

## **Fertile City Council Minutes October 10, 2022**

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, October 10, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were Mayor Daniel Wilkens, and Council members Todd Wise, Amanda Bosman, and Mary Kiefert. Also present was City Administrator Lisa Liden, Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fertile Fire Department members Wolfe Clarke, Jeff Haaven, Cory Ystenes, Eli Clarke, and Tim Oistad, and Twylla Altepeter with the Fertile Journal. Arriving later at the meeting were Paul Reese and Father Larry Delaney representing St. Joseph's Church.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkens at 6:30 p.m. and began with those present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Under agenda approval Mayor Wilkens asked to add discussion of an airport courtesy car and insulating the City shop to the agenda. Administrator Liden asked to add the estimate for a Summit Avenue water main extension and Community Center rehab estimates. The agenda was approved as amended on a motion by Council member Wise that was seconded by Council member Kiefert and was carried.

There were no public comments.

The minutes of the September 12, 2022 regular meeting and the September 12, 2022 and September 14, 2022 special meetings were approved as presented on a motion by Council member Kiefert, seconded by Council member Bosman and carried.

City Administrator Lisa Liden gave the Treasurer's Report. Liden went over the out of the ordinary deposits and checks for the month of September. Under the deposits Liden noted that the only out of the ordinary receipts were \$33,425 for fire department equipment, and \$23,615.29 for fire aid. Under the check listing Liden noted the checks to the League of MN Cities and the MN Association of Small Cities for annual dues. Noted also were the checks to Fertile Oil for airport fuel, Barry Wilkens for hauling the new batwing mower, the check for \$30,000 for the fire department to deposit in their savings for a new truck, and the check to LPL Financial for the fire department pension account in the same amount as was received for fire aid. The balance sheet, profit and loss, and budget to actual reports were also reviewed.

The Treasurer's Report and Bills were approved on a motion by Council member Wise that was seconded by Council member Bosman and was carried.

Mayor Wilkens asked to move ahead on the agenda to address the request that the Fire Department members were there to make. Wolfe Clarke, representing the fire department, explained that the department was working on financing the purchase of a new fire truck. He noted that the cost of new trucks was rapidly rising and they had been saving money for a few years towards the purchase of a new truck, so they would like to make the purchase as soon as possible. Clarke also noted that the newest truck in their current fleet was 20 years old, and that it was hard to certify the trucks and harder to get FEMA grants if all of the trucks were more than 20 years old.

Clarke went on to explain that the truck cab and chassis would be available to purchase in January of 2023 and the additional work on the truck would take place in the fall and early winter of 2023. The department currently had enough money saved for the down payment and the first two years of payments. They would like to finance the truck for 15 years with an annual payment of almost \$35,000 with the first payment coming due in January of 2023.

They had researched the available options for financing the purchase and had learned that warrants at the bank were no longer available. They had also researched municipal financing companies and had contacted Community Leasing Partners out of Kansas and they had put together a proposal for consideration. Since the fire department was a city department, the City would have to be the borrower on the loan, so the department representatives were at the meeting to ask if Council would approve providing the financing on the loan.

Mayor Wilkens explained that he and Administrator Liden had met with members of the fire department the previous week and they had gone over the department's financial information and that showed that the department would be able to make the annual payments with no problem. Wilkens also noted that the City was quite fortunate to have such a fine fire department and that he was quite proud of the service that they provide to the City and the surrounding area. He ended by noting that he was in favor of granting the request.

A motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the City applying for the financing for the new fire truck. The motion was seconded by Council member Kiefert and was carried.

Public Works Director Kevin Nephew then asked the fire department if they had any plans to upgrade the generator that was located behind the shop. Wolfe Clarke responded that they currently didn't have any plans to do that. Nephew went on to explain that there had been some electrical work done in the shop and that the fire department's electricity came through the shop. With the work that was done, the meter panel for the generator had been removed so he was wondering if it needed to be replaced in the near future.

Mayor Wilkens then inquired about the fire department partnering with the City to get a new generator installed that would provide backup electricity to the fire department, City shop, and community center. Wolfe Clarke noted that the City and fire department should work together as an emergency management team and that plans could be made for getting a generator. Administrator Liden noted that the Emergency Management Committee was formally appointed each January and that the Committee consisted of City, fire department and County EMS representatives.

The first item up under department reports was the airport. Mayor Wilkens explained that the Learning Center currently owns a van that is rarely used. He proposed that the City get the van titled in the City's name and then have it available at the airport as a courtesy car. The van currently has Learning Center information painted on it, but that a door magnet saying airport courtesy car could be purchased to go over the Learning Center information. The van could also be made available for Learning Center use when needed. Administrator Liden noted that she had emailed about the cost of insurance on the van, but that she had not yet heard back with a price quote.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Bosman and seconded by Council member Wise to approve getting the van titled in the City's name if the Learning Center approves it. The motion was carried.

Next, since there were two representatives present at the meeting regarding the bill for the water line to St. Joseph's, that matter was moved ahead in the agenda to address. Paul Reese explained that he had been present at the Council meeting in 2015 when there was discussion on the City bringing water to the new church location just east of City limits. He remembered at the time that the cost was estimated at \$40,000 and that there was possibly a grant for \$10,000 to cover part of the installation. He recalled also that the church had agreed to split the cost of the line with the City so the church would pay \$15,000. Reese also thought that the church had paid \$5,000 to the City as a down payment, but that he and Father Larry had looked through their records and couldn't find that the payment had been made. He apologized for that oversight.

