

Watson City Council Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2021

Present: Mayor: Todd Tongen Council Members: Carter Lokken, Nathan Jordahl, Cheryl Bjornstad, Todd Vogel City Clerk, Nicole Koenen. Six Watson Residents were also present.

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

Property at 330 2nd Street was added after Award Resolution.

Motion to approve Agenda with additions by Vogel, 2nd Jordahl m/s/p unanimously.

Motion to approve June 8, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes by Vogel, 2nd Bjornstad m/s/p unanimously.

Public Hearing Regarding Proposed Property Tax Abatements

Mayor Tongen opened the Public Hearing. Council explained to residents the proposed plan to use property tax abatements to improve city streets. The City's tax levy would be increased this year, residents would continue to pay their property taxes. The property taxes for those listed for abatement will be set aside to pay the principal payments of the Bond. The city will pay just over \$19,000 for 20 years.

Concerns of water drainage at the end of Highland Ridge were discussed. Council explained the contracted company had a plan to fix problem areas and were confident their plan would solve the issue. A resident asked if curb and gutter were an option. Nicole explained that would be too expensive as it would have to be specially assessed to each property along the improved streets. Some residents would be obtaining quotes to have their driveways paved while the company is in town. Residents asked if a building permit is required in which Nicole responded, yes.

After no further questions, Mayor Tongen closed the public hearing at 7:32pm. The regular council meeting was opened back up.

Resolution 7-13-21-1 Approving Property Tax Abatement for Public Infrastructure Improvements in the City of Watson.

Motion to approve resolution 7-13-21-1 made by Tongen, 2nd Vogel m/s/p unanimously

Resolution 7-13-21-2 Awarding the Sale of the General Obligation Tax Abatement Bond Series 2021

Motion to approve resolution 7-13-21-2 made by Tongen, 2nd Vogel m/s/p unanimously

Property located at 330 2nd Street

Council discussed complaints of a bad smell coming from the property and the debris scattered around the yard. It was determined to send the owner a letter to be delivered by the Sheriff's Department.

Financial Report

- Cash Balances

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

Old Business

- Building Permits – Nicole provided council with an example of possible new wording to the building permit guidelines as requested last month. Howard Flinn asked the council multiple hypothetical questions pertaining to when to apply for a building permit. As of now the changes

proposed are not approved and are being discussed. Council encouraged him to call the City Office before starting any project and ask.

- Zoning Committee – it was suggested to start a Zoning Committee to discuss changes to building permit requirements. Vogel and Jordahl volunteered to be on it along with Howard Flinn.

The Discussion was tabled until the committee meets and makes a recommendation.

New Business:

- Resident Letter- Dogs Running at Large – Nicole received a letter from a resident who complained of a neighbor's dogs running at large. The Sheriff's Department was called twice by the resident and the owner of the dogs was given a citation. Nicole confirmed with the Sheriff's department that a citation was given and the matter has been resolved as of now.
- Resident Letters Sent- Three letters were discussed. Two that pertained to properties with weeds, debris, and appliances. Both have mentioned they would take care of the issues before receiving a fine. The last letter was in regard to individuals living in campers within city limits. It was determined to continue to monitor the situation and follow up if not removed by the time given.
- Animal Control – A resident requested to use the city live trap as they had racoons on their property. Tongen and Vogel helped remove them. Discussion followed. It was determined that because we no longer have an employee to monitor this, residents can use the city's trap when needed. Jordahl mentioned he also has traps and could assist residents who need help.
- Volunteer Waivers – Council members signed the volunteer waiver that states the city is not liable if something were to happen to them while they are volunteering. Discussed any one who is volunteering for the city should also sign one.

Maintenance Report

- Street Maintenance – Tongen and Vogel discussed the need for more gravel on certain alley ways. It was determined to purchase what is needed to finish.
- City Mowing – Tongen mentioned he will continue to volunteer to mow as needed. Other council members mentioned they would be willing to as well.
- City Compost Site – Non-Watson Residents have been obtaining the key from the Store and using the city compost site. Suggestions of changing the sign saying violators will be fined and prosecuted. The city can provide the store with a new sign out sheet where they have to state their address and print their name. Having the key signed out directly from the city office was also discussed but decided against as it not open on weekends.
- Ballpark Water Hook up- Nicole discussed the option of tapping into the pumphouse to provide a water line to the concession stand with Byron. He said it was possible to have a licensed plumber tap into the north side, have a frost free spicket, meter if needed, and have the line trenched 18 inches in the ground. Tongen would discuss with the baseball association.

City Clerk Report

- Work Comp Audit – The audit was done and the city will be reimbursed \$240. It is predicted our premium will be lower next year as we no longer have a full-time maintenance position.
- Budget Meeting – It was decided to postpone the meeting for tonight to before our August council meeting.

Public Comments

Howard Flinn asked if adding a paved driveway were to put his property at more than 25% coverage, could he be allowed to do it? Discussion followed. It was decided a building permit would need to be obtained and driveways could be grandfathered in. Permit amount was also discussed as if the costs are more than \$5,000, permit fees would increase. It was determined to wait and see what is quoted and go from there.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

City Clerk, Nicole Koenen