

Lewiston City Council
Council Meeting Minutes
December 23, 2020
Lewiston City Hall – 7:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Electronic City Council Meeting called to order by Mayor Beth Carlson at 7:00 pm December 23, 2020.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present (3): Mayor Beth Carlson, Councilor Dan Robertson, and Councilor Carol Boynton. Not Present (1) Councilor Larry Rupprecht.

Others present: City Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Knight, Ambulance Director Matt Essig, Fire Chief Tim Dahl, Police Chief Scott Yeiter, Public Works Director Curt Benter, Nick Ebnet, Ben Borchardt, Nate Hedlund, James Creaghe, Jeff Peterson, Alan Mote, Adam Franzen, Kevin Ziebell, Richard Pollema, Grace Chamberlin, K., two iphones, and Polly Calhoun.

4. Agenda- Changes and additions

Mayor Carlson asked if the councilors had seen the letter from Councilor Rupprecht? All replied yes, so Mayor Carlson requested to add letter I, resignation of Councilor Rupprecht, to the agenda. City Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Knight requested to add Accounts Payable B to letter F. Knight also mentioned that Mr. Holtz had not yet checked in for the meeting, so agenda items 7 and 8 might need to be moved to the next meeting.

Councilor Robertson motioned to adopt the agenda with said changes. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

Mayor Carlson requested to add the vacant Council seat applications as item 16.7.

5. Adopt Consent Agenda

- A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes- December 9, 2020
- B. Special Council Meeting Minutes- Administrator Review- November 11, 2020
- C. Special Council Meeting Minutes- Allegations of Misconduct- December 3, 2020
- D. Special Council Meeting Minutes- Budget- December 9, 2020** sent separately
- E. Special Council Meeting Minutes- Allegations of Misconduct- December 17, 2020
- F. Accounts Payable, Accounts Payable B
- G. Gambling Permit- American Legion- Raffle March 13, 2021

H. Gambling Permit- American Legion- Bingo March 27, 2021

I. Resignation Letter- Councilor Larry Rupprecht

Mayor Carlson motioned to adopt the consent agenda with said additions. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

6. Citizens' Concerns-None.

7. WWTP Variance Letter- Bryan Holtz- POSTPONED UNTIL 1/13/21

8. LRIP Program- Fremont Street- Bryan Holtz- POSTPONED UNTIL 1/13/21

9. Ambulance Truck Committee Presentation- Matt Essig

Ambulance Director Matt Essig stated a 44-page presentation was in the packet. Ambulance truck committee members were in the Zoom meeting tonight in case of any questions. There were two recommendations for the City Council to approve: 1. To keep the current truck as a backup for the next three years and gather data about its use, and 2. Purchase a new ambulance to be delivered 275 days in the future, end of September/October 2021. One payment would be due upon delivery of the new truck.

Mayor Carlson and Councilor Boynton thanked the committee for the extensive presentation in the packet. Essig stated the last page details the payment for the new ambulance, and the cost of equipment for the second ambulance. Now would be the time to try the second ambulance scenario.

Mayor Carlson motioned to keep the current Ambulance truck in service for three years and then re-evaluate it after those three years. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

2026 is the proposed year when the evaluation of the second Ambulance would take place.

Councilor Robertson motioned for the Ambulance Department to purchase a new ambulance from Premier Specialty Vehicles in the amount of \$249,229. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

Essig thanked the truck committee for their extra hours and Sunday night meetings, along with special recognition to Nathan Hedlund for taking the lead on this committee.

10. Resolution 2020-40 Accepting a Donation for the Lewiston Ambulance Service- Matt Essig

Essig stated this was a donation from the Lewiston Ambulance Association in the amount of \$30,000 towards the purchase of the new ambulance.

Councilor Boynton motioned for approval of Resolution 2020-40, Accepting a Donation for the Lewiston Ambulance Service in the amount of \$30,000. Seconded by Councilor Robertson. Approved 3-0.

