**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday August 10, 2020**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Verndale City Hall**

**101 Brown St SW**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

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

**STAFF ABSENT**: None

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Kenny Kjeldergaard, Family Life Church; Austen Rife, Gas Station; Brian Hagen, Liquor License, Robin Fish

**OPENING PRAYER:** The opening prayer was led by Kenny Kjeldergaard, Family Life Church.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND AUGUST PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Carr to approve the July 13, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes and the July 20, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve the August payables in the amount of $109,181.46, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS**

**Joseph Schuller:** Current stated that Schuller had a toilet running that caused usage of 71,000 gallons of water. Uselman stated that they aren’t at that building for months, and he had told Schuller to keep the valve shut off before the meter when they aren’t there to prevent this from happening again.

A motion was made by Ackerson to make a one-time exception for Schuller Family Funeral Home so that they only owe for half of the bill, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**Austen Rife:** Rife stated that they are in the process of closing with the bank. Rife stated that they are waiting for a soil test to come back from the State of MN. Rife stated that ideally, they will be opening October 3, 2020. Rife stated that they looking for about $20,000 in Gap Financing to complete the purchase of the Gas Station. Rife asked if this was something the City could provide. Ludovissie stated that the EDA might be able to help but gap financing isn’t something that they want to get into. Ludovissie stated Rife could sit down with the EDA and

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ask them; he believes that there are funds available but with gap financing they would want to secure it. Ludovissie stated that it’s kind of like dealing with a bank with a low interest rate. Ludovissie stated that if they want to go that route to get ahold of Current and she will set up an EDA meeting. Ackerson asked for an update on the car wash. Rife stated that the Car Wash won’t be operational until next Spring. Rife stated that they will either put in a manual or automatic wash. Rife stated that the quotes came back higher than they were hoping and there wasn’t as much equipment for the Car Wash as what they thought. Uselman asked if the Car Wash has a grease trap, oil trap in the drain system. Rife stated that they will find that out from the person that they are purchasing the equipment from. Rife stated that his assumption is that this is already in place because in order to build that to begin with there has to be that catch underneath there. Uselman stated that he didn’t know when that was built, if the City Ordinance was in place. Rife stated that that is a state ordinance.

**Brian Hagen:** Hagen asked the Council if it would be possible for him to get an Off-Sale Liquor License. Current stated that according to State Statutes and City Ordinance that would not be allowed because the City has a Municipal that carries Off-Sale. Runyan asked for clarification on what may not means in the statutes, he felt like that meant that it could be allowed. Current will do research on that. Hagen asked Council if he’s not able to get an Off-Sale license, would the City consider giving up its Off-Sale. Hagen stated that for the past six months the Off-Sale had only brought in 21% of the profits for the Liquor Store. Ludovissie stated that when the City had Off-Sale out there it didn’t do well. Ludovissie asked Current to get Hagen the numbers from when Highway 10 Liquor was in operation. Current will call Hagen when she has the numbers ready. Council asked for time to think about this. Hagen agreed.

**Clif Allen - Moore Engineering:** Allen wasn’t in attendance. Uselman stated that at best the City will be looking at going out for bids for the Water Tower in November. Uselman stated that the meters are going to stay with the project instead of making them a separate project.

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve paying the Moore Engineering Invoice in the amount of $2,285.00, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – MIKE MADSEN-FIRE CHIEF-** Madsen stated that there were six (6) calls for the month; four (4) medical and two (2) fire. Madsen stated that he needed approval for Chuck Goddard’s retirement from the department.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the retirement of Chuck Goddard, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

Madsen stated that there are four (4) applicants for the open position on the fire department; they should have one to approve for the next meeting. Madsen stated that the auction has been rescheduled to August 29. Madsen stated that he would like approval to purchase five (5) used

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2-way radios at a cost of $2,200.00

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve purchasing five (5) used 2-way radios at a cost of $2,200.00, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Madsen stated that the Wadena county fair has asked the fire department to bring two (2) trucks to the enduro races on August 23 for safety.

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated that the month looks bad because the Liquor Store had to pay the remaining $17,324.70 for the new roof; the total for the roof was $34,324.70. Current stated that sales increased in the amount of $194.93 over last year. Current stated that Verndale Days income was down compared to last year. Current stated that the Liquor Store is looking at having Karaoke in September. Current stated that she had a conference call with Heartland Payment Systems about credit card fees and they stated that they could save the Liquor Store about $100.00 per month. Council stated that Current should check with the current credit card processing company and see if they will match this price; if not then switch.

