

Fertile City Council Minutes

August 12, 2019

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, August 12, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens, and Council members Todd Wise, Linda Widrig, Stanton Wang, and Reid Jensrud. Also present were City Administrator Lisa Liden, Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, and Twylla Altepeter from the Fertile Journal.

The meeting began with those present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda was approved on a motion by Council member Wise that was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

There were no public comments.

The minutes of the July 8th meeting were reviewed next. Mayor Wilkens noted that the word “old” should be added in reference to the skating rink in the first paragraph on page two. Then in the last paragraph on page two the words “to determine if that” should be inserted in the last sentence for it to make sense. Finally, Wilkens recommended adding Kevin Nephew’s first name to paragraph five on page three to provide clarity since there are many Nephew’s in the area.

The minutes as amended were approved on a motion by Mayor Wilkens that was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

City Administrator Lisa Liden next gave a brief overview of the financial statements and the out of the ordinary bills paid in July. Liden noted that the City had received the remainder of the first half of Local Government Aid in July and that the amount listed for MN Public Facilities was for reimbursement on funds paid out for the water project. In reviewing the checks for July, Liden noted the check to Sellin for the progress payment that was approved at July’s meeting. As well she noted the check to Short Elliott Hendrickson and explained that it was for services in planning and design for the lighting and runway projects. Further noted was a check to Northland Trust Services which Liden explained was payment for the Nursing Home Renovation Bond.

The Treasurer’s Report and Bills were approved on a motion by Council member Widrig that was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

The City Engineer was not present for the meeting but a written report had been submitted. The first item to be covered was Change Order #4 for the water project. Council member Jensrud questioned whether or not to pay the contractor for the heated sidewalk work in front of the church when it was the contractor who had broken the system when the old sidewalk was removed. Administrator Liden said that she would get in touch with Alex Ranz for clarification on that item.

A motion was then made by Council member Wise to table Change Order #4 until more information was provided. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

The next item up for discussion was pay request #5 for the water project. After a brief review, a motion was made by Council member Wise to approve payment. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

On the Engineer’s Report the next item up was the contract with Ulteig for the design of the RV campground to be located at the old skating rink site. Mayor Wilkens noted that he would like to see some sort of layout of the site to see if easy pull-in spots would be provided. Administrator Liden explained that the site design would be worked out in more detail once the work was under contract and the City would have final say in the end design.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the contract with Ulteig for the design, permits, and construction staking of the RV campground. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting gave her report to Council. Fair Meadow began the month of July with 38 residents and ended the month with 39, operating at 90.32% occupancy. They had also served 272 home delivered meals.

Leiting went over the financials for July and noted that the home and assisted living together showed a profit for the month of \$10,730. The home had a profit of \$17,848 and the assisted living showed a loss of \$7,118. The year to date profit and loss showed a combined profit of \$134,450 with the nursing home showing a profit of \$213,440 and the assisted living a loss of \$78,991. The loss for the assisted living was due to the fact that there were four vacant units for much of the summer. Leiting then went over the budget to actual report for the year to date.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Director, gave his report to Council. The first item up for discussion was the tarring quotes for street work that had been reviewed in July. Kevin noted that he would be getting a second quote in the morning so that the bidding requirements were met. He anticipated, however, that the second quotes would come in higher than the quotes received from Agassiz Asphalt considering the City wouldn't have to pay mobilization costs since Agassiz was already in town for the water project. Administrator Liden explained that Council could approve moving forward with the lowest quote so that the quotes could be accepted and the work begun when the asphalt crew was in town. Liden reported that the City Engineer also recommended that the mill and overlay would be sufficient for the streets under consideration and that a total rebuild was unnecessary at this time.

Council member Jensrud then commented that the City could cut the bill almost in half for the parking lot at the new skating rink if the whole lot was not paved. The lot is 28 feet deep and Jensrud said that if the paving was only twenty feet deep starting at the road then money could be saved on the asphalt. The remaining eight feet between the pavement and sidewalk could then be planted with grass. This was followed by a discussion on how much money would actually be saved by doing that and about snow removal in the winter being much easier with the full area paved.

After further discussion of the paving, a motion was made by Council member Wise to accept the low quotes on paving and to move forward on paving the new rink parking lot, East Main Street, Summit Avenue West, and Polk Avenue West as detailed in the quotes. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

Mayor Wilkens commented that the alleys in town were getting gravel and look really good. Kevin Nephew explained that sod in some alleys had to be cut back to get the alleys to their full width again. The sod would need to dry out and then get worked back into the alley before gravel was put down.

Kevin Nephew reported that the Case tractor was in for repairs again due to a hydraulic leak. Apparently the last time there was a leak the incorrect seal was put in so it started leaking again. Nephew felt that the work should be covered by warranty since there was a mistake made on the part of Titan. This was followed by a discussion on the street to Kent Freberg's duplex and the work that needed to be done to improve drainage. The auction of unused City property was also discussed. Administrator Liden noted that she had spoken with Tim Oistad and that he would get those items put on auction this fall. She then reported that she requested they list the old rink building for removal as soon as possible but that Tim Oistad had stated that buildings to be moved were hard to sell. Kevin Nephew stated that the City could try advertising the rink building in the paper and on Facebook to see if that could be taken care of before the rest of the items go on auction.

Council member Jensrud then asked if Kevin Nephew had done an inspection of the light poles after the one had blown over earlier this summer. Nephew stated that he and Dan Lene had looked at all the poles and that there were nine or ten that could use some work. He had spoken with Dean Johnson about welding some metal plates at the bottom of the poles where they were badly deteriorating due to sand and salt. This was followed by a discussion on whether to repair or replace the poles and what the costs would be for either option.

