

**WATERVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
December 3, 2024 6:00 p.m.**

There was a regular meeting that the Waterville City Council held in the Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. on December 3, 2024.

Call to Order / Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Council members: Tim Smith, Dave Wollin, Jennifer Grobe, Scott Potter and Mayor Bill Conlin

Also Present: Administrator Teresa Hill, City Attorney Jason Moran, City Engineer Jason Femrite and Waterville Police Chief John Manning.

Mayor Conlin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Announced present members of Staff and Council and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda/Additional Items to Agenda

Administrator Hill requested to delete agenda item 5B and add F, Resolution 2024R-54 and 7E, Special Meeting Request. **Motion by Wollin Seconded by Smith** to approve the amended agenda as requested with the deletion and additions. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes- November 7, 2024 Regular Meeting, November 13, 2024 Special Meeting, November 19, 2024 Special Meeting. **B.** Approval of Disbursements. **1.** Electronic Fund Transfers (35911E-35937E) \$47,535.79. **2.** Payroll Check Numbers (2024440-2024482) \$49,225.59. **3.** Computer Generated Checks and Overtime (39014-39090) \$203,110.55. **4.** Total Disbursements \$299,871.93. **C.** Impress Cash Fund-\$6.20. **D.** Resignation of volunteer fire fighter Corey Gedicke effective 11/18/24. **E.** 2024R-048 Accepting Donation-St. Peter Lutheran Church. **F.** Resolution 2024R-054 Granting Exempt Gambling (Southern Lakes Angling & Fishing). **Motion by Smith Seconded by Potter** to approve the Consent Agenda. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Public Hearings

Street Vacation (Alley in Everetts Tetonka Lake Addition Block 8, Lots 1-10)

Administrator Hill said the petition was accepted by the council and moved forward to the public hearing where the public has a chance to weigh in if the alley should be vacated. No one came forward. **Motion by Wollin, Seconded by Grobe** to approve Resolution 2024R-049 Resolution Vacating an Alley. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

2025 Budget and Levy

Mayor Conlin asked if there were any public input regarding the levy. No one came forward. Administrator Hill recapped the Levy. This shows a 10.5% increase, the state average is 8.8%. If homeowner's statements show a higher increase, chances are they've had a valuation adjustment. Those valuations will be heard in April. Our LGA (Local Government Aid) only went up \$442 this year. The increase in the Levy will cover the interest payment of the new Fire Hall. Also, if this project moves forward, an additional increase for the 2026 Levy will be needed to cover the principal and interest payment. If the fire hall is not built, those funds will return to the Capital fund to be applied to other projects that have been set aside to start the Fire Hall project. There was discussion on hiring a new Water/Wastewater Operator with licenses that is included in the budget. Also discussed was hiring a fifth full time officer. This will save the city approximately \$9,000.00. This includes 120 hours for part time officers. Administrator Hill relayed that with a 10% levy increase, every 1% equals \$11,248.41. Grobe questioned if hiring a Water/Wastewater Operator would come out of the wastewater budget. Administrator Hill confirmed it does. Applications will start being accepted in January. If we hire an operator without any licenses, it will take approximately six to seven years to obtain the proper licenses to run the Treatment Plant.

Public Input

Sarah Edwards, 527 Riverview Drive West, addressed the Council regarding hiring another full-time officer and inquiring what types of increases would take affect by hiring another full-time officer. Administrator Hill replied there would be a savings of \$9,000.00, including a benefits package. Ms. Edwards questioned if additional resources for Emergency Management were necessary to prepare for future events. Administrator Hill explained there wasn't much of a change to the budget relating to Emergency Management.

Phil Langerud, 503 Marian Street, inquired if the 10.5% would be mostly for the fire hall? Administrator Hill explained that with a new fire hall, there would be less than \$100 left from the increase in the levy that is not taken up by the fire hall payment. Langerud asked if the City will be receiving any funds from FEMA to cover any City expenses from the 2024 flood? Administrator Hill stated the City has submitting all related expenses to FEMA. Ultimately FEMA will decide what will be reimbursed. The expenses will never be 100% covered. The City submitted for a notice of interest for a couple of mitigation projects for flood walls, on the grant side. Langerud

also asked if the State will help with what FEMA doesn't pay? The State will only fund what FEMA funds. Langerud wanted to thank the city and council with some of the abatement processes. Administrator Hill said the county assessor found that availability.

Resolution 2024R-050 Approving 2025 Budget

Motion by Smith, Seconded by Wollin to approve Resolution 2024R-050, Approving the 2025 Budget. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Resolution 2024R-051 Approving 2025 Levy

Motion by Wollin, Seconded by Potter to approve Resolution 2024R-051, Approving the 2025 Levy. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Old Business

Tree Abatement – Attorney Jason Moran said the property owner presented information to Administrator Hill late in the day today. On December 12, the tree service is scheduled for completion. This has been discussed every month since the Spring. Attorney Moran is recommending to council to allow the homeowner another month to complete the process. If the work is not completed by January Council meeting, enforcement action will be taken. This would be filed in District Court where a judge would issue an order for the offending condition be remediated. If it's not remediated, the judge could impose consequences to compel compliance. Attorney Moran will reach out to the homeowner and let her know she has until January to get this done.

Citizen Time

No one came forward to address the council.

New Business.

