**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday June 8, 2020**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Verndale City Hall**

**101 Brown St SW**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  James Ackerson, Ardith Carr, Tara Erckenbrack, Raye Ludovissie, Jim Runyan

**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:** Clif Allen, Moore Engineering; Amos Self, Family Life Church; Robin Fish, Kimberly Rife

**OPENING PRAYER:** The opening prayer was led by Amos Self, Family Life Church.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND JUNE PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Carr to approve the May 11, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve the June payables in the amount of $11,822.32, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS**

**Kim Rife – Gas Station:** Rife stated that she is looking at buying the Shell Station and running it as a sister store to Rife’s in Sebeka. Rife stated that they are looking at putting $120,000 to $130,000 into the store to rebrand it. Ackerson asked if she was going to have a grocery store in it. Rife stated that she wants to get the store up and running and then that would be her next project. Rife asked for input on whether to keep the car wash, have bulk bait, or have a liquor selection. Rife stated that she hasn’t gotten a quote yet to make it a touchless car wash but was quoted $300,000 to build one for the store in Sebeka. Council advised her not to pursue carrying liquor as the City had a Liquor Store on Highway 10 and it didn’t do well. Erckenbrack stated that she would like to see the car wash stay as there aren’t many around. Carr stated that having bulk bait would be a good idea as a lot of fishermen would stop there before going down County Road 23. Rife stated that she is planning to rebrand the store as Marathon and sell Hot Stuff pizza. Rife asked who owned the land right behind the station. Ludovissie stated the County. Rife stated that she is going to try to write a grant through MN Power to get solar power and car charging stations there. Ackerson asked what the hours would be. Rife stated that it varies; in

the winter the hours would probably be 6:00 am to 9:00 pm and during the summer the hours

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would probably be 5:00 am to 10:00 pm. Rife asked the Council to consider a 5-year tax abatement. Ludovissie stated that that would need to go through the EDA and have them make a recommendation and then go from there. Ludovissie stated that an EDA meeting would need to be scheduled. Rife stated that she would like to get the purchase accepted by the end of the week and then she is pushing to have the store open by the end of July. Rife stated that she doesn’t want to open the store until it has been rebranded.

**Clif Allen - Moore Engineering:** Allen stated that he has three (3) action items. Allen recommended approval of Partial Pay Estimate #16 for Eagle Construction.

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve Partial Pay Estimate #16 in the amount of $82,540.69 for Eagle Construction, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC

Allen recommended signing the Certificate of Substantial Completion for Eagle Construction. Allen stated that there is a punch list of little things that need to be fixed.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve signing the Certificate of Substantial Completion for Eagle Construction, seconded by Erckenbrack. AIF/MC

A motion was made by Carr to approve paying the Moore Engineering Invoice in the amount of $31,479.00, seconded by Erckenbrack. AIF/MC

Allen stated that they ended up hiring a different reviewer from the State Historic Preservation Office. Allen stated that the critical path item is the quiet title action. Ackerson asked if it was still quiet. Current stated yes, she had talked to the attorney to get an update and he said he was going to send over the title opinion but he had concerns about all of the different owners. Current stated that she hasn’t received anything yet.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – MIKE MADSEN-FIRE CHIEF-** Ludovissie stated that Madsenwasn’t here.Ludovissie stated that there were 11 calls for the month; 6 medical calls and 5 fire.

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated that there was a Net Loss of $1,761.41 for the month. Current stated that the Liquor Store opened on June 1 for outdoor seating only and the bar seemed to do pretty well considering. Current stated that starting on June 10 the bar can be open for indoor seating up to 50% capacity. Erckenbrack asked if the Liquor Store normally operates at 50%. Current stated pretty much. Carr stated that the capacity is what the Fire Marshall says. Ludovissie asked if the Liquor Store is still trying to get bartenders. Current stated yes, an ad ran in the paper and there was no response. Ludovissie suggested running the ad again. Erckenbrack stated that the ad could be posted on Facebook. Current stated Sunday sales will need to be looked at to see if they are profitable for the Summer.

Erckenbrack asked about looking at sales and hours in general to see if adjustments need to made such as opening later. Ludovissie stated that there will be fireworks on July 25; that might be the

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celebration all together.

