

# Watson City Council Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2021

Present: Mayor: Todd Tongen Council Members: Carter Lokken, Nathan Jordahl, Cheryl Bjornstad, Todd Vogel City Clerk, Nicole Koenen. Special guest, David Euerle with Westberg Eischens.

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

Town Clean Up and Small Cities Development Program update were added to New Business. Generator was added to Old business. Special guest, David Euerle with Westberg Eischens was added after approval of meeting minutes. Lift Station Inspection Quote and Utility Accounts were added to Maintenance Report.

**Motion to approve Agenda with additions by Tongen, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vogel m/s/p unanimously.**

**Motion to approve February 9, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes by Vogel, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bjornstad m/s/p unanimously.**

Special Guest David Euerle with Westberg Eischens

David handed out copies of the Finalized Audit and Financial Trends Report for 2020. He went over each fund stating that the City has been consistent with combined cash balances each year. Each Fund has enough cash to cover operating costs and debt payments.

Financial Report

- Cash Balances

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

Old Business

- Contract with Perfect Paws – Nicole discussed a contract with Mary at Perfect Paws. She will be sending a contract to the city. She did agree to take impounded animals. Owners would have to claim them within 5 days and have current rabies vaccination. All costs would be collected from the owner before animal could be released.
- Ordinance 2021-1 Fee Schedule

**Motion to approve Ordinance 2021-1 made by Tongen, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lokken m/s/p unanimously**

- Storage Containers update- Our Attorney sent a draft ordinance regarding portable storage containers. He needed to know if the City had interim use permits and the size regulations for the containers before finalizing. He would also need to draft a resolution approving summary language for publication. He is still working on that at this time. Nicole also reached out to Richard Enevoldsen, he said he would communicate with the City Office before delivering a container within the city.
- Generators – Bjornstad asked if we will be adding anything about generators. Discussion followed as to what the MN Basic Codes state pertaining to running a generator. Tongen mentioned he spoke with the property owner about the issue. He stated he was almost done and he wouldn't need to run it anymore after that. It was decided to have Nicole send him a letter notifying him of the multiple noise complaints. Suggestion of modifying the ordinance to limit the time in which it can be used. Council directed Nicole to gather information on this for the next meeting.

#### New Business:

- Utility account at 421 Park Ave – Because of a fire at the residence the water meter was removed from the property and the water was shut off at the street. Nicole asked if she should still be charging base rates as it is still connected to our sanitary sewer system. The council directed her to continue to charge sewer base rates until the property owners cap the line. Discussion over the condition of the house was also discussed. A suggestion that the city should consider condemning the property was discussed. Nicole will follow up with the attorney on this matter. The storage container that was placed there without city knowledge will be there for up to 3 months according to what Vogel was told.
- Street Replacement – Discussion about replacing all city streets. It was decided that the redevelopment committee get together to discuss a plan and obtain quotes from contractors.
- Town Clean Up – Lokken suggested that the city clean up the brush and debris from the lot on Highland Ridge. Sentence to serve was contacted last year and stated they would do projects for the city; we just have to let them know when its needed. City wide clean up was also discussed.
- Small Cities Development Program – Nicole received an email from the new contact for the program. An update was requested as we have not heard anything for over a year. As of the end of February: Owner Occupied-Three properties are out for bids, three applications have been received and one is over income. There is an open spot for another owner-occupied property to apply. The Commercial property has been completed. Next month the City will have to pass an Income Reuse Plan and Fair Housing Plan.

#### Maintenance Report

- Unlicensed/inoperable Vehicles – Nicole sent out letters to the property owners of the 24 vehicles that were unlicensed or inoperable last month. Seven vehicles remain unlicensed and a list was provided to council. One property owner did reach out asking if an exception can be made as the truck is used for parts, will not fit in the garage, and they did not think the state would license it as it is inoperable. Council discussed the situation and determined we can not give any exceptions as others have licensed or removed their vehicles according to the ordinance. If it is too wet to move the vehicles, the city will allow them to wait until its dry to remove them. Nicole was directed to send letters to other remaining owners on the list to let them know their vehicles will be towed once it dries up.
- Town Hall – The Honkers are using the town hall for batting practice. They informed Tongen the walls and ceiling paint is peeling pretty bad. Discussion over what to do with the Town Hall followed along with the costs. Suggestions to heat it over the winter as well as selling the building were brought up. It was decided to table until next month. Tongen suggested to ask the residents for their opinions and ideas for the Town Hall on the next water bill.
- Lift Station Annual Inspection Quote – Byron had Minnesota Pump Works provide a quote to have our lift station and pumps inspected yearly at the same time as Montevideo does. It would be \$130.15 yearly for the next three years.

#### **Motion to have Minnesota Pump Works inspect our lift station and pumps annually made by Vogel, 2<sup>nd</sup> Jordahl m/s/p unanimously**

- Utility Accounts – The beneficiary for the property at 630 CO RD 9 left a message on the answering machine after office hours to turn the water off due to a leak. They then called back and said to Not turn the water off as directed by the plumber. The next day when the plumber arrived, he could not get to the problem as water filled the basement. Tongen was able to call

Dylan with Montevideo to turn the water off at the curb. The plumber stated the following day that the water meter might have been frozen. If the meter was frozen, the property owner would have to pay for a new one along with a new base if needed. Nicole was directed to contact the owner and discuss the costs and situation. They would also need to be charged a reconnection fee for when it is turned back on.

Another resident asked that council consider giving them a refund on their bill as their water softener broke down. It continued to run water through several times before they were able to catch the problem. Their bill was \$30.00 more than normal. Council discussed if they refund them, they would have to refund everyone who has repairs or leaks at their properties. Although it is unfortunate to have break downs or leaks, they come with the responsibility of owning a home.

#### City Clerk Report

- Vacation – Nicole informed council her family will be going on vacation April 25<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>. The City Office would be closed for the entire week. She will post the closure dates on the water bill and also on the doors well in advance so residents are aware.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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City Clerk, Nicole Koenen