

**CITY OF LE CENTER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024 – 7:00 PM
10 W. TYRONE ST. LE CENTER, MN 56057**

*** MINUTES ***

1. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Mayor Christian Harmeyer, Council Members Antonio Ruiz-Mendez, Nathan Hintz, Collin Scott

Absent: Council Member Dan Steffen

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Scott, seconded by Hintz to add part-time police officer hiring process to the agenda. Under section (9) new business letter (E), All in favor, motion carried.

4. PUBLIC HEARING

A) None

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Scott, seconded by Ruiz-Mendez to approve the consent agenda items list below. All in favor, motion carried.

A) Approval of Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on April 9, 2024

B) Approval of Claims to be Paid

C) Accept the Resignation from Walter “Wally” Blaschko

D) Approval of “Kick off to Summer” Special Event Permit from the Le Center Chamber of Commerce

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

A) None

7. PRESENTATIONS

A) Tom Olinger with ABDO presented the 2023 audited financial statement. Tom discussed the city’s general fund, debt service funds, and enterprise funds. The general fund unassigned fund balance was at 45.7%, which is in the normal range. No compliance legal findings were found during the audit. Total remaining outstanding bonds in our debt service funds are \$6,251,296. Water fund has a cash balance of \$179,394 and the target cash goal is \$452,717. Sewer fund had a negative cash balance (\$30,855) and the target cash goal is \$234,152. Refuse fund has a cash balance of \$33,566 and the target cash goal

is \$90,443. Liquor fund had a cash balance of \$355,385 and is over the target cash balance of \$295,286. The tax rate is trending down from 68.4% in 2022 to 65.8% in 2023.

- B) Shelia Huber with the Minnesota Valley Council of Governments (COG) presented the wage compensation study for employees with the city of Le Center. The COG performed a true market study with comparisons to other organizations. Shelia indicated the goal was to be within 5 to 10 percent of the market in a position classification. Currently there is no pay scale structure for the city, only actual wages for each employee. Shelia provided two pay scale structures for the council to consider. Option one reflects a new salary table structure with a starting wage of \$14.00, and option two, that reflects a new salary table structure with a starting wage of \$15.00. A motion was made by Hintz, seconded by Scott to move forward with option two with an implementation date of July 2024. All in favor, motion carried. A resolution will be prepared for the following meeting to implement these changes. Shelia also indicated that she would work with Evans on compensation policies for this new pay structure.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- A) None

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A) Motion by Hintz, seconded by Scott to approve Resolution No. 2024M A Resolution authorizing acceptance of a grant from the Minnesota Department of Health. All in favor, motion carried. Evans indicated that staff is moving forward with Traut Well to finish the job of sealing the abandon well next to city hall.
- B) 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-2 An Ordinance granting a franchise agreement with Midcontinent Communications. Evans indicated that the previous agreement is due to expire, and this ordinance will secure another 10-year franchise agreement.
- C) Motion by Scott, seconded by Ruiz-Mendez to establish a City of Le Center Facebook Page. All in favor, motion carried.
- D) Motion by Hintz, seconded by Scott to approve the Social Media Policy. All in favor, motion carried.
- E) Police Chief Overn presented his proposal on hiring methods for part-time police officers. MN POST Board has allowed municipalities to hire and start part-time officers immediately who meet certain criteria and then conduct a background and psychological assessment within 6 months, to help speed up the hiring process. Motion by Scott, seconded by Hintz to approve this hiring process for part-time police officers.

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

- A) P & Z Report – Block indicted no report.
- B) Liquor Store Report - Vikla stated April 2024 sales were \$91,874. March gambling rent was \$6,671. April C&N Sales were \$640. April recap: Fools in the Alley, Sohmer Karaoke, Customer appreciation event.

C) Police Report – Overn provided the report on the police activities for the month of April. Calls / incidents handled 148, miles patrolled 2,264, 1 arrest, call / incidents are down 25% from 2023.

D) Public Works Report - Steinborn reported the following:

- City wide clean up June 15th 8am to Noon
- Staff drained and cleaned the pool
- The unmanned refuse and recycling center had a large amount of blue garbage bags dropped near the service doors over the weekend. Steinborn wanted to remind everyone that garbage drop off is not excepted over the weekend.
- Steinborn wanted to thank Walter “Wally” Blaschko for all his years of service to the public works department. Wally started working for the city back in 1986.

A Motion was made by Hintz, seconded by Scott to post the adjusted wage amount for the public works maintenance position. All in favor, motion carried.

E) Administrator’s Report – Evans reported the following:

- City website is moving forward, the design is approved and now the content is getting migrated from the old site to the new site. Staff has also started training on how to upload content to the new website.
- Evans indicated that most all the zoning preemptive bills that were introduced this legislative session have been defeated. Which is a great win for municipalities in the state.
- Evans said the MN Small Cites Association is still lobbying for a gap finance package for the small cities’ assistance fund. Currently it’s funded at 9 million but they would like to see it funded at 20 million for FY 2024.

F) Le Sueur Co. Commissioner Updates – Dave Preisler reported the following:

- Sharon Street road closure south of the courthouse is pushed back a week because of drawing delays.
- MnDOT moved up the date of construction to FY 2026 for the roundabout at State Hwy 13 and State Hwy 99.
- Preisler mentioned that the paid family and medical leave act that is scheduled to start in FY 2026 is likely underfunded to what the state projected. It was going to be funded at a .7% tax but that will likely be .88% and DEED can go to 1% without going back to the legislature.
- County has held discussions on updating their comprehensive / land use plan as the current plan is 17 years old.

G) Le Sueur Co. Fair Board – Nancy Stauff not present

11. OTHER BUSINESS

A) Council Reports –

- Harmeyer wanted to additionally thank Wally for his years of service for the city.
- Scott wanted to know the sign-up date for swimming lessons, Evans advised May 30th.

- B) Open House for the MnDOT Hwy 99 Project at City Hall on May 28th from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- C) Reminder for Council Members to submit any additional meetings attended

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business; Motion by Hintz, seconded by Scott, for Mayor Harmeyer to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.

Dan Evans, Administrator