**POLICE-CORY CARR-POLICE CHIEF-** Council liked the nuisance reports.Ludovissie asked what was going to be done to the properties that didn’t clean up their yards when letters were sent. Chief Carr stated that that is what he needs to know; he can issue City admin tickets for $65.00. Council agreed to that idea. Ludovissie asked about all the campers in town. Chief Carr stated that it all comes down to how many units they have in their yard. Current stated that the zoning ordinance says that they are a permitted use for up to 60 days; they just need to come and get a permit. Chief Carr stated that it’s hard to know who is living in their camper when residents have family come up from out of town; there’s not a way to draw a line. Uselman stated that if residents have family come and stay for more than 14 days, it’s a temporary structure so they need to come and get a permit and that lasts for 60 days. Current asked if Council wanted to change the ordinance so that temporary structures are allowed for 30 days instead of 60. Council stated yes. Runyan asked to be filled in on the chicken deal. Current stated that the City currently doesn’t have an Ordinance about chickens. Uselman stated that Council talked about an Ordinance a couple years ago but decided to wait until chickens became a problem. Council agreed to have an ordinance made for chickens that allow up to five chickens in a fenced in yard or in a coop (no free-range chickens). No roosters would be allowed and a permit would be required. If the chickens are in a fenced yard, the fence cannot be made of chicken wire it needs to conform to the fencing guidelines in the zoning ordinance. Chief Carr stated that the squad car is half done; it’ll be about a month before it’s completely done.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that a new wellhead protection plan will need to be written since the City has a new well and removed a well. Ludovissie asked who writes the plan. Uselman stated that engineering firms do, MN Rural Water has a lady in Alexandria that does a really good job. Uselman stated that this will need to be budgeted for next year. Uselman stated that the quote from West Central for cameras includes a one-time fee of $1,624.90 and a monthly fee of $52.10. Uselman stated that this would cover all four sides of the outside of the building.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the quote from West Central Telephone in the amount of $1,624.90 for initial set up and $52.10 monthly for cameras at the Water Treatment Plant, seconded by Ackerson. Voting in favor were: Ackerson, Carr, Erckenbrack and Ludovissie. Runyan was opposed. MC

Ludovissie asked if there are alarms if someone breaks in. Uselman stated that there are door alarms. Erckenbrack asked if Uselman had access to the cameras. Uselman stated that he has access to them on his phone. Uselman stated that he didn’t receive any quotes for the sidewalk work. Uselman stated that he has a contractor that is interested, he’s just really busy; he wouldn’t be able to get to them until Fall. Uselman stated that the City took delivery of the street sweeper. Uselman stated that an ad will be in the paper this week for selling the old one.

Uselman stated that sealed bids would be accepted. Runyan asked if there was some place he could get this out so that if another City wants it, they could put in a bid. Uselman stated yes, he was thinking of putting it on the MN Rural Water site. Uselman asked if the City should sell it

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to the highest bidder. Ludovissie stated that if it’s an unreasonable bid, he wouldn’t want to. Current stated that the bids would be opened on June 22. Council agreed that they would talk about the bids at the public hearing that is set for June 22 at 4:30 pm. Uselman stated that the Bar remodel is almost complete; flashing along the north roof line against the grocery store wall is needed. Uselman stated that he sent out nine (9) grass letters. Uselman stated that the City received a Certificate of Commendation from the MPCA in recognition of exceptional compliance with MPCA in 2019. Uselman asked when to have an open house for the Treatment Plant. Ludovissie suggested having it the same day and time that the Firemen have their pancake feed.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current requested approval to move $17,009.88 from the General Fund Money Market – Street Equipment to the General Fund Checking account for the purchase of the street sweeper.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve transferring $17,009.88 from the General Fund Money Market-Street Equipment account to the General Fund Checking account for the purchase of the street sweeper, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC

Current stated that Ackerson, Erckenbrack and Ludovissie are up for re-election and the Affidavit of Candidacy runs from July 28 to August 11, 2020. Current stated that the auditors have been working on the audit and should be ready to present at the July meeting. Current stated that she won’t be able to get certified this year because they cancelled the Clerk’s Institute so she’ll have to wait until next year.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 20-0608 – Donation to Greenlawn Cemetery

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve Resolution 20-0608 – A Resolution accepting a Donation to Greenlawn Cemetery from Lyndon McClure in the amount of $200.00 for perpetual care, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 pm, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Raye Ludovissie, Mayor