

**CITY OF LE CENTER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 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, Nathan Hintz, Collin Scott

Absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Dan Evans, Public Works Superintendent Dan Steinborn, Liquor Manager Becky Vikla, Police Chief Mitch Overn

Others Present: City Attorney Jason Moran

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Scott, seconded by Hintz to approve the agenda as distributed. All in favor, motion carried.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Weiers to approve the consent agenda items list below. All in favor, motion carried.

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

B) Approval of Bills to be Paid

C) Accept Officer Mitch Toltzman Letter of Resignation

D) Approve Holly Daze Festival Special Event Permit for November 25, 2023

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Shawn Blaschko at 200 West Minnesota Street commented on the cities snowplow/removal routes and asked if the city could extend one of the routes. Steinborn indicated that changes to the snow removal policy could be changed at a later meeting to accommodate this. Blaschko also commented about having the city potentially take over snow removal on the sidewalks in the business district. Staff will review current policy and may make recommendations at a future meeting.

6. PRESENTATIONS

Alissa Oeltjenbruns with Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) addressed the council on local and regional updates. SMIF offers three main areas of support: entrepreneurship, early childhood care and community vitality. SMIF provides gap leading to business start ups, to help them succeed in the first few years. In the past few years, a total of 45, \$10,000 grants have

been awarded to local businesses in Le Sueur County. SMIF provides training for staff and owners that are in the early childhood field.

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

- A) E.D.A. Report – Evans advised no report.
- B) P & Z Report - Block was not present, Evans advised a public hearing will take place December 5th by the Planning and Zoning Commission on a potential rezone.
- C) Liquor Store Report - Vikla stated that October 2023 sales were \$96,961. October sales in 2022 were \$95,655. Sales were up \$1,306 from 2022. September gambling proceeds were \$8,430. October recap: Live music by Lukas Graff, Dart league, Karaoke by Sohmer, Pfeiffer tournament, hotdish contest, music by Shenanigans, potluck party. Vikla stated that two point-of-sale machines went down. Replacement cost is roughly \$4500 per machine.
- D) Police Report – Overn provided the report on the police activities for the month of October. Calls / incidents handled 168, miles patrolled 3298, 3 arrest, miles patrolled are up 29% and call / incidents are up 27.5% from 2022. Overn indicated that he received one application for the vacant police officer position. The position is open unit filled, but it's been open for roughly 2 weeks. Overn said that shifts are getting covered, but overtime is increasing.
- E) Public Works Report - Steinborn reported the following:
- Preparing the equipment for snow.
 - Attending an exercise through Le Sueur Co. Emergency Management to respond to chemical spill/exposure on a roadway.
 - The flagpole was installed at Ron Germscheid Memorial Park.
- F) Le Sueur Co. Commissioner Updates – Dave Preisler reported the following:
- Preliminary levy was at 6.5% the Co. is optimistic it can be lowed. At this rate a \$225k home in the county would go up \$18 per year just in the county portion of taxes.
 - Farmland sales have been historically high so the taxing burden will shift from residential to agriculture.
 - Still no decisions have been made regarding public safety dollars. Likely will be held until a new records management system is acquired.
 - The pavement on Co. Road 11 just north of town was cut out and the gravel will be there until spring.
 - The Co. will likely receive dollars from the opioid lawsuit that was brought on by the Attorney General.
 - The Co. is in the process of redoing there financial and operational policies.
 - Preisler personally thanked Council Member Scott for his efforts in the Veterans Day program.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- A) The council discussed the two proposed Earn Sick and Safe Time (ESST) policies that were provided. Option 1 would just expand the current sick policy to open the scope to that of what is required under ESST law. Full-time staff would get 8 hours per month with a maximum of 800 hours like normal. Part-time, seasonal, temporary employees along with election judges would get 1 hour of every 30 hours worked with a maximum of 80 hours. Option 2 would be to run this ESST as a separate leave program and keep the current sick policy in place. Under this option all employees would accrue 1 hour for every 30 hours worked up to a maximum of 48 hours the first year and 80 hours the second year. The council is leaning towards option 1, but that is subject to change.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Motion by Scott, seconded by Hintz to approve the resignation of Council Member Weiers effective after the regularly scheduled meeting on December 12, 2023. All in favor, motion carried.
- B) Council Member Weiers has greater than half the amount of time left in her term, therefore there will need to be a special election question at the November 5th, 2024, general election to fill the remaining two years of the term. It was discussed that the direct appointment can be made until the general election to fill the vacancy. Motion by Hintz, seconded by Steffen to publish for the request of applications to fill the vacancy until December 31, 2024. All in favor, motion carried.
- C) Motion by Steffen, seconded by Weiers to accept the proposed method for determining water and sewer base fees for multi-unit residencies. All in favor, motion carried.
- D) Motion by Scott, seconded by to approve the drug and alcohol consortium member agreement between the city of Le Center and Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA). All in favor, motion carried.
- E) Motion by Steffen, seconded by Soctt to increase part-time Police Officers wage to match step one in the police collective bargaining agreement. All in favor, motion carried.

10. ADMINISTRATION & MISC.

- A) Reminder of Truth-in-Taxation Public Hearing on December 12, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.
- B) Le Sueur County Officials Meeting on November 29, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. location TBD
- C) Annual Holiday Festive Outfit Contest for Council and Staff at the December Council Meeting
- D) City Offices Will be Closed November 23rd for Thanksgiving and November 24th for Friday Following Thanksgiving Holiday

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business; Motion by Steffen, Seconded by Scott, for Mayor Harmeyer to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.