Reese then went on to recall that there had also been discussion of possible water line looping in that area and since the looping was done in 2019, he was wondering if the church could get a break on the \$15,000 that they owed for the water main installation since that was half of the looping that was needed in that area. Council member Wise, Administrator Liden, and Public Works Director Kevin Nephew didn't recall any discussion of looping during the initial conversations with St. Joseph's about the cost of the water line. Liden and Nephew pointed out that the City had to get the looping done on that line only because of the St. Joseph's line. If that line had not been there, there would have been no need to loop in another main from the north end of 105<sup>th</sup> Ave.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wise to not give any cost concessions in regard to the St. Joseph's water line. The motion was seconded by Council member Kiefert and was carried.

For the City Engineer report Administrator Liden shared the cost estimate that Moore Engineering had provided for extending a water main down Summit Ave. SW to serve the JJ Hamre property as well as the Strem properties that were yet to be developed. Kevin Nephew noted that he had also spoken with Danny Strem about the possible water main and that Strem had noted there was already a well on site that could serve up to two building sites. The cost estimate for the water main was \$184,000 including a fair amount for contingencies. Given the high estimate, there would be no further action taken on the Summit Ave. watermain extension.

There were no reports submitted for Fair Meadow Nursing Home. Administrator Liden reported that Fair Meadow Administrator had noted that the year-end reports were still not closed out so there was nothing to report. Liden also noted that the Administrator's report had been sent that listed the starting and ending resident numbers for the month as well as the percentage capacity. Liden explained that she had forgotten to print it out and distribute it to Council.

After discussion of the matter of not having the monthly financial reports from the nursing home available for the meeting, a motion was made by Council member Bosman and seconded by Council member Wise that Council needed to have complete financial reports submitted for Fair Meadow every month.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Director was next to give his report. Mayor Wilkens asked if there had been any progress made on getting the cold side of the shop insulated before winter. Nephew replied that they had been busy with outside work and getting the rink boards up so they had not had time to do that yet. Nephew then reported that all the rink boards had been replaced after drilling approximately 5,000 holes in the metal frame supports. They had painted the edges, tops, and the bottoms of the wood that would be against the steel frame at the bottom. The plan was to let the wood cure until next summer and the rest of the boards would be painted. He noted that they caulked behind and in front at the bottom of the boards to stop leaks when the rink was flooded. This was followed by discussion on getting the shop insulated. Nephew then inquired about getting approval for the purchase of a more powerful hot jetter for thawing sewer lines and for other power washing needs. Chris Zimmel, the Public Works assistant had priced various units and the one that they were interested in would cost about \$13,000. Discussion was held on how much remained of the equipment budget for public works given the purchases that were already made this year. Discussion was held also on the two mowers that the City owned that were no longer needed after the purchase of the 15-foot batwing mower.

A motion was made by Council member Wise to list the Kuhn and Whistler Cutter mowers with Resource Auction and to table the matter of the pressure jetter until the mowers were sold. The motion was seconded by Council member Kiefert and was carried.

The addition to the Learning Center shop was the next item up for discussion. Mayor Wilkens had gotten quotes from Aaron Swenby for the concrete and Kyle Solie for the construction of the addition. With the materials quote from the Fertile Building Center, the total cost of the addition would be just over \$42,200. Mayor Wilkens added that he was hoping to get the concrete poured yet this fall if at all possible. Council member Kiefert asked whether there was money in the budget for the building addition this year and Administrator Liden answered that there was \$75,000 budgeted for capital improvements to buildings this year and that only a small portion had been spent.

A motion was made by Council member Kiefert to approve the quotes for the shop addition and to proceed with construction. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

The City Administrator's report was briefly reviewed with Administrator Liden noting that there was additional Truth in Taxation paperwork that was now required to be sent in to the County with the Preliminary Levy and Budget meeting information. Liden explained that the new report was similar to the summary budget report that was due to the State in January each year and it required grouping expenses and revenues into summary categories for reporting purposes. Liden also reported that she had worked with the bank on some fraudulent debit card purchases. The questionable activity was caught by the bank rather quickly and the debit card was shut down. The bank had assisted in getting refunds on two of the purchases and had refunded the account for two smaller purchases.

Under old business Administrator Liden gave an update on the community center project. She had handed out a new project list with estimates and the new list didn't include the parts of the project that Council had decided were not feasible or necessary at this time. Liden noted, however, that the engineers had left off the insulation of the walls and roof in the new list and that she would contact them to get it back on the list since it should have been included.

Under new business, the only item that remained was the approval of liquor licenses for 2023. Council member Kiefert inquired whether the licenses for 2023 would be the same ones as were approved and issued for 2022. Liden stated that the licenses would all be the same for the four establishments in Fertile.

A motion was made by Council member Kiefert to approve licenses for The Other Place, Fertile Wine and Spirits, Side Street Bar and Grill, and Erickson's Smokehouse for 2023. The motion was seconded by Council member Bosman and was carried.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 on a motion by Council member Kiefert.

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Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

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Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator