

Watson City Council Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2024

Present Mayor: Todd Tongen. Council Members: Todd Vogel, Carter Lokken, Nathan Jordahl, Cheryl Bjornstad. City Clerk: Alan Marohl. Kevin Ketelsen with the UMRDC. Stephanie Weick with the Chippewa County Sheriff's Department. Autumn Lee. One Resident.

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

Add Fire Extinguisher to maintenance report.

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

Motion to approve January 9th, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes by Vogel, 2nd Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

Financial Report:

- Cash Balances – Alan will bring new rate schedules for CD's.

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

- Utilities – Delinquent accounts were sent disconnection notices.

Old Business:

- Harvest Festival – Harvest Festival items were discussed with Autumn Lee who will be organizing the committee. Regular bingo will be replaced with cow patty bingo. Kayla Daniels was suggested as another option for the band. The committee will start by setting a budget to determine how many fundraisers are needed. Alan will check what the last year's Harvest Festival total cost was.
- Park/Grant – Once the park committee begins meeting, they will establish a timeline and estimate how much money will need to be raised for the park equipment. Council looked at the Jelly Bean Rubber Mulch sample and a flyer for engraved garbage cans.
- Fee Schedule Ordinance 2024-1 – Alan went over items 15 and 28. Bjornstad asked to have the wording in 15 changed for better clarity on what the fee was referring to.
- Water and Sewer Charges – Watson may continue to charge a sewer base fee to vacant properties as long as the amount and when it applies is defined in the fee schedule.

New Business:

- Resolution 2-13-24-1 Hazard Mitigation – Kevin Ketelsen was present to finish the process of submitting Watson's hazard mitigation plan. This will allow Watson to seek funding from FEMA in the event of a disaster. Kevin will also send information to Alan about possible grants for a storm shelter.

Motion to approve resolution 2-12-24-1 by Tongen, 2nd by Vogel m/s/p unanimously.

- Resolution 2-13-24- Sewer Replacement Reserve Fund

Motion to approve resolution 2-13-24-2 by Tongen, 2nd by Vogel m/s/p unanimously.

- TV for Community Center – It was suggested to purchase a TV for the Watson community center. A TV would make the center more appealing to people who might rent the building and could be used at meetings to view informational videos. After Alan went over the costs for each size of TV, council agreed on purchasing a 55-inch TV and wall mount to go with it.

Motion to purchase a smart television and mounting system between \$500.00 and \$700.00 by Vogel, 2nd Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

- Utility Late Fee – Tongen proposed that the utility late fee amount be examined as the current 10 percent was too high. For comparison, Montevideo’s late fee is \$5.00 per month. Council considered a few different numbers, but decided that a \$5.00 fee per month is reasonable while still giving incentive to pay on time.
- Additional Liability Insurance – The League of MN cities insurance is offering an additional one million dollars in liability coverage for \$1,200.00 extra to the yearly premium. Council wants to meet with the insurance agent before making a decision.

Maintenance Report:

- Parking Tickets – The attorney recommended that whoever issues parking tickets be an employee of the City, so they are covered by the City’s insurance. However, Alan mentioned that it might be simpler if Brad Tollakson were responsible for the tickets. Council agreed and will have Alan ask Brad if he is interested.
- Speed Limit Signs – One of the options for the remaining safety aid money was a digital speed limit sign for the highway going through Watson. Their prices range from about \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00 each. Alan had asked MNDOT if they had funds to help purchase these signs but they currently do not. Alan will continue to search for other funding sources to help purchase these signs.
- Fire Extinguishers - Watson had its fire extinguishers checked by Monte Fire & Safety. Four fire extinguishers will need to be replaced and two new ones purchased for the fire hall.

Motion to use the town hall improvement funds and the Christmas decoration funds to pay for the new fire extinguishers by Vogel, 2nd by Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

City Clerk Report:

- Filing Cabinets – Alan requested a new filing cabinet as his current ones are nearly full.

Motion let Alan buy a five-drawer file cabinet for the office by Vogel, 2nd by Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

- MCFOA – Alan and Council looked over the MCFOA schedule of events. Council determined it would be beneficial for Alan to attend the conference again this year.

Motion to send Alan to the MCFOA conference for the Wednesday and Thursday classes by Vogel, 2nd by Bjornstad m/s/p unanimously.

- Code of Conduct & Statement of Values – This item was moved to the closed meeting.

Public Comments:

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

City Clerk, Alan Marohl