

WATERVILLE CITY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

August 5, 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 August 5, 2024.

Call to Order / Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

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

Also Present: Administrator Teresa Hill, City Attorney Jason Moran, City Engineer Jason Femrite

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

Approval of Agenda/Additional Items to Agenda

Administrator Hill requested to Strike Agenda Item 6 A&B and to add 8 G & H. **Motion by Smith Seconded by Wollin to approve the agenda as amended. Motion Carried 4-0.**

Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes- July 2, 2024 and July 8,2024 B. Approval of Disbursements. 1. Electronic Fund Transfers (35798E-35827E) \$55,392.46. 2. Payroll Check Numbers (2024260-2024307) \$ 51,315.97. 3. Computer-generated checks and Overtime (38676-387655) \$429,280.18. 4. Total Disbursements \$ 535,988.61. C. Impress Cash Fund-\$2.31. D. Emergency Management Resignations, Douglas Spicer, Glen Waugh and interim Emergency Management Director Amy Cyr effective June 20, 2024. E. Resolution 2024R-023 Faribault Street Vacation. F. Resolution 2024R-024 Accepting Night to Unite Donations. G. Resolution 2024R-025 Accepting Donations. H. Resolution 2024R-026 Accepting Pickleball Court Donation. I. Resolution 2024R-027 Accepting Fire Department Donation. J. 2024 Municipal Maintenance Agreement. **Motion by Wollin Seconded by Grobe to approve the consent agenda. Motion Carried 4-0.**

Public Hearings

75-2024 Ordinance Amending Golf Cart Ordinance. Two things were changed, the golf cart permit will follow the golf cart, not the individual drivers. Also, the permit will now be valid for three years with the \$10 fee being for all three years. **Motion by Smith Seconded by Wollin to close the public hearing. Motion Carried 4-0. Motion by Wollin Seconded by Smith to Approve and Adopt the Amended Golf Cart Ordinance. Motion Carried 4-0.**

Written Petitions and Requests

Resolution 2024R-028 Approving Conditional Use Permit for Del and Gail Point. Motion by Wollin Seconded by Smith to approve the Conditional Use Permit for Del & Gail Point. Motion Carried 4-0

Old Business

North Shore Drive. Administrator Hill suggested postponing resurfacing due to the recent flooding. Those funds that were set aside may be needed to repair other city streets that were damaged during of the flood. Request from council whether they want to wait for North Shore Drive resurfacing or try and find financing to repair the other streets? **Councilmember Smith** suggested to wait on North Shore Drive but make it a priority next year. **Councilmember Wollin** agrees. **Grobe** and **Conlin** agree also. **Motion by Smith Seconded by Wollin to not go out for bids this year for North Shore Drive. Motion Carried 4-0.**

Roof Repairs – Another leak has been found in the kitchen area. The roofing company won't touch our roof without the trees being removed. **Moran** wants to have that in writing to show to the homeowner which would be required to remove the tree. It has been noticed that the tree is being held together with chains and cables which is very temporary and not to be trusted. **Moran** suggested filing a claim with the insurance company first. The tree damaged the roof and the property owner has been given ample time and opportunity to remove the tree. The liability could land on the homeowner. The last step would be to take the homeowner to court. Or remove the tree ourselves and assess the cost against the homeowner's property. For now, we may have to patch the roof as needed until the trees are removed. **Femrite** suggested to have engineers do a structural review and see what they come back with. **Moran** said to schedule the abatement hearing and let the homeowner know about it. We also need to get quotes for tree removal. **Motion**

by Smith to direct Hill and Moran to move forward with an abatement hearing planned on September 3rd during the regular council meeting and arrange for quotes for patching. **Seconded by Wollin. Motion Carried 4-0.**

