

**Regular Council Meeting
Mountain Lake City Hall
Monday, March 4, 2019
6:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Darla Kruser, Mike Nelson, David Savage, Andrew Ysker

Members Absent: Dana Kass

City Staff Present: Michael Schulte, City Administrator/Clerk; Maryellen Suhrhoff, City Attorney; Rick Oeltjenbruns, Street Superintendent

Others Present: Doug Regehr

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nelson at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda

Motion by Savage, seconded by Kruser, to add 2.A Checks #22176 – 22223, 595E and 2.B Payroll Checks #64456 – 64473 to the consent agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Ysker, seconded by Kruser, to approve the agenda and consent agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Bills: Checks #22176 – 22223

Payroll: Checks #64456 – 64473

Approval of January 18 EDA Minutes

Approval of February 14 Utilities Commission Minutes

Approval of February 19 City Council Minutes

Public

No one spoke during this portion of the meeting.

Mountain Lake Community Center

City Administrator Schulte provided an update on the community center. The new pool room walls on the exterior and the interior have been completed. Leftover paint was used to blend in the new wall with the existing walls. The garage door to be purchased and donated by Loyal Klassen will be installed when warmer weather conditions occur. Cots used for stranded motorists during winter storms or for campground users during severe weather in the summer were placed up in the loft in the garage section of the building when volunteers were organizing the space. Direction was given to the city administrator to contact the volunteers to move the cots to the floor for quick accessibility in case of emergencies.

Street Department Report

Rick Oeltjenbruns, Street Superintendent, provided a report of activities completed from February 5 – March 4. Plowing snow, hauling snow, cleaning sidewalks, sanding, and moving snow have been constant in February due to multiple snow storms and constant drifting snow. Close to every day a street department employee has had to work to plow and remove snow. Mayor Mike Nelson and Councilmember David Savage relayed positive comments from multiple residents about the prompt snow removal.

Water/Wastewater Department

The presented Water/Wastewater Foreman job description and pay scale were approved by the union members. The job description and the pay scale were then reviewed by the Utilities Commission and approved to recommend to the Council to approve. City Administrator Schulte explained the background of the new position and how it progressed. Back in October/November, advertising for the Water/Wastewater Superintendent occurred. Two individuals applied and were interviewed but the position was not filled. The interview committee and the Utilities Commission gave direction to the city administrator to create a Water/Wastewater Foreman position which includes similar responsibilities as a Superintendent but does not require the water and wastewater licenses from the start. City Administrator Schulte met with Mayor Nelson and Councilmember Savage to review and edit the job description. A pay scale between the Public Works I and Public Works II was proposed. The Foreman position would report to the City Administrator and the city's designated water and wastewater license holder. Currently Dave Watkins is the city's license holder for both water and wastewater. In addition, the union members approved a \$0.50/hour premium for each water and wastewater license held which was approved to recommend by the Utilities Commission to the City Council. Other cities were researched, including Windom and St. James, and offer similar license premiums. The city of Lakefield was discussed. Lakefield has a contract with PeopleService who provides a 40 hour/week worker with the city's required wastewater licenses for a contract of approximately \$150,000/year. Lakefield is also looking at a similar contract for their water system. Licenses, premiums, state requirements, the city's water and wastewater systems, and other discussion ensued. Motion by Ysker, seconded by Savage, to approve the presented job description, pay scale, and license premiums and to post the job internally per union policy to fill and advertise externally to fill if needed. Motion carried.

City Attorney

A letter was sent to the greenhouse property owners regarding their property, but a response has not been sent back yet. Suhrhoff will contact Building Inspector Steve Carson regarding possible next steps. A meeting was held with a property owner near the wastewater ponds to discuss the background of the wastewater pond project and options moving forward regarding the property.

City Administrator

An email update from Elizabeth Wefel, Senior Attorney/Lobbyist from Flaherty & Hood was read regarding PFA funding. The State Senate and the House may have reached a compromise to resolve the dispute over the ENRTF appropriation bonds. The House Ways & Means Committee passed H.F. 80 to the General Register. This bill converts the ENRTF appropriation bonds to General Obligation bonds. The Senate Republicans held a press conference today stating that they had reached a compromise with the governor and the house to resolve this issue. They are going to convert the LCCMR bonds to GO bonds and pass them off the floor today. Updates over the next few days will be provided from Wefel.

The League of Minnesota Cities wrote an article about the certified 2019 property tax levy report. Levies for all cities increased by 5.6%, or \$133.2 million, over the 2018 levies. According to the report, 216 cities, or 25 percent of all cities, either froze or reduced their final certified 2019 property tax levy. Another 334 cities, or 39 percent, had a final levy increase between 0 and 5 percent. Cities with levy increases between 5 and 10 percent totaled 226, or 27 percent of all cities. A total of 77 cities, or 9 percent, proposed increases of more than 10 percent.

Coffee with the Council

The date has been rescheduled to 5:30PM-6:30PM on March 27 at The Den. Councilmember Kruser and Ysker will attend.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Approved March 21, 2019

ATTEST:

Michael Schulte, Administrator/Clerk