

**CITY OF LE CENTER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015 - 7:00 PM**

**** MINUTES ****

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Mayor Fredrickson, D. Woelfel, J. Weiers, C. Harmeyer, G. Meidlinger Jr.
Absent: None

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) Motion by Woelfel, Seconded by Harmeyer, Minutes from April 14, 2015 Regular Council Meeting be approved. Approved unanimously.

B) Council changes to Agenda: None

III. APPROVAL OF BILLS TO BE PAID

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

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

A) E.D.A. Report

Director Collins reported: EDA Board still negotiating with Maud Borup on possible sale of Industrial Park Lot 5 of Block 1. Meeting with Maud officials next morning to try to reach an agreement.

B) P & Z Report

Administrator Block reported: P & Z meeting coming up before next council meeting. State has lowered the state surcharge amount from \$5.00 down to \$1.00/ Block wants to add some more projects to the “set fee” schedule, rather than the cost based schedule.

- 1) Attorney Moran reported the Maple Ave. hazardous property is now ours, and can be advertised for sale. The Cordova Ave. hazardous property is now signed over to city via Quit-Claim Deed; but can't be recorded until the back property taxes of approx. \$5,000 are paid off- city will have to pay the \$5,000 to record the deed. Staff advertise lots for sale on city web site, Craig's List, sign in front yard: Selling lots “as-is”/ house needs to be torn down within 60 days of signed purchase agreement/ garage would need to be fixed up to satisfaction of city or torn down/ sewer & water is there/ WAC & SAC fees waived to rebuild/ winning bidder responsible for inspecting property and removal of any lead paint or asbestos that may be present; city makes no guarantee as to their presence or not/ if not rebuilding immediately, must haul in fill material to fill the hole for public safety/ deed given to winning bidder after house is torn down & removed from property. Motion by Mayor Fredrickson, Seconded by Harmeyer, on all the above. Approved unanimously.

C) Municipal Liquor Store

Manager Brad Collins gave the April report: Sales were \$71,424: down \$4,100 from March, up \$8,200 from Apr. '14. Collins reported: sales showed 39% gross profit margin/ upcoming events: 1st meat raffle went well; now many conflicts, postponed the next one until August/ nice weather has off-sales up/ closed on Sundays now until September/ draft beer cooler will be set up for sales this week/ met with Darian Hunt to review the Elmer's Bldg. inventory, now better covered/ need new cleaner at Muni; taking bids thru end of the week.

D) Police Department

Police Chief Pfarr reported on the police activities for month of April: 100 calls @ 2,429 miles patrolled/ total calls down 24%, total miles up 21% for 2015. Pfarr also reported: squad car has gone thru its 4th fuel pump; would like to trade car off when purchase new unit in 2016/ LETG training in June; goes online in August.

E) Water, Sewer, Streets, Parks

Public Works Supt. Curt Roemhildt reported:

- Parks- some west park traffic control done using big field rock, replacing some older wooden posts in the ground.
- Sewers- a company televising (50) city sewer service lines; city staff kept notes and records of much useful information. (roots, foundation drains, etc.)

F) Bolton & Menk Engineering

- 1) Engineer Joel Hawbaker presented to council bidding specs for sealcoating and edge mill & over-lay of Rolling Hills Drive and Meadow View Lane.
- 2) Lexington Avenue project: Hawbaker handed out a list of preliminary items to be considered for the project. Sub-committee appointed by Mayor to update the city assessment policy: Attorney Moran, Hawbaker, Collins, Meidlinder, & Harmeyer.

G) Pool

Supt. Roemhildt reported the pool is painted and ready to go. Approx. opening will be June 1st. Staff inform pool manager to start attending the council meetings.

H) County Fair/ Nancy Stauff

No Fair rep present/ No report.

