**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

**TUESDAY MAY 22, 2018**

**5:00 p.m.**

**Verndale Fire Hall**

**102 Butler St SE**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** James Ackerson, Ardith Car, Tara Erckenbrack, Raye Ludovissie, Jim Runyan

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**  None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Barbara Holmes, City Clerk/Treasurer; Matt Uselman, Public Works Manager; Melissa Current, Deputy Clerk

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Trinity Gruenberg, Verndale Sun; Joeb Oyster, Moore Engineering;Robin Fish, Monica Pilgrim, Erwin Barney, Jason Bosman, Gary Van Dam

The purpose of this public hearing is to discuss the City’s plans for installation of a new tower at 19 3rd Ave SE.

Mayor Ludovissie opened the public hearing at 5:00 pm.

Oyster provided handouts that he went through page by page. Oyster provided examples of what the tower would look like. Oyster stated that the shape of the tower would be a hydro cone, which would cause less staining. Oyster stated that the tower can be any color and have any logo on it that the City wants. Carr asked how tall the water tower would be. Oyster stated that it would be 150 feet tall because if the tower is taller there will be more pressure for the system. Erckenbrack asked how big the base of the tower would be. Oyster stated that the bottom of the base would have a 20-foot diameter. Carr asked how that compares to the diameter of the tower the City currently has. Oyster stated that the tower the city has now has a way bigger diameter so the new water tower would be more compact. Ludovissie asked if there would be a fence around the tower. Oyster stated that the City could put up a fence but it is not necessary. Oyster stated that the tower would have a steel door that locks. Ludovissie asked the citizens if they had any questions or concerns. Ludovissie asked Uselman if the tower location would have a big grass area. Uselman stated yes there would be grass and a few picnic tables but no shelter. Barney stated that as a homeowner on that block he had three primary concerns. Barney stated that the first concern is how the tower would affect property values. Barney stated that in his research he found that there is no way to determine what the tower could or couldn’t do to the property values, but there is a certain percentage of buyers that would be turned off and they would reject the property. Barney stated that the second concern is that if potential buyers are applying for an FHA loan they require an appraisal of potential tall hazards and if the property that is trying to be bought has a tall object and is considered in the fall zone then FHA could reject the loan of the buyer. Barney defined what a fall zone is. Barney stated that the third

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concern is that the water tower is a lightning rod and will be in the middle of a residential block. Barney stated that he is aware that there are codes that are federally regulated about what kind of grounding systems go into the towers. Barney expressed concerns about the topography of the area being changed and how the soil could be different than where the tower is now. Barney provided a handout that showed water towers that had been struck by lightning and how the towers didn’t shunt the electricity into the ground. Ludovissie stated that he understands the concern about home values. Ludovissie stated that he didn’t see how the house next to Barney’s would be helping his value at all. Ludovissie stated that with appraisals each appraiser is going to do something different. Ludovissie stated that the value wouldn’t be known or how that would determine the outcome. Ludovissie stated that having an open grassy area would have more value for Barney. Ludovissie stated that the current water tower is surrounded by residential and no house has never been struck by lightning and it has been in that location since 1948. Ludovissie stated that there is no way to know what lightning is going to do, it can hit anything at any time. Bosman asked where the treatment plant was going. Ludovissie stated on the other side of town. Bosman asked why the water tower wasn’t going by the plant. Ludovissie stated that the water tower needs to be close to the biggest user and that is the school so the tower needs to be on this side of town. Ludovissie stated that the City wasn’t able to get the tower in the park and nobody is willing to sell any land around here. Ludovissie stated that the City went with this option because it is the only option the City had. Barney asked what about the land over by the ball park. Uselman stated that the City owns barely any land there and the landowners weren’t willing to sell. Ludovissie stated that the City doesn’t have another option for the tower location and the City needs to keep moving forward. Bosman asked if the water is treated now. Ludovissie stated that it is treated but not as well as it is going to be. Oyster stated that right now there is Chlorine, Fluoride and a Polyphosphate but there is no treatment to remove anything it is just chemical addition. Ludovissie stated that residents would no longer need water softeners in their homes. Bosman asked if the water rates were an increased cost to him. Ludovissie stated that it is an increased cost to everybody. Bosman asked how the rates compare to other cities rates. Oyster explained how each City’s affordability determines how much water rates can increase. Pilgrim asked why the grant money isn’t used first and then get a loan. Oyster stated because the government isn’t going to give the City grant money without determining when the grant dollars would end. Pilgrim asked how much the City’s loan would be. Oyster stated that he didn’t remember but he had it in his previous presentation, he thought it was about $1,000,000. Pilgrim asked if the trees on the lot where the water tower would be going have to be removed. Oyster stated that the contractor will take as many as needed to make construction easier. Barney asked Oyster if he had done a number of these projects. Oyster stated yep. Barney asked how typical it is to have a water tower in a residential block instead of a commercial block. Oyster stated that every City is different, it is more typical have a water tower on a commercial block. Barney stated he was concerned that the water tower is being shoe horned into this lot in the middle of a residential block. Oyster stated that the lot size is pretty typical for a tower to be constructed on. Barney asked if anyone had conducted soil resistivity testing. Oyster stated that they did geotechnical boring there and

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he hasn’t gotten the results yet. Barney asked if that includes soil resistivity. Oyster stated that he hadn’t had any concern in the past on that so he would check to see if it was included in the geotechnical. Pilgrim asked what about the empty lot over by the school and the bus garage. Carr stated that the school dealt with the neighbor to get enough land for the bus garage and that is all they would sell. Runyan asked Oyster if he said the base would be 20 feet. Oyster stated that it is ball park 20 feet at the base and then there would be a concrete footing. Oyster stated that typically they do a concrete ring that could be 30 feet in diameter. Oyster stated that it is no bigger than a garage. Runyan asked if the ring would be below the surface. Oyster stated yep it would be 8 to 10 feet down. Barney stated that it isn’t uncommon for people that live by communication towers to experience equipment failures that didn’t happen before they were put in. Ludovissie asked if there were any other concerns that needed to be addressed.

The Public Hearing was closed by Mayor Ludovissie at 5:38pm.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, Deputy Clerk Raye Ludovissie, Mayor