

Lewiston City Council
Council Meeting Minutes
September 9, 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 September 9, 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, Erik Fredberg, Karina Patino from Flaherty and Hood, Bryan Holtz, Nick Ebnet, Hilman Speltz, Craig Porter and Lana from Plasticert, and Polly Calhoun.

4. Agenda- Changes and additions

Mayor Beth Carlson asked City Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Knight if the Fire Department items emailed today from Fire Chief Dahl were time sensitive and needed to be acted upon. There was a grant document and a purchase order, which were added as item 12.5.

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- August 26, 2020
- B. Emergency Council Meeting Minutes- August 31, 2020
- C. Accounts Payable

Councilor Robertson motioned to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 5-0.

- 6. Citizens' Concerns-** Hilman Speltz addressed Council regarding his water bill of \$2,965.87 dated 8/7/20. There was an underground water leak at his business, Lewiston Welding on south Fremont Street. This bill represents 20-25% of his profit for this year. Mayor Carlson stated that in the past a water leak that did not go down the sewer would have had the sewer portion of the bill forgiven, but not the water charges. Councilor Rupprecht agreed with Mayor Carlson that water charges are

not forgiven, as then the remaining customers are in effect paying the bill. Rupprecht suggested making a payment plan with the City Administrator and forgiving penalties so long as the payment plan is adhered to. Councilor Lavey had several questions on this matter.

Councilor Lavey motioned to forgive ¼ of the water bill. Motion died due to lack of a second.

Mayor Carlson again stated to Speltz to reach out the City Administrator for a payment plan. Nick Ebnet addressed Council in appreciation for the street rehab work done in his neighborhood. Elcor Construction was “top-notch” and were polite, well-mannered, and interactive with the kids. Ebnet hopes the City does work with them in the future. Kudos to Public Works Director Curt Benter who coordinated communicated with the residents. Also, Ebnet expressed his thanks to Councilor Rupprecht for his work done on the Cedar Park Tree Project.

7. Wage Study Presentation- Flaherty & Hood

Karina Patino, legal analyst with Flaherty & Hood, gave a presentation on the wage study. There was significant discussion following her presentation. Councilor Rupprecht requested a separate Council meeting to continue this discussion. Mayor Carlson will address this under Council concerns.

8. PUBLIC HEARING-Tax Increment Financing District @ 7PM- Mike Bubany

The hearing was started at 7:05pm, with a presentation by Mike Bubany. Property taxes will be used for the project (local manufacturer expansion). As property taxes increase, the taxes will be directed back to the project. Municipal district #1 is the entire City of Lewiston, while #2 indicates this is the second TIF district to be established for Plasticert, the first one being Riverside Electronics. The two tax parcels were identified, and no current jurisdiction will lose any tax amounts. Bubany further explained the documents in the packet. \$91,000 is the total amount to be potentially reimbursed to the developer. No questions or comments were received from the public. Mayor Carlson called three times for any comments or questions from the public on the Zoom call. There were no comments or questions made from the public. The public hearing was then closed 7:27pm.

9. Resolution 2020-23 Approving the Establishment of Tax Increment Financing District No. 1-2- Mike Bubany

Councilor Rupprecht motioned for approval of Resolution 2020-23, Approving the Establishment of Tax Increment Financing District No. 1-2 Within Municipal Development District No. 1 and Adoption of the Tax Increment Financing Plan Relating Thereto. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 5-0.

Bubany stated there also needed to be a motion and vote that authorizes the Mayor and the City Administrator to sign the development agreement.

Councilor Rupprecht motioned for authorization of the City Administrator Cheryl Knight and Mayor Beth Carlson to sign the Development Agreement. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 5-0.

Bubany stated the request for certification will be sent next spring to Winona County. The City will receive a final transcript of these documents.

10. Wastewater Treatment Plant Information and CIP- Bryan Holtz

Holtz stated that the wastewater treatment plant is approaching twenty years old. Holtz and others in his firm would like to perform a walk-through of the plant with James Creaghe, the PeopleService operator, and Curt Benter, the City's Public Works Director. This would be at no cost to the City and will then be able to address Council on the next 5-10 years of future needs for the wastewater treatment plant. Holtz is hoping to do this walk-through within the next couple weeks. A very rough estimate could be ready by the next meeting.