**POLICE-CHIEF CARR-** Chief Carr stated that today was the first day driving the new squad car. Chief Carr stated that he doesn’t have all the totals done up on it yet. Chief Carr presented the Council with a letter of appreciation from a stranded motorist. Ludovissie stated that he received an anonymous letter stating that there weren’t many people wearing masks at Verndale Days.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that there is a guy that has a YouTube Channel with 1200 subscribers that wants to have a camera installed on the Historical Building in the Park to be able to watch trains as they go through town. Uselman stated that the guy contacted the Historical Society who then contacted him. Uselman stated that the Historical Society would help pay for the install but they wanted the City or someone else to pay the monthly fee. Council stated that they are not interested in paying the fee. Uselman stated that he would like to purchase adjustable valve extension stems for all the fire hydrant valves. Uselman stated that he would need 45 of them and they are $78.00 each. Uselman stated that he received a quote in the amount of $3,510 plus shipping, unless someone goes to Fargo or St. Cloud to pick them up.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the purchase of 45 adjustable valve extension stems for all the fire hydrant valves in the amount of $3,510.00, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

Uselman stated that cleanup after the band at the Bar went well. Uselman stated that Graba is on light duty work after breaking his arm outside of work. Uselman stated that he wants all residents to know that building permits are needed for all structures, whether they are on a foundation or not. Uselman stated that he is looking at replacing two (2) fire hydrants. Uselman stated that it should cost less than $19,000 to replace the two (2) hydrants and he has the money in his budget. There was discussion about just replacing the parts instead of the hydrants.

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A motion was made by Carr to approve purchasing two (2) fire hydrants if the cost is under $19,000.00, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

Uselman stated that Wadena has had their hydrants sandblasted and repainted. Uselman stated that he called Wadena to find out how much it cost and they said $125 per hydrant. Uselman stated that he would like to get this done; it will cost around $5,000 for all the hydrants to get done. Ludovissie asked Uselman to look into it and bring it back to Council. Uselman stated that there is a property that is in the commercial district that is refinancing their house and is asking the City to write a letter giving them permission to get a conditional use permit to rebuild their home within one (1) year if it were to be destroyed. Current confirmed that the homeowners would need to apply and pay for the conditional permit. Ludovissie stated yes, they still need to go through the whole process.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve writing a letter giving the homeowner permission to get a conditional use permit to rebuild their home within one (1) year if it were to be destroyed, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve Ordinance 82 – an Ordinance stating the requirements for owning chickens in the City of Verndale, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current stated that the Affidavit of Candidacy is open until 5 pm tomorrow. Current stated that the Fire Relief needs the bond amount increased from $75,000 to $100,000 due to an increase in their assets.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve increasing the Fire Relief bond amount from $75,000 to $100,000, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Current stated that she needed approval to transfer $76,905.99 from the Sewer Money Market account to the General Fund Checking account to cover the payment to MN Public Facilities Authority for the General Obligation Bonds.

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve transferring $76,905.99 from the Sewer Money Market account to the General Fund Checking account to cover the payment to MN Public Facilities Authority for the General Obligations Bonds, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

Current stated that Wadena County has put together a COVID-19 Business Assistance Program. Current stated that applications will be accepted until September 11, 2020. Current stated that the budget meeting is set for August 17 at the Fire Hall following the Public Hearing. Runyan asked if the City would receive any C-19 money. Current stated yes, the City received $43,000 from the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Ackerson asked if the City could help out businesses in this community. Current stated yes, the City could choose to set up a program and set aside dollars to help businesses in the City. There was discussion about setting up a program like the County has for Verndale businesses. Current stated that this could be done and that she will start working on it. Runyan asked if the City could use that money to help businesses out such as

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providing masks and sanitizers for the businesses. Carr stated that she understood that this money is meant to reimburse purchases not make the purchases for the businesses. Current stated that she would research that. Runyan asked how businesses will know that there will be funds available. Current stated that maybe the paper could make this the headline for the minutes. Ludovissie stated that it wouldn’t be much to send something out to each business.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None

A motion was made by Carr to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 pm, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Raye Ludovissie, Mayor