. Collins, Attorney Moran, Bldg. Official Block.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Motion by Wetzel, Seconded by Collins, to certify to the county auditor the 2011 delinquent sewer & water utility accounts for collection with 2012 property taxes. Approved unanimously.
- B) Motion by Emmers, Seconded by Fredrickson, to certify to the county auditor the 2011 delinquent weed abatement assessments for collection with 2012 property taxes. Approved unanimously.
- C) Motion by Krenik, Seconded by Collins, to approve the 2012 Fire Service Contract with Le Center Area Fire Commission for \$77,500.00. Approved unanimously.
- D) Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Krenik, to approve the 2012 Ambulance Agreement with Le Center Volunteer Ambulance Service for \$33,705.00. Approved unanimously.
- E) Motion by Collins, Seconded by Emmers, to table action on a partial request for a liquor license for Le Center Sportsmen's Club due to no application. Approved unanimously.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION & MISC.

- A) Consider changing auditors (EideBailly) after five years. Councilman Krenik felt they had done a good job & deserved to stay money-wise too. Motion by Krenik, Seconded by Fredrickson, to keep Eide for 2011 audit. Approved by 4-1 vote; Wetzel voting No.
- B) Admin. Collins reminder for council-members to turn in any reimbursable expenses.
- C) A polite "No Thank You" to Montgomery-Le Center Schools and City of Montgomery for a joint meeting between cities/ schools/ local legislators in January 2012.
- D) Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Collins, to adopt the 2012 wage sheet handed out and also approve that from now forward the dept. heads will make the recommendations to the Council for wage increases in their department. Approved unanimously.
- E) AT&T final request to "de-commission" one water-tower site antenna- leaving only the building to the city for a payment of \$1,000.00 to the city. Motion by Fredrickson, Seconded by Krenik, yes accept contract leaving only building behind for \$1,000.00. Approved unanimously.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Motion by Krenik, Seconded by Emmers, for Mayor Wetzel to adjourn the meeting. Approved unanimously. 9:00 pm.

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