

Watson City Council Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2022

Present: Mayor: Todd Tongen Council Members: Carter Lokken, Nathan Jordahl, Cheryl Bjornstad, Todd Vogel City Clerk: Nicole Koenen. Autumn Lee with Sunshine and Whiskey Filling Station, and Pastor Linda Estling with Immanuel Lutheran Church were also present.

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

Resolution 2-8-22-1 was added to New Business, Pump Repair was added to Maintenance Report, and Community Pantry was added under City Clerk Report.

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

Motion to approve January 11th, 2022 Council Meeting Minutes by Vogel, 2nd Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

Special Guest Autumn Lee with Sunshine and Whiskey Filling Station

Autumn was present to discuss plans to upgrade the station's current pumps with an E15 option, add a diesel tank/dispenser to the west side of the station, add above ground storage tanks, potentially remove underground tanks, 8x8 control shed, add an addition to the store, and add a rear door. A grant application for the E15 fuel portion is being pursued and has a deadline of March 17th. Council asked questions regarding the size, position, and regulations regarding the fuel tanks. Autumn explained the MPCA requirements for above ground tanks of this size. Underground lines will need to be put in and would be 3-4 feet deep. The lines would be crossing over the city's sewer line, but should have no issues. The lot where tanks are being proposed is next to a residential property. Zoning ordinance states that a fence or vegetation screening will need to put along the adjacent lot line. Council asked Autumn to discuss the fence with the adjacent property owner. A building permit will be needed for the project when the time comes, but the city did not see any issues for Autumn to move forward with the grant application.

Community Pantry

Pastor Linda Estling was present to discuss the community pantry she has been working on. An issue as to where it will be placed was discussed. Council suggested the city build a platform for the pantry and library to be placed at the back of the community center. The city will be adding a sidewalk from the parking lot to the office door. The platform will be placed along the sidewalk for easy access, but will not be done until spring. Nicole will inform residents of the pantry on the monthly utility billing.

Financial Report

- Cash Balances

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

- Utilities – Delinquent Accounts were sent disconnection notices. One account has set a payment plan of \$200 bi-weekly until the balance is paid in full.

Old Business

- Town Hall – A proposal was presented from Jodi Tongen. She would like to purchase or rent the building for her business. If the city decides to rent it, she would take over all expenses and would like to make upgrades to the building. If after she has made upgrades and the city decides to sell the building, she would like to be the first person to be able to purchase it. She is looking into grants to help her with the upgrade costs. Discussion followed. It was decided to table until she has heard if grant options have been approved or available.
- SCDP – December 2021 Update – An update was provided of current projects. The city of Watson has met its goal with 7 Owner-Occupied projects submitted. There are 3 pending and 4 approved to proceed to work.

New Business:

- Fee Schedule – Council looked over the fee schedule passed last year and determined no changes were needed.
- Committees – It was determined to leave the committees the same as last year. They are as follows: Personnel – Jordahl, Bjornstad, Bev Sailer. Redevelopment – Tongen, Vogel. Zoning – Jordahl, Vogel, Howard Flinn.

Harvest Fest – Nicole mentioned we should have a community club to help with the planning of a yearly festival as it is just too much work for one person. Council suggested sending a letter to residents asking for volunteers to form a community club and suggestions for planning. Council previously determined to hold the festival the 3rd weekend in September yearly. Concerns of restrictions due to the pandemic were also discussed.

- Insurance – An insurance appraiser came last week to inspect all city owned buildings. Nicole noticed the city does not have the Fire Department covered. After contacting our insurance agent, it was discovered that the Fire Fighters insurance covers the building and contents inside. Once we no longer have a contract with them, the building will need to be added to our policy.
- Resolution 2-8-22-1 Authorizing the Transfer of Funds from the City's Sewer Fund to the City's Sewer Replacement Reserve Fund.

Motion to approve made by Tongen, 2nd Vogel m/s/p unanimously

Maintenance Report

- Street Sweeping Agreement with MnDOT – The city received a letter with options to hire a contractor and be reimbursed for the costs of sweeping HWY 7 through the city. It was decided not to move forward with this.
- MVTL Rate Increase – The City received a letter stating they would be increasing their rates by 5% taking effect on February 28, 2022.
- Pump Repair – Byron noticed pump number one was making more noise than usual. Dakota Pump repair came to take a look and determined the shaft was broken. They took it back to their shop and will be back to repair next week. It is under warranty as this pump was replaced in August.

City Clerk Report

- Vacation Dates – Nicole will be gone April 7th – April 14/15th. The office will be closed.
- Resident Request – a Resident’s utility bill was higher due to a running toilet. They were not home for weeks as they had a medical emergency. They are requesting the city consider adjusting due to their unforeseen circumstances. Council discussed. The bill was \$60 higher than normal, they decided to adjust the bill by half of that amount.

Motion to adjust billing for resident made by Vogel, 2nd Bjornstad m/s/p unanimously

Meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

City Clerk, Nicole Koenen