

**WATERVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

January 7, 2025, 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 January 7, 2025.

Call to Order / Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Council members: Tim Smith, Dave Wollin, Sarah Edwards, Scott Potter, and Mayor Bill Conlin

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

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

Approval of Agenda/Additional Items to Agenda

Motion by Smith **Seconded** by Wollin to approve the Agenda and advised. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Consent Agenda

These items are routine and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member or citizen so requests, in which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed elsewhere on the agenda. **A.** Approval of Minutes- December 3, 2024, December 9, 2024. **B.** Approval of Disbursements. 1. Electronic Fund Transfers (35938E- 35971E) \$59,976.41. 2. Payroll Check Numbers (202483- 2024545) \$113,093.21. 3. Computer Generated Checks and Overtime (39091-39160) \$162,100.17. 4. Total Disbursements \$ 335,169.79. **C.** Police Department Resignation-Amy Cyr. **D.** Depositories of City Funds: Frandsen Bank–Waterville Branch; Elysian Bank; AIM; 4M Fund; Northland Securities/Northland Trust Services; Robert W. Baird & Co.; US Bank. **E.** Official Newspaper – Life Enterprise. **F.** City Engineer-Bolton & Menk/Jason Femrite. **G.** Financial Auditors- Abdo Solutions. **H.** City Attorney Jason Moran. **I.** Employment and Labor Legal Services-Kennedy & Graven. **J.** Department and Commission Yearly Reports. **1.** Planning and Zoning Commission Report. **2.** Economic Development Authority Report. **K.** Meeting Start Time-6:00 p.m. **L.** Resolution 2025-001 Accepting Pickleball Donation. **M.** Resolution 2025-002-Accepting Fire Department Donation. **N.** Fire Hall Special Meeting -January 13, 2024, 6:00 p.m. **Motion** by Wollin **Seconded** by Potter to approve the Consent Agenda **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Old Business

Tree Abatement

Attorney Moran conveyed to the Council that this has been a saga for compliance. Again, there was a late submission today with what appears to be a final report. It seems that the tree is still hanging over the City Hall roof. The issue is still precedent. There has been trimming and maintenance to the trees but not to the full extent. It was reported by the Owner that the trees will receive annual checks and services. Without any set schedule or the type of maintenance to be performed; The City Hall roof is still exposed to damage from tree limbs, branches, or animals that may dwell in the tree which can lead to a huge insurance claim. I am asking for authority to allow Administrator Hill and myself to remedy this with the Owner. If the Owner does not comply with a complete remedy two actions can take place. Those being Civil or Criminal charges. Attorney Moran explained the differences in the types of enforcement. Council held a discussion on the process and outcome they would like to see. **Administrator Hill** relayed that she had a brief discussion with the owner about the limb over the City Hall building. The Owner expressed that the arborist who trimmed the trees stated that if that limb was taken it would make the tree unbalanced. **Motion** by Wollin **Seconded** by Smith to allow Attorney Moran and Administrator Hill to communicate the need for work to be completed within thirty days. If the work is not completed then have Attorney Moran move forward with Criminal charges. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Squad Car Expense Approval

Police Chief Manning requested from Council to approve the two squad car quotes to finalize the outfitting of the new Waterville squad car. One from Northern Safety Technology for \$29,822.66. This quote covers the installation of all the emergency lighting and most of the internal technical needs. The second request is to Grafix Shoppe for \$1,400.00. This covers exterior graphics on the squad. There was a conversation between the Staff and Council on the quality and durability of the provider of the graphics. **Police Chief Manning** noted to Council that as of right now there are 38 other squads scheduled before Waterville can get put on the list. **Motion** by Smith **Seconded** by Potter to approve the estimated amounts for outfitting the new police squad from Northern Safety Technology and Grafix Shoppe **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Citizen Time

County Commissioner Preisler presented to the Council some updates that were happening on the County level. **1.** The County has set the final levy at a 3.9% increase which is the lowest increase in the last 10 years. **2.** A new County Commissioner Dennis Tiets was seated and will be overseeing the Lanesboro Township and the City of New Prague. **3.** The County has received a Grant from BWSR (Board of Water and Soil Resources). This type of work is paired with Soil and Water Conservations. One of the three Grants received in the amount of \$207,075.00 will help assist with the water quality projects targeted for Lakes: Clear, Francis, German, Jefferson, Volney, Tetonka, and Sakatah. The use of technology will help identify the weak points along banks with erosion and the water flow. This Grant is geared towards water quality. **4.** Final letters were mailed out from the County Attorney's office to get the last of the non-compliant septic into compliance. Most have replied with a plan of compliance. Some have reached out due to a financial deficit, and the County does have a loan program allocated to help those in need with a 4% interest rate. If those do not comply or respond to the last letter, they

will be subjected to a misdemeanor offense along with a monetary fine. **5.** The hydro study will hopefully be completed by this spring. These studies will assist with obtaining financial dollars from the Federal and Region 9. This is not a national competition for funds this is supplied regionally. **6.** Preisler supplied the Council with a County survey. What is the Vision 2050 survey <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/7333d6fd668b4712af81c844d772ea2d>. No other persons approached the Council at this time.