11. Ambulance Department- Diesslin Resignation- Matt Essig

There was a resignation letter in the packet for Audrey Diesslin effective November 29, 2020.

Councilor Boynton motioned to accept the resignation of Audrey Diesslin from the Ambulance Service effective November 29, 2020, with thanks for her service from the Council. Seconded by Councilor Robertson. Approved 3-0.

12. PeopleService November 2020 Report and Maintenance Reports- James Creaghe

James Creaghe stated the monthly report was in the packet. There were no questions on it. Creaghe stated there was a quote in the packet from River City Heating for air handlers and for the ventilation fan in the basement. He also commented on the Council moving \$45,000 in 2021 budget funds from the repair/maint account and felt that in reading the report from Bolton-Menk of necessary items, and the quote from River City, these items will eat up the budget left for repair/maint for 2021. The air handler units need to be fabricated and will take three to four months to receive. If they should fail, the plant will be without heat for three to four months. Creaghe feels that moving budget away from this line item will cause this account to go into the red very early in the new year. Mayor Carlson requested that Mr. Creaghe stay on the call for the city budget item #15.

13. River City Proposal for WWTP Air Handlers- James Creaghe

14. Police Department- Removal of Officer Joshua DeBoer from probation- Scott Yeiter

Police Chief Scott Yeiter requested to remove Officer Joshua DeBoer from probation. His performance review was completed, and he has done a great job for the City.

Councilor Robertson motioned to remove Officer Joshua DeBoer from probation effective December 23, 2020, with thanks from the Council. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

15. City Budget for 2021

Mayor Carlson stated this was the last regular meeting of the year, so there is discussion needed. There is money sitting in a debt service account that has been paid off which could be used for the WWTP repairs and get the facility report completed. Administrator Knight stated there was \$36,921 from the 2009A bond which is paid in full. This can be moved into the sewer fund, and then we can move roughly \$35,000 from engineering fees back to repair/maint. Creaghe was concerned that a report was going to be done even though the City does not know what the limits will be on the new WWTP permit. Carlson felt that a separate conversation with Creage, Bryan Holtz from Bolton-Menk, and Public Works Director Curt Benter, along with the new member of the Public Works Committee from City Council, and others from the community will be needed.

Councilor Robertson motioned to approve the proposal from River City Heating and Air Conditioning in the amount of \$30,100 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant to be paid from the 2021 budget. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

Creaghe will need to submit an electrician proposal for the installation and wiring of the new air handlers. Mayor Carlson wanted the bond excess to stay where it is and not move it into the sewer fund at this time.

Mayor Carlson stated the most recent workbook sent to all from Administrator Knight shows a levy amount of 4.61%, a total amount of \$1,002,336. The community center budget for property insurance needed to be re-aligned, creating the increase from 4.40 to 4.61%. \$44,129 is the dollar amount of the increase. Councilors Robertson and Boynton were okay with this budget.

Mayor Carlson motioned to approve the 2021 City budget in the amount of \$1,002,336. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

16. City Administrator's Report- Cheryl Knight

16.1 Nuisance Abatement-Heller City Administrator Knight stated that a copy of the letter sent to 80 Williams Street and ten photos taken of the property were in the packet, showing the general disrepair of the property. Per Lewiston City Code 801.04 Abatement: The City Council may under Minnesota Statutes 429.101 provide for removal of such a public nuisance by City employees and equipment or may contract for independent personnel and equipment to remove the public nuisance. Any charges or cost incurred...may be charged against the property by special assessment.

Mr. Heller was on the call and explained his situation at length. He was reminded by Mayor Carlson of the thirty (30) day time limit mentioned in his letter, and that this is a long standing issue. Councilor Boynton stated this property was an eyesore and complaints had been received. Administrator Knight stated that the public works department would contract out this abatement if needed.

Police Chief Yeiter stated there should be a specific list of things that should be done so it is clear to all parties involved what should be cleaned up/removed from the property. Mr. Heller said he wanted to know what he had to do. A tentative date of March 1, 2021 was set for this matter to be resolved.