Citizen Time

County Commissioner Dave Preisler requested to address the council by phone. **Hill** called him and he was unable to be reached. **Tom Czech**, 910 Lillian, addressed the council by reading a statement he wrote. He questioned what maintenance is being done on bridges by the city and county, anyone monitoring the waterways, what's being done about the clean-up in the Lagoons? **Councilmember Smith** said the Sheriff's Water Patrol needs to be notified about lake debris and they can assess the debris by boat. **Femrite** mentioned that it will be the end of the year for the study to be completed. **Jeff Lorentz**, 911 Lillian, asked who is performing the study? **Femrite** answered Bolton & Menk, DNR, County and Core of Engineers. The County is leading the project, they have secured the funds. **Dave Stenger**, 921 Lillian, wanted to know what makes this study different from the study performed by the Army Corps of Engineers? **Councilmember Smith** said it has to do with upland water storage, and a whole plan that is five counties wide. **Femrite** stated it is very complex. This study is upstream and downstream all the way to Faribault. **Deb Knutson**, 902 Marian, during the study, will they make changes in the next few years? **Administrator Hill** stated the city started the study but there were errors between finance department and award agreement and didn't allow us to complete it. The county stepped in and got funding for that. The county also put forth a bonding bill to help offset the cost of improvements. **Dave Preisler**, County Commissioner, who has now joined the meeting via phone, stated the study will probably not be completed until next year. The study will show the best spots to hold water. The best long-term solution is to put water storage on the landscape before the water gets to Waterville. It will take time and money but a slow release of water over a period of time would allow the water to slowly move through the area. **Deb Knutson** wants to know if she should wait to rebuild. **Councilmember Smith** has also been affected by the floods and knows their frustration. He said they just need to be patient, there is no quick fix. The city is here to help and we are doing the best we can to get the help needed for residents, through FEMA and other organizations. **Commissioner Preisler** stated that numerous drones were used during the flood event. When a small obstruction was noticed at the Narrows Bridge, Rice County was notified immediately and the obstruction was removed right away. **Sue Mariska**, 450 Cedar Circle, addressed the council regarding recent years drought and not cleaning out the waterways from debris buildup. **Moran** said the study is the first step. Residents need to put pressure on the state representatives. Nothing happens quickly. **Kathy Bublitz**, 940 Marian, what to do while they sit and wait; elevate, start rebuilding? **Dave Stenger**, 921 Lillian, he can't access his house, why raise it? Can the road be raised? Sometimes they've had two floods a year in his area. **Deb Knutson**, is it time we decide not to rebuild? **Councilmember Smith** said in prior floods some properties were bought out by FEMA and insurance companies. Those properties were given back to the city and the city was told they are not allowed to build on those properties. That could happen again. **Councilmember Grobe** asked how long it would take the easement process to develop with the property owners for water storage? **Commissioner Preisler** stated a quick process with an individual homeowner could take about 18 months to 2 years. Some funding is available now but at the scale that is needed, it would take 10's of millions of dollars. But it's not just benefitting Waterville. It would benefit many communities. **Preisler** also wanted to share information regarding the debris collection site and give an overview. Over 100,000 sand bags were made and there are 10,000 – 12,000 sand bags are left. 1,400 tons of sandbags came back. There were 86 dumpsters of debris collected, 12 semi loads of appliances and electronics, and another few semis of mattresses. The county is picking up the bill which will come to probably around \$500,000. That's not final but it most likely will be close to that. He thanked city staff and council and everyone who came together to help. **Administrator Hill** thanked Preisler for the debris site and how well it was run.

New Business

8 A. Authorization to Post Emergency Management Positions. **Administrator Hill** would like to advertise for the three open positions on Emergency Management until filled. **Motion by**

Wollin, **Seconded by** Grobe to advertise for three Emergency Management positions until filled. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

B. Vacation Carry over Request. Chief Manning has requested he be able to carry over his vacation since he has not been able to use any recently and he is at the max. **Administrator Hill** suggested it carry over until December 31, 2024. Whatever is above and beyond his cap at that point will be paid out. **Motion by** Smith, **Seconded by** Wollin to approve Chief Manning to carry over his vacation until December 31. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

C. Zoning Application Fee Waiver for Flood Damaged Homes. **Administrator Hill** would like to request that the application fee be waived for homeowners of flood damaged homes. If they are building in the flood zone, they would still have to pay a \$500 as-built deposit that they would get back after they get their elevation certificates back. **Motion by** Wollin, **Seconded by** Grobe to waive the zoning application fees for flood damaged homes. **Smith** abstained from voting due to having a flood damaged home himself. **Motion Carried 3-0.**