V. PUBLIC FORUM

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

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A) Community committee for senior citizen center: Bob Leary presented a monthly- yearly budget and explained/ Ron Germscheid will serve as their treasurer/ Councilman Dennis Woelfel appointed to their board committee/ they will have a checking account to pay their own bills/ city will pay the group \$333 per month/ FNB will guarantee the 4% interest rate, therefore the \$100,000 principal will not be used/ called the “55 and Older Club.”
- B) Administrator Collins updated the council on the “health hazard emergency” declared at 305 West Minnesota Street. The mortgage company had contacted city hall; and they agreed to clean out the inside of the house and get it on their mowing schedule. They were informed they had only the 30 days as set in the letter sent to them.
- C) Collins updated the council on ACH direct payment for utility bill payments and explained the process so far. Announced sign-up sheets were now available at city hall to sign up.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Guardian Inn Motel request for tax abatement on past due taxes paid. Administrator Collins explained the reason for the tax abatement question: the 2013 and 2014 property taxes had just recently been paid to the county, and there was some question if the motel would still be granted the city portion of tax abatement as outlined in an earlier city resolution. Motel owner Tom Sery stated the motel is not doing well financially and he and his partners have had to pay money out of their own pockets to keep the motel open. He was asking the council to permit the tax abatement for the years 2013 and 2014. City Attorney Moran pointed out that their water & sewer utility bill was past due at \$3,700 and their loan for the city lot they purchased had not had a payment made towards it since the payments were to start on 01/01/13. Moran felt this was a violation of the resolution agreement approved on 08/14/07 by that council; specifically the language that refers to “shall not be in default with the City for any of its payment obligations respecting any assessments, utility charges, or other governmental impositions” in order to earn the tax abatement. Mr. Sery stated he would make the utility bill paid up and the land loan paid up in order to receive the tax abatement. Greg Traxler, President at First National Bank of Le Center, spoke for the motel stating that his opinion was that if Mr. Sery pays up his utility bill and land loan payments, the city should grant Sery the tax abatement. He felt that unless the abatement agreement had been formally cancelled by the council; then Mr. Sery should be entitled to the tax abatement. Traxler also stated he felt it was important to keep the motel open with a possible sale in the works; and he felt the council should honor the tax abatement agreement. After some council discussion: Motion by Woelfel, Seconded by Harmeyer, to reinstall the tax abatement and grant it as long as water/sewer utility bill and land loan note are paid up to date. Approved by 4-1 vote; Councilman Meidlinger voting No.
- B) Motion by Woelfel, Seconded by Harmeyer, to approve the 2015 Liquor License renewals as listed/ less Le Center Lanes. Approved unanimously.

- C) Collins explained the request by a downtown business owner to place advertising off-site along Hwy 99. Current zoning ordinance does not allow for permanent advertising signage off-site, and barely allows for some temporary advertising signage off-site. This downtown business owner wanted to know how the American Legion could advertise (temporary) their monthly steak fry along Hwy 99. Collins asked council to allow he and zoning administrator Block to handle this using the current ordinance as written. Granted.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION & MISC.

- A) Employee request for phone stipend in lieu of carrying city phone, so as not to have to carry two phones during the day: employees carry a city phone instead of radios. Council generally not in favor of stipend. "Carry a city phone, use for city business."
- B) Mayor Fredrickson noted the next county official's meeting will be held on Thursday, May 28, at 6:30 PM at Ney Nature Center (county park), rural Henderson.
- C) Mayor Fredrickson noted: Public weed notice has been published in the official newspaper and is now in effect concerning mowing grass & weeds.
- D) Administrator Collins reported a complete redesign of the city web site will be done: Making it more inter-active, more mobile friendly for phones and iPads.
- E) Collins inquired of council: who shall mow our newly acquired properties, city staff or should it be hired out to contractor? Council generally agreed city staff will mow them.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business; Motion by Woelfel, Seconded by Harmeyer, for Mayor Fredrickson to adjourn the meeting. Approved unanimously. 9:04 pm.

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