16.2 Nuisance Abatement-85 Meadow Drive

Administrator Knight stated that this property was previously brought to Council's attention by Councilor Boynton, and she gave background information on the memo. SunTrust Bank in Virginia is listed as an additional property owner. Discussion of who is actually living at the property, noise complaints received, the stove pipe in the garage, and was there proper notice to the correct person. Chief Yeiter messaged to the person living at that property and will create a list of items to be cleaned up/removed like the other property and will report back to the Council.

16.3 Resolution 2020-39 Resolution Granting Approval of Annual Liquor Licenses and Renewals

Knight stated that all applications and fee payments have been received from Kwik Trip, the Legion, and the Luex Sales Corp.

Councilor Robertson motioned to adopt Resolution 2020-39, Granting Approval of Annual Liquor Licenses and Renewals. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

16.4 Resolution 2020-41 Accepting of Donations for the Lewiston Prairie Trails Park

Knight stated that monies had been received along with gravel from Jim Peterson Trucking.

Councilor Boynton motioned to approve Resolution 2020-41 Accepting of Donations for the Lewiston Prairie Trails Park to include money and gravel. Seconded by Mayor Carlson. Approved 3-0.

16.5 Rubbish Haulers License Renewals for 2021

Knight stated that applications and fee payments have been received by Harter's Trash and Recycling, J&J Rubbish, Sunshine Refuse, and Waste Mgmt. of WI (which was pending receipt of their insurance certificate which was received December 21, 2020).

Councilor Robertson motioned to approve the rubbish haulers renewal list for 2021. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

16.6 CC Memo-Christmas Eve half day holiday 12/24/20

Knight stated there was a memo in the packet. Christmas Eve day is not an official holiday, but past practice has been to allow time off for a half day in the afternoon.

Mayor Carlson motioned to close the office on Christmas Eve day, 12/24/20, at noon, so employees can have the afternoon off if they desire. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

16.7 Applications for the Vacant Council Seat

Knight stated there was one application received from Councilor Boynton for the vacancy.

Mayor Carlson motioned to appoint Carol Boynton to the vacant Council seat effective January 4, 2021. Seconded by Councilor Robertson. Approved 2-0, with a conflict of interest declared by Councilor Boynton.

Mayor Carlson mentioned that there are only three Council members until the new Council members are sworn in January 4, 2021. Knight wondered if the two new members would agree to be sworn in early for the two weeks between City Council meetings.

Mayor Carlson motioned to appoint Nick Ebnet and Ben Borchardt to the City Council effective 12/24/20 until 1/4/2021. Seconded by Councilor Robertson. Approved 3-0.

17. COVID-19 Information and Updates

Chief Yeiter stated that vaccines are in for Winona County, and some employees will be getting vaccinated January 4, 2021.

Yeiter brought up the issue of mandated training for the Police Department. Will Council allow the in-service training to be conducted as needed as long as social distance and masking protocols are in place while doing that? It is the annual required training for the Police Department and other law enforcement in the county.

Councilor Boynton motioned to allow law enforcement to conduct training at the Lewiston Community Center, and to observe COVID protocols and sanitize after using. Seconded by Mayor Carlson. Approved 3-0.

Yeiter also commented that it was raining and 23 degrees, and it was nasty outside so avoid travel.

18. Additional Council Concerns

Mayor Carlson stated the Personnel Committee was listed as meeting “as needed” and she would like to move the meeting back to “regular” status. Discussion on when to hold these meetings. This will be revisited once the committee members are set as to when to meet.

Administrator Knight stated the external audit will begin January 25th-to be determined if the auditors will be working on site.

Mayor Carlson wished everyone a happy and safe Christmas and New Year!!!

Councilor Robertson motioned to adjourn the City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 3-0.

The Council Meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:48 pm on December 23, 2020.

Submitted By:
Cheryl A. Knight
City Administrator/Clerk