New Business Chamber Requests

1. Truck & Tractor Pull Location Request. **Lizzy Bybee** the New Bullhead Days Chairman of the Board requested to move the Truck & Tractor Pull to the Old Weaver Lot. If this was relocated here, possibly in the future this area could be used for: Demo Derbies, an outdoor Music Venue, an Ice arena, and possible stands for seating, and lighting. **Council Smith** asked Bybee what the long-term effects would be on the land in this area. **Bybee** responded by making an arena for a slew of possibilities, lighting, arena, bleachers, and Emergency Management access. **Administrator Hill** relayed that the Park Board started this vision 17 years ago with Mr. Weaver. There has been communication with the family wanting to discuss the property. The property ended up being gifted to the City of Waterville from the Weaver family. The Park Board is trying to make Weavers' vision happen. They have ideas to earn revenues with this venue. It has been suggested that the Park Board would present a business plan, along with other ideas. There are some City ideas for this location as well like industry re-locations and the other being residential development. In the event the City would have either of these it would be placed in the northern portion of the lot which would be the most sought-after part of real estate. Any of these concepts are not an overnight development. The Council noted if happenings were allowed on the old Weaver Property that they would like it to stay away from the creek. So, this would have events on the South end of the Property. Also requesting to see a long-term, a more in-depth vision for the area, along with working with the City and the Park Board. **Valerie Vail** from the Park Board mentioned that multiple entities have looked at the trail crossing and would like to see a safe crossing put in at this location. The Park Board would be happy to work with the Chamber and the Festival Organization. **Council Wollin** noted that the Park Board raises, earns or receives donations for their projects. They are not funded by the City of Waterville. **Motion by Conlin Seconded by Smith** to approve the use of the Southern portion of the Weaver land area identified with the tall grass area, for the Chamber to use for the Truck and Tractor Pull location for 2025. The future location of the event is unknown at this time. With possible use of Demo Derbies and other Events. No permanent structures are to be built on this property at this time. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

2. Chamber Event Requests. **Motion by Wollin Seconded by Potter** to approve all of the Bullhead Day Events. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

3. Event Street Closures. **Administrator Hill and Bybee** conveyed to the Council that for the Bullhead Days event, the Chamber and Festival organization would like to add some additional street closures. Those being Paquin Street encompassing from the alleyway behind the Library to the alleyway behind the Classics Car Bar, and Third Street from the Corner of Make it Waterville to the Bridge. There was a discussion held on the purpose of the additional closures and possible emergencies with response times and home access to those businesses and residents that live before the Bridge on 3rd Street. **Motion by Conlin Seconded by Wollin** to approve the street closures minus the Paquin Street that was illustrated on the map. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

4. Electrical Update at Old Shop for Carnival Parking. **Administrator Hill and Bybee** requested a quote to update the electrical for Carnival workers to camp on the Old City Shop Lot. This was quoted by Volkman Electric for \$5,315.00. **Council Smith** asked why this is a necessary expenditure for the City, we are not in the business of campgrounds. Is the Chamber willing to pay for this upgrade, most people with RVs have generators. **Bybee** replied that the electrical was stated that it needed updating. **Motion by Conlin Seconded by Wollin** to approve parking campers for Bullhead days; down at the Old City Shop in the parking lot there. Any electrical and how that is paid for will be determined. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

5. Chamber Advertising Donation Request. **Patti Salmon**, the Chamber President, asked the City Council if there were City funds, FEMA, or Flood Relief funding available for advertisement. Also, asked the Council if they have thought about imposing a lodging tax for all short-term rentals. With lodging tax, 95% of those collected funds can be used directly for tourism and advertising. Salmon presented Explore Minnesota Tourism and Southern Minnesota which are publications for tourism. The City of Waterville is not listed in either publication. Salmon explained the publication costs and the frequency of printing, expressing the need for this type of advertisement to entice more tourism. **Attorney Moran** expressed that if money was collected for this tax, it would be the Cities monies, and the City would have to do all of the paperwork including the Ordinance and financial bookkeeping. As for the donation, it would not be recommended due to the nature of the ask and how this would not benefit the local government directly. If the City earmarks or spends money that is one thing. Council held a discussion on lodging tax, and how the local short-term rental owners may feel about imposing this on their customers. The Council also suggested going to the local businesses and see if they would want to be in any of the advertising magazines, and if so ask for a donation. **Motion by Smith Seconded by Potter** to deny the request of advertising donation. **Motion Carried 5-0.** The Council requested the Chamber come back with more information and a possible plan on how the lodging tax would work.

