**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday January 9, 2023**

**6:00 pm**

**Verndale City Hall**

**101 Brown St SW**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Ardith Carr, Tara Erckenbrack, Daryl Jacobson, Jim Runyan, Brad Cottrell

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:**  Cory Carr, Police Chief; Matt Uselman, Public Works Manager; Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer

**STAFF ABSENT**: Michael Madsen, Fire Chief;

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Robin Fish, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bartlett Township; Jeannie Mayer, Verndale School; Steve Schmitz, Verndale Fire Department; Amos Self

**OPENING PRAYER:** The opening prayer was led by Robin Fish, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bartlett Township.

**APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBER TO FILL VACANCY:**

A motion was made by Jacobson to appoint Ardith Carr as a Council Member to fill the vacancy left by Anthony Stanley, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**OATH OF OFFICE**: Ardith Carr and Brad Cottrell were sworn in as Council Members.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND JANUARY PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve the December 12, 2022 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the December 12, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes and the December 19, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve the January payables in the amount of $50,766.14, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS:** Self thanked the Council for all their work on the Sidewalk Ordinance.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – MIKE MADSEN-FIRE CHIEF-** Schmitz stated that approval was needed for the officers.

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A motion was made by Runyan to approve the officers as follows: Fire Chief – Mike Madsen; First Assistant Chief – Steve Schmitz; Second Assistant Chief/Training Officer – Louis Wegscheid; First Captain – Nate Witthuhn; Second Captain – Tyler Fisher; Lieutenant – Keith Weiher; Safety Officer – Eric Anderson; Secretary – Ryan Schmitz, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Schmitz stated that they will be applying for the FEMA grant again this year as they were denied last year. Schmitz stated that the grant would be used to replace their #1 Engine and requires a 5% match.

**POLICE-CHIEF CARR-** Chief Carr submitted his letter of resignation effective Feb. 8, 2023.

Chief Carr asked Council if he should post the opening for the Chief position. Erckenbrack stated that a Committee has been formed and they will get together to see what the City needs, what the options are and how to move forward as a community. Chief Carr stated that it’s possible that a deputy at the Sheriff’s Office would be willing to step in as CLEO (Chief Law Enforcement Officer) while the City is discussing and figuring things out.

A motion was made by Council Member Carr to accept the resignation of Cory Carr as the Chief of Police, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated that there was a net loss of $4,076.97 for the month. Current stated that there was an increase in sales from 2021 in the amount of $3,615.82. Current stated that there was a net profit for the year in the amount of $43,429.43. Current stated that meat raffles are taking place on Fridays at 6:30 pm. Current stated that Liquor Inventory was completed on 1/1/23.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that it’s time to vote for their favorite Water Week poster. Uselman stated that in May the 4th grade classes will come out to the Treatment Plant for a tour. Uselman stated that Insurance will be paying $1,164.20 after the $250 deductible for the stolen tailer. Uselman asked for this money to be set aside for a future trailer purchase. Council agreed. Uselman stated that the City is still technically in a drought after receiving 3.02 inches of moisture in December. Erckenbrack asked if there was a start time for the construction of the new water and sewer building. Uselman stated that once the ground thaws, they will strip the black dirt and the concrete guy will set up the grade and then sand will be brought in. Uselman stated that it will then get leveled off and they will finish it. There was discussion about building a storm shelter as the current maintenance building serves as a storm shelter and it will be sold once everything is moved. Self stated that they are looking into a storm shelter at Family Life Church as well.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current requested approval to transfer $33,880.05 from the Sewer Money Market account and $2,900.95 from the Water Money market account to the General Fund Checking Account for a total of $36,781.00 to pay the Northland Trust loan.

A motion was made by Carr to approve transferring $33,880.05 from the Sewer Money Market Account and $2,900.95 from the Water Money Market Account to the General Fund Checking Account for a total of $36,781.00 to pay the Northland Trust loan, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

Current stated that Audit work will be starting soon as the audit needs to be completed by March 31, 2023. Current stated that there is a public hearing on Jan. 23 at 6 pm for the wheeled loader grant.

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Current stated that State Statute requires her to certify tax collections and other income to the Council for the previous three years; the report is available for review.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 23-0109 – 2023 Fee Schedule

There was discussion about changing the amounts for water/sewer deposits. Council decided to change the Renter to $150.00 and the Property Owner to $50.00. There was discussion about how many people could be buried in a lot in the Cemetery. Uselman stated that record keeping would get complicated if more than 8 people were allowed to be buried in a Full lot.

A motion was made by Carr to approve Resolution 23-0109 – 2023 Fee Schedule with the changes discussed, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

1. Resolution 23-0109A – Resolution Accepting a Donation from the Verndale Lions

A motion was made by Runyan to approve Resolution 23-0109A – Resolution Accepting a Donation from the Verndale Lions in the amount of $10,251.29 for the Verndale Lions Building Fund, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

1. Consideration of 2023 Appointments and Committee Assignments

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve the 2023 Appointments and Committee Assignments, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

1. Audit Engagement Letter

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve the 2022 Audit Engagement Letter from Brady Martz, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

Mayor Erckenbrack adjourned the meeting at 6:48 pm.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Tara Erckenbrack, Mayor