**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday May 8, 2023**

**6:00 pm**

**Verndale City Hall**

**101 Brown St SW**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Tara Erckenbrack, Daryl Jacobson, Brad Cottrell

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ardith Carr, Jim Runyan

**STAFF PRESENT:**  Michael Madsen, Fire Chief; Erika Penner, Police Officer; Matt Uselman, Public Works Manager; Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer

**STAFF ABSENT**: Randy Athmann, Police Chief

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Tracee Bruggeman, BradyMartz; Amos Self, Family Life Church; David Hotchkiss, Wadena County IT; Chuck Goddard, Denise Rousslang

**OPENING PRAYER:** The opening prayer was led by Amos Self, Family Life Church.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND MAY PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve the April 10, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Cottrell. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve the April 11, 2023 Board of Review Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Cottrell. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Cottrell to approve the May payables in the amount of $62,894.51, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS:**

1. Chuck Goddard: Goddard expressed concern about being charged for sidewalk snow removal when the distance between the street and the sidewalk is eight (8) feet. Goddard stated that if he clears the sidewalk before the City plows, it gets covered with snow when the City plows the street and he is unable to move the snow when he gets home from work because it’s “frozen chunks”. Goddard stated that most sidewalks are 15 - 20 feet from the street. Erckenbrack thanked Goddard for bringing it forward; this is food for thought for next year.
2. Denise Rousslang: Rousslang stated that mowing at the Cemetery has caused stones to be chipped/damaged. Rousslang asked what do people do when they have $20,000-$30,000 invested in monuments, who do they sue when this happens again? Erckenbrack stated that this is something the Cemetery Committee can look at and talk about.
3. Tracee Bruggeman, BradyMartz: Bruggeman gave a review of the 2022 Audit. Bruggeman explained the three comments and recommendations to improve internal controls. The City has a plan to address the comments.

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A motion was made by Jacobson to accept the 2022 Audit, seconded by Cottrell. AIF/MC.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – MIKE MADSEN-FIRE CHIEF-** Madsen stated that there were 17 calls for March and April; 9 were fire (2 grass, 2 structure, 5 car accidents), and 8 were medical. Madsen stated that their pancake feed is going to be held on May 20 from 8:30 am – 11 am. Madsen stated that the Department is receiving a donation from Karvonen Funeral Home for Flashlights.

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated that there was a net profit of $11,209.00 for the month. Current stated that there was a decrease in sales from 2022 in the amount of $3,200.04. Current stated that there is a net profit for the year in the amount of $21,529.35. Current stated that the Ice Machine is in place and making ice. Current stated that she attended the MMBA Conference at Arrowood on April 30 and learned about dead inventory and rewards programs. Current stated that the MugWugs are booked for Verndale Days. Current asked if they should start playing at 8 pm or 9 pm. Erckenbrack stated to check with the Liquor Committee to determine the start time.

**POLICE- CHIEF RANDY ATHMANN -** See Report in Council Packet. Penner suggested using Wadena County’s Tech Support program so that Verndale will be compliant with the BCA and FBI policies. Hotchkiss presented the details of the Tech program. Erckenbrack stated that it sounds like this is a need not a want.

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve the Wadena County Tech Support program at a cost of $3,500.00 for one year, seconded by Cottrell. AIF/MC.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that half of the light poles have been installed, however new bolts will need to be epoxied to the existing concrete. Uselman stated that it needs to be warmer to do this so they are hoping to get it done by the second week in May. Uselman stated that the black dirt has been removed from the new building site, hopefully concrete can be poured by the middle of May. Uselman stated that there is a lot more black dirt than he was expecting so, if residents would like some please get ahold of him. Uselman stated that a tree service will be needed to remove a tree by the water tower so that the privacy fence can be put up. Uselman stated that once that is done then a stump grinder can come to grind a few stumps. Uselman stated that the Water Tower will have its one year warranty inspection on May 10. Uselman stated that the fourth grade class will be having a field trip to the Water Treatment Plant on May 16.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current requested approval to transfer $37,296.00 from the General Fund Money Market Streets Fund to the General Fund Checking Account to pay Vinco 80% of the cost of the street lights.

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve transferring $37,296.00 from the General Fund Money Market Streets Fund to the General Fund Checking Account to pay Vinco 80% of the cost of the street lights, seconded by Cottrell. AIF/MC.

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Current stated that Steve’s Auto and Tire is sponsoring a Spring Clean-up with pickup starting on May 22 at 8:00 am. Current stated that residents are asking for credit for watering gardens. Current asked if this is something the Council wants to offer again. Council tabled until the June 12 meeting. Current stated that UBMax was taken over by gWorks and they are discontinuing the current software. Current stated that the new software would cost $8,574.00 for the first year and $4,254.00 per year after that. Current stated that she would like time to research available software, but wanted Council to be aware of the cost. Current stated that she didn’t have a timeline for the phase out as gWorks doesn’t have a timeline yet. Current stated that she will be on vacation May 25- 30. Current stated that she plans to attend the LMC Annual Conference in Duluth June 21-23.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Erckenbrack stated that she took the City’s concerns about the Board of Review to the County Commissioner’s Meeting. Erckenbrack stated that the County Commissioners are requesting that the Department of Revenue come in and do a complete audit/investigation into the Assessor’s office.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 23-0508A – Resolution Accepting Donations to the Verndale Fire Department

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve Resolution 23-0508A – Resolution Accepting a Donation to the Verndale Fire Department from Karvonen Funeral Home in the amount of $1,510.03 to pay for Streamlight Flashlights, seconded by Cottrell. AIF/MC.

1. Resolution 23-0508B – Resolution Approving the Lion’s Raffle

A motion was made by Cottrell to approve Resolution 23-0410B – Resolution Approving the Lion’s off-site Raffle, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

**OTHER BUISNESS:** None

Mayor Erckenbrack adjourned the meeting at 7:06 pm.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Tara Erckenbrack, Mayor