

**CITY OF LE CENTER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023 – 7:00 PM
10 W. TYRONE ST. LE CENTER, MN 56057**

*** MINUTES ***

1. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Mayor Christian Harmeyer, Council Members Jennifer Weiers, Dan Steffen, Collin Scott

Absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Dan Evans, Public Works Superintendent Dan Steinborn, Police Chief Derek Carlsrud, Liquor Manager Becky Vikla, City Attorney Jason Moran

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Scott, Seconded by Steffen to approve the agenda as distributed. Approved unanimously.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Weiers, Seconded by Scott to approve the consent agenda items list below. Approved unanimously.

A) Approval of Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on January 10, 2023

B) Approval of Bills to be Paid

C) Approval of American Legion/St. Patrick's Special Event Permit

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

6. PRESENTATIONS

A) Utility Rate Study Presentation by Victoria Holthaus, on behalf of ABDO Financial Solutions. Holthaus presented two rate structure scenarios both with and without the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars for the water fund. Holthaus noted that the proposed rate structure is now tiered as required by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Holthaus then presented two rate structure scenarios both with and without the use of ARPA dollars for the sewer fund. The council discussed these rate structure scenarios as needed. It was noted that rates have not been increased in at least the last 10 years and recommended by Holthaus that the city should always be thinking about increasing rates 3 to 5 percent every year, just to keep up with inflation. Evans indicated there is roughly \$275,000 of ARPA funds available. If these ARPA funds were used to finance capital improvement needs in the water and sewer fund as indicated in the

scenarios, it would use roughly \$190,000 leaving around \$85,000 to be used for other city needs in the future.

Motion by Harmeyer, Seconded by Scott to use ARPA funds to finance capital improvement needs in the water and sewer fund, rather than using an intergovernmental loan from the general fund. Approved unanimously.

Motion by Weiers, Seconded by Scott to approve Water Fund Scenario #1 with the use of ARPA funds. Approved unanimously.

Motion by Harmeyer, Seconded by Steffen to approve Sewer Fund Scenario #2 with the use of ARPA funds. Approved unanimously.

With the recommendations from council, Holthaus will prepare a final utility rate document to be presented to the council at their March meeting.

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

- A) E.D.A. Report – Evans provided the council with an updated covid loan worksheet that shows all outstanding loan debt.
- B) P & Z Report - Director Block, was not present, not report.
- C) Liquor Store Report - Manager Becky Vikla stated that January 2023 sales were \$85,676.47. January sales in 2022 were \$83,034. Sales were up \$2,641 from 2022. January recap: Music by Sohmer, DJ Kern Bros for a birthday party, dart tournament, Pfeiffer tournament and Sunday football. February: Potluck for the Super Bowl and dart league. Live music by Mike David and the Angels on the 17th at 7pm.
- D) Police Report - Chief Derek Carlsrud reported on the police activities for the month of January: 230 calls / incidents @ 3685 miles patrolled. Three arrests (1) warrant (1) DWI (1) motor vehicle theft. Carlsrud indicated he was backgrounding an applicant and had to release them from a conditional offer of employment. The full-time police officer position closes on February 28, 2023. Carlsrud proved the council with the annual 2022 police report. Highest number of calls or incidents were traffic stops, followed by security checks and then medicals.
- E) Public Works Report - Public Works Superintendent Steinborn reported the following:
 - Steinborn spoke with LJP regarding our city-wide clean-up. LJP could provide a truck / driver and work in conjunction with city staff / truck to operate a drop site. LJP would also provide two large roll-offs. The roll-offs would be utilized when the two trucks are in route to the garbage processing facility. Steinborn indicated that most other garbage haulers do not offer a property pick-up option, only a drop site location where residents can haul their own junk to. Staff will work on an acceptable junk item list and flyer for this event. It was discussed on whether to charge \$25 per person, no matter the quantity. The event would likely take place on a Saturday in June of 2023.

- The council gave the go ahead for staff to move forward and purchase the soccer goals. This purchase was budgeted for from the capital improvement fund in the parks dept. Evans indicated that he was approached by a civic organization who would potentially be interested in donating funds towards the purchasing of the goals. Evans will work with the organization to see if a donation can be secured.
 - Staff is continuing to remove snow from intersections and clean out catch basins.
- F) Le Sueur Co. Commissioner update – Dave Preisler District 4 Commissioner and Administrator Evans previously discussed the potential benefits of having Commissioner updates available at the City Council meetings. Preisler indicated the County is have a compensation study done for all County employees, this report should be available in May. Starting May 11th, the Human Services Dept. for the County will begin going through case files to determine continuing eligibility for public services. This process is anticipated to take a year to complete. The County had previously contracted with a private firm to do fraud investigations for public assistance. A Deputy will now be housed within human services to prevent fraud of public services. Bids went out for the CSAH 11 (Cordova Ave) mill & overlay construction project from Hwy 99 north past city limits. The County knows this road is in rough shape. Preisler indicated County Officials and Staff are continuing to monitor the record number of Bills that are being introduced at the state legislative session and the effect some of these bills will have at a local level.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- A) Evans stated the City received 11 applications for the Public Works Maintenance Worker position. The hiring committee will vet the applications and interview a select few that meet the criteria established by the committee. Evans was hopefully a job offer would be extended, to one of those applicants before the next council meeting.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A) There were no vacant council member seat applications submitted to city hall by the deadline. There was one application that was submitted a day late, and it was not included in the packet. Motion by Scott, Seconded by Steffen to publish an ad in the Le Sueur County News for the vacant seat and push the deadline back to March 9, 2023 and review applications again on the March 14th Council meeting.
- B) New Public Works Superintendent Dan Steinborn has recently transitioned from a Non-exempt status to an exempt status with him becoming the new Superintendent. With this transition he no longer qualifies for overtime pay. Motion by Scott, Seconded by Weiers to payout 171.85 hours of compensatory time. Approved unanimously.
- C) Evans informed the council that although Juneteenth was established as a state holiday in the current legislative session, this does not go into effect until August 1, 2023.
- D) Motion my Scott, Seconded by Steffen to approve the 2023 Le Center Area Fire Commission Fire Service Contract. Approved unanimously.

10. ADMINISTRATION & MISC.

- A) Mayor Harmeyer reminded the council of the upcoming Le Sueur Co. Officials Meeting on February 22, 2023 location is TBD.

11. CLOSED SESSION

- A) Closed session to discuss employee matters as permitted by the attorney-client privilege, under Minnesota State Statute 13D.05 Subd. 1(d)

- B) Closed session for the purpose of conducting city administrator annual review, under Minnesota State Statute 13D.05 Subd. 3(a)

12. OPEN SESSION

- A) Attorney Moran summarized that a former employee had submitted a request to the city for payment of accumulated hours. Council agreed on the following accumulations: 80 hours of vacation from 2022. 200 hours of vacation from 2023. 368 hours of sick time accumulated over the course of employment. 180 hours of compensatory time also accumulated over the course of employment. Motion by Scott, Seconded by Steffen to approve the accumulations listed above and pay said employee at a rate of \$42.02 per hour. Approved unanimously.

- B) Attorney Moran summarized that an annual review was conducted on Administrator Evans. A new employment agreement was proposed by Evans and reviewed prior to the meeting by Attorney Moran. Moran reviewed the agreement and made some recommendations for modifications and those recommendations were agreed upon by Evans. Motion by Weiers, Seconded by Scott to approve the City Administrators Employment Agreement. Approved unanimously.

13. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business; Motion by Scott, Seconded by Weiers, for Mayor Harmeyer to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m. Approved unanimously.

Dan Evans, Administrator