The next item for discussion was the street lights to be installed on the south end of town by the golf course. Downs was ready to go with getting those installed but boring was needed to get electricity to the west side of the highway. Kevin Nephew said that he would talk to KW Drilling about doing the boring since they were in town for the water project already. Discussion then moved on to getting the boring done to get lighting to the City signs on both ends of town. It would be best to get all three locations done at the same time.

Administrator Liden then gave the Administrator's Report. Liden noted that there had been a sewer back up during the fair and that she had worked with the League of MN Cities Insurance Trust in filing a claim. Last year there had been a backup in the same residence and at that time the City was not found liable. This time, however, since it was a repeat less than a year later, it was determined that the City was liable. Fortunately the damages were less than \$600 or so since the homeowner's basement was unfinished. This was followed by discussion on what preventative measures could be taken to avoid future backups.

Council member Jensrud then inquired about the new siding for the Community Center. Liden answered that the Building Center had been contacted and would hopefully be providing some cost information in the near future. Jensrud then asked about the weeds at the Learning Center. Mayor Wilkens explained that he was waiting for some chemical to come in and that he would spray once he had that. Jensrud then inquired about whether it was possible for the volunteers putting up the dasher board glass at the rink be paid something for their work. Mayor Wilkens replied that the City could look at doing something since it was many hours of heavy work involved.

Under the Learning Center, Mayor Wilkens reported that the Education Director Search Committee would be meeting soon to go over the job description for the position. As for the Master Plan, he reported that the Board was still waiting for information and materials from Jacob Mans.

Council member Wang gave the Fire Department report. They had answered five calls in July with one kitchen fire, a weather watch, a bale fire, a car accident and one false alarm.

For the Airport it was reported that the draft Zoning Ordinance was now in MnDOT's hands. Once it was approved there would be a public hearing scheduled. The lighting project would be started at the end of August.

The next item on the agenda was the Personnel Committee. Mayor Wilkens stated that he thought that the committee could use some outside help like was done for the Nursing Home Personnel Committee. Wilkens had spoken with Michelle Cote who serves on the FMNH Personnel Committee and asked if she would be willing to serve on the City's Personnel Committee. Cote had indicated that she would be willing to do that. Council member Widrig then questioned whether it would pose a conflict of interest having Michelle Cote on the committee since she was Council member Wang's mother-in-law and Administrator Liden is Wang's sister. Mayor Wilkens responded that he didn't believe that would be a conflict of interest since Liden was not related to Michelle Cote.

This was followed by a discussion on the composition of the Personnel Committee and bringing in non-Council members who had personnel experience. Council member Jensrud who also serves on the Personnel Committee said that if outside help was needed that Mayor Wilkens should reach out to April Grunhovd who has personnel experience and is a resident of Fertile. The appointment of Michelle Cote to the committee was tabled until the next meeting to give Mayor Wilkens time to reach out to April Grunhovd.

A motion was made by Council member Jensrud and seconded by Council member Wise to adjourn the regular meeting for the purpose of a Public Hearing. Dustin Kalinoski had applied for a variance to put a patio on the west side of his house. The north edge of the patio would line up with the existing garage which was five feet off the north property line. The required side yard setback is 10 feet so a variance was required. Administrator Liden had published notice of the hearing and also mailed notice to all property owners within 350 feet. No objections were made regarding the variance.

A motion was made by Council member Jensrud to close the public hearing and reconvene the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

A motion to approve the variance request for Dustin Kalinoski was made by Council member Wise, seconded by Council member Jensrud and carried.

The next item up for discussion under old business was the ice resurfacers for the skating rink. Administrator Liden said that she had been in touch with Chris Michaels who works with the Olympia dealership and repairs their units. Michaels had said that if we want the machine gone over and repairs made that it would have to be hauled down to his shop located south of the cities. Liden had also inquired about possibly trading in the City's ice resurfacers for a newer, smaller unit but Michaels didn't have any available for sale at the moment. He had, however, given contact information for another dealer in Canada so Liden had contacted them and received a listing of their current units including pricing. Liden had also inquired with them regarding a potential trade in but had received no response.

Council member Jensrud then asked if someone could come to Fertile to look at the machine and make repairs in order to avoid transporting it so far. Liden explained that she had asked about that option and was told that the service call would be between \$1,000 and \$1,500 just to come look at it. Depending on the repairs needed, it would most likely still have to be hauled to their shop where the proper tools and parts were located.

After further discussion of the matter a motion was made by Council member Jensrud to make arrangements to haul the resurfacers down to be repaired. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

A temporary liquor license application for St. Joseph's Hoe Down was the next item up on the agenda. A motion was made by Council member Wang to approve the application for the license. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

The next items on the agenda were two new policies for consideration. Administrator Liden explained that Mayor Wilkens had asked Liden to research policies on key holders and security cameras after the League training that the Council had received in June. There were no "model" policies of either type available so the sample policies that were in the packets were derived from combining the language from policies that Liden found online for other cities, universities, or libraries.

When discussing the key holder policy, Council member Widrig stated that the Community Center locks should be rekeyed if there was a concern about outstanding keys. This led to a discussion on whether or not all the City buildings should be rekeyed in the event that there are unknown duplicate keys that the City doesn't know about. Council member Wise then recommended having all keys stamped with "do not duplicate." Council member Wang added that not all stores honor the do not duplicate on keys and that it would still be pretty easy for anyone to get duplicates made, especially out of town.

After further discussion of the matter a motion was made by Council member Jensrud to rekey all the City buildings and have all new keys stamped with "do not duplicate." The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

A motion was made by Council member Jensrud to approve the key and camera policies as presented in the Council packets. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m. on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Widrig.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator