

Lewiston City Council
Council Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2020
Lewiston City Hall – 6:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Electronic City Council Meeting called to order by Mayor Beth Carlson at 6:00 pm October 14, 2020.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present (5): Mayor Beth Carlson, Councilor Dan Robertson, Councilor Carol Boynton, Councilor Niles Lavey and Councilor Larry Rupprecht. Not Present (0).

Others present: City Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Knight, Ambulance Director Matt Essig, Fire Chief Tim Dahl, Police Chief Scott Yeiter, Public Works Director Curt Benter, Public Works Assistant Erik Fredberg, Nick Ebnet, and Polly Calhoun.

4. Agenda- Changes and additions

City Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Knight requested to postpone item #7, 1st and 2nd Street Alleyway Cost Estimate, as Bryan Holtz had a conflict and was unable to attend tonight.

Councilor Robertson motioned for approval of the Agenda with said change. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 5-0.

5. Adopt Consent Agenda

- A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes- September 23, 2020
- B. Special Council Meeting Minutes- September 15, 2020
- C. Special Council Meeting Minutes- September 17, 2020
- D. Special Council Meeting Minutes-Budget- September 23, 2020
- E. Accounts Payable
- F. Duane LaRocque- Firearms Training 7/12-15/21- waive rental fee for Community Center
- G. New Rubbish Hauler's License- GFL Solid Waste Midwest LLC

Councilor Rupprecht commented on the sparseness of the special meeting minutes, as some of the meetings were two hours long, and the minutes showed a "discussion". There were some pretty important things that went on, and this was the only record of the meetings. Knight stated there was a video record of the meetings, but if directed by Council, would be happy to rewrite them.

Councilor Boynton motioned to have Administrator Knight rewrite the special meeting minutes for September 15 and September 17, 2020. There was no second, motion died.

Councilor Boynton motioned to adopt the consent agenda less items B and C. Seconded by Councilor Roberton. Approved 5-0.

6. Citizens' Concerns- None

7. 1st and 2nd Street Alleyway Cost Estimate- Bryan Holtz- POSTPONED

8. Ambulance Department Monthly Report- Matt Essig

Ambulance Director Matt Essig stated his report was in the packet. The Ambulance Department is at 8-9 calls below this time last year. An EMR class is currently going on, with in-person training tonight and next week. The class is smaller, and everyone is following COVID guidelines with no issues. The Ambulance crew just got together for in-person training. The medical director had given guidelines for meeting in person and it was done successfully. The current roster has two persons in the EMT class in Winona and are doing well. A few people are back on the roster from being gone due to COVID or injury. There will be a big recruitment push through the end of the year, especially for during the day. In November, EMR renewals will occur via hybrid meetings. The truck committee is now meeting weekly, headed up by Nathan Hedlund, the Assistant Ambulance Director. The committee hopes to have a recommendation to Council for October 28th.

9. Resolution 2020-32 Accepting of Grant for the Lewiston Ambulance- Matt Essig

Essig stated that Compeer Financial, formerly AgStar, runs this grant annually, with the Fire Department receiving it last year. The Ambulance Department is looking to replace their stair chair, which is about 15 years old, and was awarded \$3,000. The actual purchase approval will be at a future meeting.

Councilor Roberton motioned for approval of Resolution 2020-32, Accepting a Grant for the Lewiston Ambulance in the amount of \$3,000 from Compeer Financial. Seconded by Councilor Boynton.

Approved 5-0.

10. Resolution 2020-33 Accepting of Donation for the Lewiston Ambulance- Matt Essig

Councilor Boynton motioned for approval of Resolution 2020-33, Accepting a Donation for the Lewiston Ambulance in the amount of \$472.47 from the Lewiston Ambulance Association. Seconded by Mayor Carlson. Approved 5-0.

11. Fire Department Request for New Furnace- Tim Dahl

Fire Chief Tim Dahl stated the estimate was in the packet. This furnace replaces the one that heats the meeting room and kitchen area. There was another estimate received from River City Heating and Air Conditioning in the amount of \$4,940, and this one from Altura Plumbing & Heating in

the amount of \$4,701. Both estimates included removal. Dahl requested cost sharing of this item with the Ambulance Department. With the workers comp premium paid, there is a budget excess of \$3,033 available for this purchase. Knight stated she will move this excess budget from workers comp to the repair/maint account. The remaining amount will come from the Ambulance Department budget.

Councilor Robertson motioned for approval of the purchase of a new furnace for the Lewiston Fire Department from Altura Plumbing & Heating in the amount of \$4,701. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 5-0.

12. Police Department Monthly Report- Scott Yeiter

Police Chief Yeiter stated his monthly report was in the packet. Calls were down due to officer-generated calls being done. This was due to COVID case numbers being higher than ever, with the Police Department slowing down the self-initiated contacts, such as traffic stops and no in-house calls. Councilor Boynton thanked Chief Yeiter and his staff for the excellent work they do.

13. City Administrator's Report- Cheryl Knight

13.1 Office Closure- Tues 10/20 until noon for Safety Training

City Administrator/Clerk Knight requested to close the City Hall office for the morning of Tuesday, October 20th until noon, so that she and Deputy Clerk Jana Benter can attend a required safety training.

