

**CITY OF LE CENTER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 – 7:00 PM
10 W. TYRONE ST. LE CENTER, MN 56057**

*** MINUTES ***

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Mayor J. Fredrickson, Council Members J. Weiers, N. Hintz, C. Harmeyer, C. Scott
Absent: None
Staff: City Administrator D. Evans, Public Works Superintendent C. Roemhildt, Police Chief D. Carlsrud, Liquor Manager B. Vikla, Building Official C. Block, Pool Manager Dorothy Dinwiddie, City Attorney J. Moran

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A) Motion by Harmeyer, Seconded by Scott to approve Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held August 10, 2022. Approved unanimously.
- B) Motion by Weiers, Seconded by Harmeyer to approve Minutes form the Workshop Meeting held August 23, 2022. Approved unanimously.
- C) Council changes to Agenda: None

III. APPROVAL OF BILLS TO BE PAID

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

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

- A) E.D.A. Report - Evans indicated that the EDA met in special meeting on August 17, 2022, to discuss a new building lease agreement with Tri-Valley Inc. and selling/listing city owned parcels in the Horizon Addition. The EDA recommended to the council that they approve the building lease with Tri-Valley for \$600 month and the city would continue to pay gas and electric. Motion by Hintz, Seconded by Scott to approve this recommendation. Approved unanimously. The EDA recommended to the council that they sell/list the four (4) city owned parcels, Horizon Addition Lots 14, 15, 16, 17, all in block 003 for the “as is” appraisal value of \$70,000 per parcel but sell all four to the same buyer at \$280,000 for the purpose of adding more residential units of some type. Evans asked the council to give himself, Attorney Moran and Building Official Corey Block the go ahead to communicate with the two potential buyers to negotiate a purchase agreement to be brought before the council. Motion by Harmeyer,

Seconded by Scott to approve the sale price and give staff the authority to negotiate a purchase agreement. Approved unanimously.

- B) P & Z Report - Director Block indicated there was a public hearing held on September 6, 2022, for an application of a variance request by Winco Inc. to install an 80 square foot sign, 20 square foot larger than zoning code allows for the I-1 district. Evans advised that due to a publishing error by Le Sueur County Newspaper, that the public hearing was continued, until this evening to comply with the ten (10) day posting requirement. Mayor Fredrickson opened the floor to for public comment on the variance request. Hearing nothing, the public hearing was adjourned. Motion by Scott, Seconded by Hintz to approve Resolution No. 2022M adopting the findings of fact and reasons for approval for the variance application for Winco Inc. Approved unanimously.
- C) Liquor Store Report - Manager Becky Vikla stated that August 2022 sales were \$101,645. August sales in 2021 were \$91,661. Bar sales were up \$2,787 from 2021 and off sale was up \$7,196 from 2021. YTD revenues were up \$18,046 and YTD expenses were up \$53,417. August recap: wedding parties, Le Sueur Co. Fair. September: opening day of football with Sohmer, St. Mary's block party, two weddings.
- D) Police Report - Chief Derek Carlsrud reported on the police activities for month of September: 166 calls @ 3245 miles patrolled. Zero (0) arrests. Carlsrud indicated that firearms and use of force training has been completed for the year. One part-time officer has accepted a full-time position with another agency and will be leaving a vacant spot. Three (3) total vacant spots remain but Carlsrud said his part-time officers have been filling shifts, so the coverage is there. Flu clinic September 26 from 2 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the ambulance garage. Road closure on South Montgomery Ave from East Sharon to East Ottawa during that time. Carlsrud is still waiting on radio batteries to arrive, and the squad vehicle got placed on the new scheduled orders list according to Wolf Motors.
- E) Public Works Report - Public Works Superintendent Roemhildt reported the following:
- Flag football lines have been painted at West Park and Jr. High Football will be played at Ray Plut Field this fall.
 - AT&T has started to drill additional anchors in the base of the water tower platform as a part of an approved project to replace communication equipment at the top of the water tower.
 - Fire hydrants on Maple Ave and Cordova Ave have been sand blasted and painted by Total Restoration of Le Center as a donation.
 - Hydrant flushing is currently taking place and should be done within the week.
 - As a part of a county old jail remodel project, storm sewer has been installed on Park Ave.
 - Center Point Energy is installing a new gas line underground on West Sharon Street from South Maple Ave to South Kilkenny Ave, then North on Kilkenny to West Tyrone Street. They are expected to be here for a few weeks.
 - Metronet is continuing their project with underground boring of fiber.
 - 120 trees (5 different species) have been ordered to finish up the 2020 street project for an estimated cost of \$15,400.