Council Appointments

Administrator Hill announced the selected appointments for the 2025 year: Acting Mayor, David Wollin. Audit Committee: Council Scott Potter, Council Tim Smith, and Council Sarah Edwards. Assistant Weed Inspector, Chief of

Police. Zoning Inspector/Code Compliance Officer, Brad Meister. Authorized Check Signers for Frandsen Bank and Trust and Elysian Bank: Mayor Bill Conlin, City Administrator Teresa Hill, City Treasure Valerie Jorgensen, Acting Mayor David Wollin, Council Scott Potter. Authorized Check Signers for Frandsen Bank and Trust Flood Recovery Fund: City Administrator Teresa Hill, EDA President Sue Myers, and Mayor Bill Conlin. Personnel Committee: Mayor Bill Conlin, Fireman Nick Bongers, Police Commissioner Trina Waugh, City Attorney Jason Moran, City Administrator Teresa Hill, there is one vacant seat. EDA: Mayor Bill Conlin, Council Scott Potter, and the Community Member position is vacant. Minnesota Council of Governments Council Tim Smith. Night to Unite Coordinator, Mayor Bill Conlin. Sunset Lane Council Representative, Council Tim Smith. **Motion by Wollin Seconded by Potter** to approve the New Appointments. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Authorization to Start the Hiring Process for the Fire Department

Fire Chief Meskan stated that there is space for three members. **Motion by Smith Seconded by Wollin** to start the hiring process for the Fire Department. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Establishment of Firefighter Reserves

Administrator Hill relayed to the Council that the Fire Relief is covered by PERA. I reached out to PERA and it was stated a 30-day separation from the Relief would be needed to be a part of the Reserves. I was wondering if this policy would be okay for retired Reserves to allow them to return. Because if this is classed as a return agreement this may mess with their PERA. **Attorney Moran** replied this would not be if there was a clear 30-day break. **Council Smith** asked why are we doing this. **Fire Chief Meskan** stated that he thought this would open it up for retired Fire persons to help when they are needed, or if they aren't on the roster because their call percentages were down. **Attorney Moran** replied that typically these Fire persons have been with the City for a period of time, and cannot fit the percentages. This allows members to come back after they are no longer on the rosters. This is happening right now in Janesville. This helps fill the lack of personnel in smaller communities. **Council Smith** commented if the person is not up to date on the training percentages, they should not be able to perform any interior attacks. **Fire Chief Meskan** suggested those that who have retired and want to be a part of this program are diligent to be up to date on their training percentages. I believe if they have the training completed, they should be able to perform interior attacks. **Attorney Moran** relayed that he did draft the Janesville policy and it is working well for them. They were in the same position with the lack of staff. Janesville does keep them from performing any interior attacks. Council and staff asked if number 4 from the policy could be removed and it was noted that there needs to be a clear 30-day split. Section D on the policy is a portion of the policy to update the 30-day split. **Motion by Wollin Seconded by Potter** to approve the Reserve Fire Fighter Program with the revisions from Attorney Moran. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Authorization for Bid Specifications and Bidding Process for Pickleball Courts

Administrator Hill relayed to the Council that the Park Board has received a very generous donation of \$60,000.00 for the Pickleball Courts. With the other funds raised and donated the Park Board has reached the goal to start with phase one. The Park Board has asked Bolton and Menk to come up with the specifications. They are requesting approval to obtain bid specifications and to start with the bidding process. **Motion by Wollin Seconded by Smith** to authorize bid specification and the bidding process for the Pickleball Courts. **Motion Carried 5-0.**

Reports

Attorney Report: Moran had no additional items to report on.

Engineer's Report: Femrite relayed that Bolton & Menk is excited to be working with Waterville with assisting with the Pickleball Court. The Court will be built to fulfill the needs of the Waterville community. There have been meetings with the architects from BKV pertaining to the Fire Hall site.

Council Discussion

Council Wollin thanked Amy Cyr for her time served on the Waterville Police Department, you have done a wonderful job. **Mayor Conlin** welcomed Sarah Edwards to the Council.

Adjourn

Motion by Wollin, Seconded by Smith to Adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM. **Motion Carried 5-0**

William Conlin, Mayor

Teresa Hill, Administrator-Clerk

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The full text of this summary is available for public inspection at City Hall.

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