Councilor Boynton motioned for approval of the office closure until noon on October 20, 2020 for safety training. Seconded by Mayor Carlson. Approved 5-0.

13.2 Memo- Ambulance Director Vacation Time Review

Knight stated this memo addresses the COVID-19 increased demand on Ambulance Director Matt Essig. Essig has been unable to take even one hour of vacation time since before 1/1/20. His inability to take any time off has now stopped his vacation accrual, as he has maxed out at 320 hours on record. Coronavirus relief fund guidance, attached and highlighted, states the "full amount of payroll and benefits expense of substantially dedicated employees may be covered using payments from the Fund". Page six goes on to say that "a local government may presume that public health employees meet the substantially dedicated test". For these reasons, Knight requested that a total of 113.20 hours for a cost of \$2,995.27, with fringe expenses of \$454, for a grand total of \$3,449.27. Knight stated that she believed this was a 100% allowable expense for CRF monies. Councilor Robertson asked Essig if he was good with this action? Essig stated that he can't even accrue vacation. He has over 100 hours of comp time, and floating holidays on the books. If he has to take call, he doesn't want to do that while at home, so he's working. Essig stated this was

awkward for him, but he doesn't have a good answer to fix this, as the ambulance service doesn't have enough folks for daytime on call.

Councilor Boynton motioned for approval of the payout of 113.20 hours of vacation time using CARES funds in the amount of \$3,449.27 to Ambulance Director Matt Essig. Seconded by Mayor Carlson. Approved 5-0.

Councilor Boynton thanked Director Essig and his crew for all they do.

13.3 CARES Fund Grant Application

Knight stated this was in the packet and is to reimburse licensed daycares and local businesses within the City up to \$500 with receipts for PPE, supplies, and other business-related expenses on a first-come, first-serve basis until grant funds are depleted. Name, business name, address, how COVID has impacted them to provide a hardship, attaching receipts and signing the certification page are required items. With approval, this will go out to the City website and Facebook page tomorrow. The grant amount is \$500 * 30 applications, so \$15,000 is available for this program.

Mayor Carlson motioned for approval of the Lewiston CARES Fund Grant Application for licensed daycares and businesses within the City of Lewiston. Seconded by Councilor Lavey. Approved 5-0.

13.4 Resolution 2020-34 3rd Amendment to the 2020 City Operating Budget for the MN Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Grant

Knight stated this 3rd Amendment takes the remaining unbudgeted amount of \$25,280 and uses it for the park's handwash stations, payout of the vacation accrual and fringe benefits for Ambulance Director Matt Essig, \$15,000 for refunds and reimbursement for the above mentioned grant reimbursements (\$500 each * 30), leaving a net of \$6,451 which, for simplicity, was put into supplies/PPE-unless Council would request this be moved elsewhere. This could also supplement the reimbursement grant amount if we go over 30 applications.

Councilor Lavey motioned for approval of Resolution 2020-34 3rd Amendment to the 2020 City Operating Budget for the MN Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Grant. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 5-0.

Knight stated that with that approval, the CRF Grant of \$114,743 awarded to the City of Lewiston is now fully expended and accounted for.

14. COVID-19 Information and Updates

Councilor Boynton extended well wishes to those in the community, as well as those in ICU care with this terrible virus. Mayor Carlson requested that people continue to follow the guidelines from the county, the state, the CDC, in an effort to help everybody out.

15. Additional Council Concerns

Councilor Boynton wanted to thank several groups for working on the parks. Robin Randall and her crew for working on their park, and Diane Rislow for working on Cedar Park (along with several youths) for doing an immaculate job for their Adopt-A-Park. Councilor Boynton stated all the parks are covered by a main person. Knight stated that the Adopt-A-Park applications which included a liability waiver, had not been received in the office yet. Councilor Boynton will follow up with her folks.

Councilor Lavey stated that he was announcing his resignation and will be moving to Wisconsin in the middle of November. He will submit a letter of resignation to Administrator Knight by the end of the week. It has been a pleasure to serve, one he has really enjoyed, and a learning experience. He will miss Lewiston but is moving closer to his parents and so his parents can be part of his kid's lives. Mayor Carlson stated that Councilor Lavey will complete the month of October as a member of Council. He did not want to give earlier notice, as his house had not yet closed in Wisconsin. Mayor Carlson thanked Councilor Lavey for all he has done and said that Council will need to decide how his seat will be filled. Potentially, with the election, it might change how we deal with it. Do we wait until after the election to ask for applications? Maybe whoever gets the least number of votes (during the election) we could approach them to see if they wanted to take the shortened term of office. Some things to think about for next meeting. The budget meeting will take place after this meeting ends, with a different ZOOM link, and with a ten-minute break (so the expected start time will be 6:55pm).

Councilor Robertson motioned to adjourn the City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Lavey.

Approved 5-0.

The Council Meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 pm on October 14, 2020.

Submitted By:
Cheryl A. Knight
City Administrator/Clerk