- Roemhildt provided the council with his letter of resignation with his wishes to retire from the position of Public Works Superintendent. The letter indicated a final day of employment to be on January 31st, 2023. Motion by Weiers, Second by Harmeyer to accept the letter of resignation from Public Works Superintendent Curt Roemhildt. Approved unanimously.
- F) Pool Report – Pool Manager Dorothy Dinwiddie provided the council with an annual pool report for the summer months. Total revenue \$41,072 with 10,815 total pool users. Dinwiddie also provided the pool report for the month of August with lessons and passes totaling \$2,581 with a total monthly deposit of \$4,361. In all lessons are down but Dinwiddie believes this is because kids only must have a skill level three (3) out of six (6) levels to use the deep end and a lot of kids quit after level three (3) is reached. It is also believed lessons are down because the increased number of private pools in the area. Total revenues are expected to increase in the 2023 season as fees were restructured at the August 23rd budget workshop meeting.
- G) Fair Association - Board Member Nancy Stauff advised the council that the Le Sueur Co. Fair was a great success. The carnival was a big draw and kept a lot of folks there along with the other attractions and multiple food and drink vendors. The weather was great, other than a few passing showers, but people remained at the fair during those showers. 99 total exhibitors were present. Tractor pull was great draw, and the demo derbies were successful.
- H) Bolton & Menk – Engineer Adam Jacobs advised the council of the AT&T project and that holes are drilled, and construction crew just needs to anchor in the bolts. Crews have some welding to do on the bracing at the top of the tower. T-Mobile is also in the process of working with the city to replace some of their existing equipment. Finalizing on the 2020 street project is ongoing, and the contractor is processing the necessary paperwork to complete.

V. PUBLIC FORUM

Cathy Schmidt at 10 West Spors Street commented on the nice streets in town and the reverse osmosis water system the city has. Schmidt would like to see the development of pickleball courts and potentially use the school tennis court. Schmidt did reach out to TCU and is waiting to hear back from the superintendent. Schmidt said she wasn't sure the relationship between the school and the city but was advised that the courts were school property, and the city has no say over the use. Schmidt further commented that she was glad trees were being planted for the 2020 street project. Schmidt requested better communication in written form from the city, on what the expectations are for watering the new trees, so they take root.

Carolyn Mager at 375 North Park Ave. voiced her displeasure with the restoration efforts on the 2020 street project. Mager said prior to the project she had mostly lawn with some weeds and now it's mostly weeds. Mager said with the trees coming the city should consider watering the boulevard grass during that time.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A) Evans advised the council that Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA) was going to conduct a water and sewer rate study for the city. Evans indicated that he has seen a water and sewer rate study from MRWA in the past and was confident in their product. Evans met with a staff member from MRWA who would only provide a very basic worksheet on how to structure the rates. Evans indicated that he was disappointed with these efforts and with the support of the water and sewer rate committee, recommended to the council that they do a full water and sewer rate study. Evans said a study has not been completed in the last twenty (20) years that he knew, and many financial institutions recommend one every ten (10) years. Evans said he reached out to three (3) firms requesting a rate study proposal so that they can be presented at the October 11th meeting.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Evans explained the changes made to budget worksheets from the last time council viewed them in their budget workshop. Levy dropped from a 12.19 % increase to 11.43 % with an overall general fund budget of \$1,890,250. Motion by Harmeyer, Seconded by Hintz to approve Resolution No. 2022N approving the levy and general fund budget for 2023. Approved unanimously.
- B) Motion by Scott, Seconded by Harmeyer to set the Truth-in-Taxation public hearing for December 13, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. Approved unanimously.
- C) Motion by Scott, Seconded by Weiers to approve the 2023 Le Center Ambulance Agreement. Approved unanimously.
- D) The council discusses the next steps in filling the public works superintendent position. Evans indicated that he could start working with staff on getting an update job description with minimum and preferred qualifications, job posting with salary range and have this ready before the October 11th meeting. The council will set a hiring committee at the October 11th meeting. The purpose of the committee is to vet all applicants and recommend the top qualified candidates be interviewed by the full council. Position will be posted internally and through the League of Minnesota Cities website, as well as other online avenues.
- E) 1st reading of Ordinance No. 2022-2 Amending Section 22-36, Public Nuisances affecting Peace and Safety. Attorney Moran explained the amending ordinance to the council and discussed as necessary.
- F) Motion by Harmeyer, Seconded by Scott to set a public hearing for Ordinance No. 2022-2 on October 11, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. Approved unanimously.
- G) Motion by Weiers, Seconded by Scott to approve the Le Sueur Co. ditch assessment notices and prepay the assessments on ditch 21 in the amount of \$2,657.80 and ditch 23 in the amount of \$2,549.05. Approved unanimously.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION & MISC.

- A) Mayor Fredrickson reminded the council of the upcoming Le Sueur County Officials Association meeting on September 28, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at “The Bar” in Le Sueur.
- B) Mayor Fredrickson reminded the council of the upcoming FEMA Flood Insurance Map Public Open House on September 21, 2002, at 5:00 p.m. at the Le Sueur County Environmental Services Building.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business; Motion by Scott, Seconded by Harmeyer, for Mayor Fredrickson to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Approved unanimously.

Dan Evans, Administrator