

Watson City Council Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2023

Present Mayor: Todd Tongen. Council Members: Todd Vogel, Carter Lokken, Nathan Jordahl, Cheryl Bjornstad City. Clerk: Alan Marohl. Autumn Lee and One Resident.

Mayor Tongen called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Add Special Meeting Minutes for approval

Add Firehall, Vehicle Tab Fee, Resolution 12-13-22-1, and Park Grants to Old Business

Add Vehicles at Highland apartments to Maintenance Report

Motion to approve the agenda with additions by Tongen, 2nd Vogel m/s/p unanimously.

Motion to approve October 10th, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes by Vogel, 2nd Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

Motion to approve the November 9th, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes by Vogel, 2nd Bjornstad m/s/p unanimously.

Financial Report:

- Cash Balances

Motion to approve monthly claims by Tongen, 2nd Vogel m/s/p unanimously.

Motion to use \$7,000.00 of the Street Maintenance Savings for the cost of demolition at 330 2nd St by Vogel, 2nd by Lokken m/s/p unanimously.

- Utilities – Delinquent accounts were sent disconnection notices.

Old Business:

- Ben Schrupp – Request for Variance Extension – No reasons were made to deny Ben’s request.

Motion to approve Ben Schrupp’s Variance Extension for one year ending November 14th, 2024 and that a new variance must be granted if construction is not completed by the extension ending date by Vogel, 2nd Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

- Harvest Festival – Ideas and options discussed: Canyon Cowboys for a band. The city of Madison has an off-sale trailer available for rent. The company Inflatables4Fun has bouncy houses and recreational activities. A few local food trucks were suggested. And prairie five might be able to provide a bus service to take people between Montevideo and Watson.
- Firehall – Council would like to start advertising the firehall for rent. There is however old equipment left inside the building. Alan will contact the firefighter’s attorney and find out who will own the equipment after the contract expires.
- Vehicle Tab Fee – Alan spoke with the city attorney about the possibility of adding an expired tab fee on resident utility bills. Unless the fee is utility related, the fee is not legal. It may be possible to use a nuisance ordinance to impose a fee. But the attorney does not have an answer for that yet.

- Resolution 12-13-22-1 – Ed Lipinski’s interim use permit was reviewed to ensure he is complying with the rules in regards to the outdoor storage of unlicensed vehicles. Because Ed has the vehicles behind a fence and are out of public view, it was decided that he is in compliance with the interim use permit.
- Park Grants – Tongen suggested the city begin searching for playground grants. Autumn Lee also brought up that the Watson Lions Club could work with the city and help find additional grants. Council will begin looking at park equipment to have a better idea at what the city can afford.

New Business:

- Residential Storage Containers – A resident was interested in placing a storage container on their residential property for long term use. However, council agreed that the ordinance Watson has in place is meant for temporary use only.
- Resolution 11-14-23-1 Voting Funds – Chippewa county is requesting that they keep the funds received from the secretary of state for voting equipment.

Motion to approve resolution 11-14-23-1 by Tongen, 2nd Vogel m/s/p unanimously.

- Resolution 11-14-23-2 Certification of Unpaid Water Charges to property Tax Roll

Motion to approve resolution 11-14-23-2 by Tongen 2nd Vogel m/s/p unanimously.

Maintenance Report:

- Vehicles at Highland Apartments – Residents living at the apartments are parking their cars on the street rather than the parking lot. This will cause issues during the winter for the snowplows. Watson would have to pay for the towing and impound fees, as it does not currently have its own lot. Alan will ask the attorney about using parking tickets to offset the costs of towing.

City Clerk Report:

- Council Attendance – No changes were made to the attendance sheet. Checks will be handed out at the December meeting.
- Performance Review – Alan Marohl’s annual performance review will be held at a closed meeting on December 12th.
- Blighted Property Grants – Alan was informed by the county auditor that grants for dilapidated buildings may become available sometime during 2024. Watson could likely benefit from this grant considering there are multiple blighted properties in town.
- AMKO Services – AMKO is offering to create a capital improvements project (CIP) or do a rate analysis for Watsons utilities. A CIP would help budget for large expenses and create a guide for future councils. Council was willing to listen to an AMKO advisor at a following meeting.

Public Comments:

Meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

City Clerk, Alan Marohl