Resolution 2024R-052 Establishing Polling Place

Motion by Wollin, Seconded by Grobe to approve Resolution 2024R-052 Establishing a Polling Place. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Police Commission Recommendations

Police Chief John Manning addressed the council. The Police Civil Service Commission met and discussed adding another full-time police officer and naming Chief Manning as the EM (Emergency Management) Director. This will reduce the reliance of part-time officers. The full-time officer has been chosen and is already a part-time employee of the City. Since the flooding, it was realized that the City needs people who are available and will cover as needed. Ideally, cross training the officers for EM will be beneficial for any future events. There is also a need to expand the EM team since there was a need for additional members of this past flood event. Despite what is heard and read on social media, there will be no firing of people because of the hire of a full-time officer. Grobe questioned the hours of all 5 full-time officers plus a full-time EM employee. Chief Manning replied that EM suffered a loss of staffing due to the resignation of three EM staff during the flood event. There will be ample training for full-time officers without having to allocate overtime hours, plus the EM Director is not full-time, he is working full-time in two departments. Grobe questioned hours of full-time officers when the School Resource Officer is not needed in the summertime? Chief Manning replied the additional officer will be needed to cover vacations or possible illnesses. Chief Manning also mentioned that he won't be chief forever. He wants to have a fully functioning department before retirement. The full-time candidate went through the Police Civil Service Commission and thought he was a very good candidate. Chief Manning requested moving forward with hiring the full-time police officer starting at the 2-3 year step within the union contract due to previous experience. This would start after the first of the year and would go on the 2025 budget. **Motion by Grobe, Seconded by Smith** to approve to hire the full-time candidate that was recommended by the Police Civil Service Commission to start at the 2-3 year step. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Squad Vehicle Purchase

Manning said the newest squad car has 85,000 miles on it the other squad is in tough shape. The range for the new Chevy Silverado pick-up is between \$55,200 and \$57,000. The grand total for the state bid price is \$61,109 with the state bid bringing it down about \$5,900. If the truck was ordered directly through the dealership, there would be about a \$200 difference from the state bid. The truck will be ordered directly from the dealership instead of the state. Being able to deal with the local dealership will be better than having to deal with another entity, especially if any issues arise. Some prices for the required outfitted extras that are needed for the new squad are not yet available. The budget for extras is around \$35,000. The amount allocated for the new squad is \$84,253. The old used squad cars can be handed down to EM or used by city personnel to transport to trainings. **Motion by Wollin, Seconded by Smith** to approve the purchase of a new police squad car. **Motion carried 5-0.** Chief Manning wanted to take a moment to thank Jennifer Grobe for all she has done over the years.

Resolution 2024R-053 Bad Debt Expense

Administrator Hill needed to do a resolution to write off \$660.89. **Motion by Smith, Seconded by Wollin** to approve Resolution 2024R-053, Bad Debt Expense. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Personnel Committee Appointment

There is a vacancy on the HR (Human Resources) Committee that Mayor Conlin would like to fill. When Roy McIntyre resigned, the spot was never appointed. With union negotiations coming up, Administrator Hill would

like that filled before January. **Motion by Wollin, Seconded by Potter** to approve the personnel committee appointment. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Special Meeting Request to Meet With Swift Funding Applicants (December 9th at 4:45)

When the city did the notice of interest, there are 2 funding pools, one is Swift Funding. If they have repetitive loss, they qualify for a higher amount of funding. There are a couple properties the city has been invited to submit applications for. They could receive funding in 2 different areas; acquisition or elevation. Council needs to chat with the residents and decide what funding mechanism the city would want to apply for. And if the council wants to do buyouts or not. The deadline for application submission is December 13th. **Motion by Wollin, Seconded by Smith** to hold the special meeting with Swift Funding Applicants on December 9th at 4:45. **Motion carried 5-0.**

Reports

Attorney Report

Jason Moran has nothing to report. He did want to thank Jennifer Grobe for everything she has done. It's been a pleasure working with her the past couple of years and she will be missed.

Engineer's Report

Jason Femrite has been working with the architect on the Fire Hall. Potter asked if geothermal heat has been mentioned for the Fire Hall? That would be a question for the architect. Smith said that it is an expensive option that would takes years to recoup. Femrite also wanted to thank Jennifer Grobe for her time spent on the council. It's been fun working with her.

Administrators Report

Commissioner Preissler was unable to make it. The county has set aside \$50,000 in their budget for water storage projects. That is good news in that it's a start to stopping water coming our way. The county will end up with a 3.9% increase. The 6th Street Bridge has some funding opportunities that he will pursue on behalf of the City. We could get that bridge replaced with the hydraulic capacity that we need. This would not be funded until probably 2029. The city would pay the first \$10,000 of the roadway cost improvements and the first \$10,000 of the engineering. We could have that bridge replaced for \$20,000. This is a program that is only for cities under 5,000 population. There was a meeting with the Federal EDA looking at projects that could help with flooding along with a bonus of giving us some economic development enhancements. Discussed Bolton & Menk proposal to look at community flood mitigation in the lagoon area. The preliminary audit starts tomorrow. Still working through the FEMA reimbursement process.

Council Discussion

Mayor Conlin wanted to thank Jennifer Grobe for all she's done on the city council and for the city. She will be very missed. Wollin said she asks a lot of good questions. Smith wanted to thank Jennifer also and to welcome the new council members, Scott Potter and Sarah Edwards. Wollin also wanted to mention that other towns are having issues with city budgets. Waterville isn't out of line with what is being proposed with our budget. Jennifer wanted to say thank you to everyone with their compliments.

Adjourn

Motion by Smith, Seconded by Wollin to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried 5-0.** Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.