D. Joint Meeting with EDA for Individual and Business Flood Assistance. There are funds in the bank account that need to be dispersed. There is also additional funding sources and avenues that should be explored as a joint committee. Possibly use the funds that was returned to us from the county as the same type of project as the small cities. That could a resource for people who are trying to put their houses back together. Meeting will be scheduled for August 26th at 5:45 pm at the regularly scheduled EDA meeting. **Motion by** Wollin **Seconded by** Smith to have the joint EDA/City Council meeting on August 26 at 5:45 pm. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

E. Tri County Mutual Aid Agreement. **Moran** addressed that this is an agreement between Blue Earth and Le Sueur counties to be able to receive mutual aid from various other municipalities most notably Blue Earth County. **Motion by** Wollin **Seconded by** Smith to approve the Tri County Mutual Aid Agreement. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

F. Flood Elevation Free Board Requirement. **Administrator Hill** explained that the city currently requires one foot of free board. After this last event, HUD is looking at changing their free board to two feet. Council needs to consider changing our ordinance from one foot to two feet. That would open up funding sources because it would meet HUD's requirements. Any homes now that received more than 50% flood damage would have to elevate to two feet if it's approved. **Mayor Conlin** thinks more time is needed to discuss. **Motion by** Smith **Seconded by** Wollin to table the discussion until next month and possibly have planning and zoning discuss at their next meeting. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

G. Request to Hire Water and Wastewater Operator. Currently, Mark Krenik is our only licensed operator. We need another full time licensed operator. Would like to hire an already licensed operator but hiring someone who isn't quite fully licensed yet would be to Krenik's discretion. **Motion by** Smith **Seconded by** Grobe to advertise for a full-time licensed Water and Waste Water Operator. **Motion Carried 4-0.**

H. Pump Replacement Approval. Two quotes have been submitted by Minnesota Pump Works. One is for remanufactured parts to repair the current pump and the other is for a new pump. **Motion by** Smith **Seconded by** Grobe to approve the quote for a new pump plus cost of removal, installation and freight.

Reports

Attorney Report

Attorney Moran will contact the homeowner of the tree. Cannabis ordinance is about 2-3 months from finalizing. High potency will be in the industrial district and law says we have to allow at least one. Low potency in the business district and the number allowed may be capped at what we already allow in town.

Engineer's Report

Engineer Femrite has nothing more to report than what was already discussed tonight. **Councilmember Smith** thanked Femrite and Bolton and Menk for everything they have done for us the last couple of months.

Administrators Report

Administrator Hill would like to relay statistics provided to her from Samaritan's Purse during the flood disaster. 104 homes were on their work orders, 81 homes were completed by Samaritan's Purse and 23 by other organizations, they had 18 volunteers a day with a total of 215 volunteers

that clocked a total of 6,452 volunteer hours. This does not include the other three organizations that helped. Now we transition into rebuilding. The debris site is closed, Darin Hanks is available for flood debris pick-up by appointment only with the cost to be billed back to the city. The application for assistance was filed today. The Small Business Association (SBA) is set up downtown and is not for just businesses. It's also for individuals, renters and VRBO's. FEMA has checked the Senior Center and the building use agreement came through today. The phone system at City Hall has not been working properly since before the flood and we are looking at switching to Midco or Metronet. Frontier is not trying too hard to get our phones back up and running properly. Researching Gov Text for texting residents' notifications regarding emergencies, snow, etc. Brad Meister has been inspecting homes with significant flood damage.

Council Discussion

Councilmember Grobe questioned whether a business can give away alcohol without a liquor license. She heard it may have been happening during Hot Summer Nights. **Moran** will research it. **Hill** heard there was no alcohol in the drinks being served. **Mayor Conlin** mentioned National Night Out and wants to know if there are volunteers who are willing to help out. All council members have volunteered. It will be held at the Senior Center with a street dance, free smoothies, free food and tables will be setup inside and outside.

Adjournment

Motion by, Grobe Seconded by Smith to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 pm Motion Carried 4-0.

William Conlin, Mayor

Teresa Hill, Administrator-Clerk