11. Ambulance Department Monthly Report- Matt Essig

Ambulance Director Matt Essig stated the report was in the packet. This August was the busiest month in the last six years and is only two calls behind the call volume from 2019. An EMR hybrid-style (some online, some in-person) class of 12 persons started up in August and will finish October 26, 2020. The truck committee hopes to bring information to Council in October regarding a truck purchase, possibly a work session. Essig requested to clarify some statements made regarding the CARES Act Funds from the Council discussion on August 26, 2020. Department heads were asked to bring a listing of needed/wanted/desired items to the personnel meeting for consideration-which is what he did. (Personnel was assigned from the main Council to create a recommendation as to how to spend these CARES funds.) Essig stated that even though items were coded under Ambulance, the other city departments can use the PPE, masks, etc., purchased under the ambulance department code. The electrostatic foggers purchased-one of which is at the school bus barn, can also be used across all departments. The ambulance department is a business-one that is owned by the City.

12. Police Department Monthly Report- Scott Yeiter

Police Chief Scott Yeiter stated the monthly report was in the packet. August was also the busiest month for the Police department. There was a theft of a dirt bike from the back of a pick-up parked on the street-they are still looking for leads. Yeiter agreed with Essig that items, although purchased by, and coded to the ambulance, are available for use by the police and fire departments which helps keep them all safe and healthy, and on the job.

12.5 Fire Department Items

Fire Chief Tim Dahl stated the Fire Department was awarded a \$5,000 matching grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The grant will be used to purchase 4 Motorola radios, with a quote dated 8/25/2020 of \$10,820.80. Civil defense budgeted funds (101-42500-581) of \$3,250 and the remainder from the Fire department funds (201-42200-581) will be used for the City portion of this expense. The city departments are all trying to upgrade their radios, as the current version is no longer being supported. The formal resolution to accept the grant and purchase the radios will be done at the next Council meeting.

Dahl also requested to purchase a hose tester that pressure tests the fire hose with a partial donation of \$1,000. The formal resolution for this item will also be at the next Council meeting.

13. City Administrator's Report- Cheryl Knight

13.1 Resolution 2020-24 Providing for the Execution of a Lease-Purchase Agreement

City Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Knight stated that Council approved the lease-purchase of a 2015 TV380 skid-steer at the last Council meeting. This resolution provides for the execution of the lease-purchase agreement with the finance company.

Councilor Rupprecht motioned for approval of Resolution 2020-24, Providing for the Execution of a Lease-Purchase Agreement. Seconded by Councilor Boynton. Approved 5-0.

14. COVID-19 Information and Updates-

Police Chief Yeiter stated there are 100+ cases recently in the City of Winona. He wonders why 10-15 cases in the City of Lewiston constitutes an "outbreak"? He will make an inquiry.

15. Additional Council Concerns

Councilor Boynton expressed her appreciation to Elcor Construction for the fine work they did in the neighborhood, and she is glad that the streets are now in good repair.

Councilor Lavey had further questions on the water leak situation from Speltz. Mayor Carlson explained that if the City forgave this expense, the City in effect would be paying this expense. Precedent is also that if water leaks happen, the sewer charges might be forgiven-but not the water charges. Lavey continued his questioning. Councilor Rupprecht requested that Councilor Lavey investigate and bring something back to Council to review.

Councilor Rupprecht stated a resolution is necessary to accept the funds from the Fischer Foundation for the Cedar Park tree project, as well as contacts to get the stumps removed and the new trees ordered.

Councilor Rupprecht reviewed meeting minutes from EDA and the City Council. He noted an error in the EDA 7/20 meeting minutes regarding annexation-it stated that there was acreage

“around the city” for annexation, and he said “within” the city, which he hopes will be corrected. Councilor Rupprecht had stated at previous council meetings that Chapter 8 could be deleted, when actually he meant Chapter 8, Part 1- Public Nuisances section. He regrets the error and thanked Chief Yeiter for bringing it to his attention.

Councilor Rupprecht had additional comments regarding the CARES act funds and EDA following his review of meeting minutes. Significant discussion followed.

Mayor Carlson had two items on her list of topics for further discussion by the Council: the pay equity study, and the CARES act. Discussion was held.

Councilor Lavey motioned to complete the market study as part of the pay equity study through Flaherty and Hood at a cost of \$3,000. Motion died due to lack of a second.

Decision made to hold the pay study discussion on September 15, 2020 at 6:00pm, and the CARES act on September 17, 2020 at 6:00pm. City Administrator Knight will contact the Flaherty and Hood representative to check on availability for the 15th, and if not, will notify Council and swap the dates around. Further discussion brought up that the CARES study should be held on September 15, 2020 as it relates to possible discussion to be relayed to the Lewiston Chamber of Commerce meeting on September 16, 2020.

Mayor Carlson stated we will adjourn this meeting and use the separately stated ZOOM link for budget.

Councilor Boynton motioned to adjourn the City Council meeting. Seconded by Mayor Carlson.

Approved 5-0.

The Council Meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:01 pm on September 9, 2020.

Submitted By:
Cheryl A. Knight
City Administrator/Clerk