**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday September 14, 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:** Austen Rife, Kim Rife, Robin Fish

**OPENING PRAYER:** The opening prayer was led by Robin Fish, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bartlett Township.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND SEPTEMBER PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Carr to approve the August 10, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes and the August 17, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve the September payables in the amount of $25,065.49, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS**

**Clif Allen - Moore Engineering:** Allen wasn’t in attendance. Ludovissie stated that there weren’t any changes since last month.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – MIKE MADSEN-FIRE CHIEF-** Madsen stated that there were five (5) calls for the month; three (3) medical and two (2) fire. Madsen stated that the fire department is recommending Daniel Fisher to join the department and he would like approval to hire him effective upon approval.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve hiring Daniel Fisher as a member of the Fire Department, seconded by Erckenbrack. AIF/MC.

Madsen stated that they received a matching grant from the MN DNR in the amount of $1,650 to purchase a monitor nozzle and PPE so he needs approval to spend $1,650.

Page 2

September 14, 2020

City of Verndale

Regular Council Meeting

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve spending $1,650.00 to purchase a monitor nozzle and PPE, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Madsen stated that they also received a 100% grant for a grain bin rescue tube. Madsen stated that this a tube that is used if someone gets trapped inside a grain bin. Madsen stated that this tube would get set up and pushed around them so that grain can be removed. Madsen stated that in the past a big hole would be cut in the side of the grain bin to remove the grain. Madsen stated that this tube is meant to be a quick deal that gets the person out without having to remove all the grain. Madsen stated that they will have training on how to use the tube on October 12. Madsen stated that their fish fry and gun raffle is going to be held on Saturday October 17 at the Civic Center. Madsen stated that gun raffle tickets can be purchased from any fireman.

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated there was a net profit of $3,019.05 for the month. Current stated that sales increased in the amount of $1,360.63 over last year. Current stated that there will be Karaoke with Jason Neuerburg on September 19 from 8:00 pm – 12:00 am. Current stated that she needs approval to make some changes to the Liquor Store Policy, they are highlighted in yellow. Carr suggested adding “make sure to include the date and time” to the incident log line.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve the changes to the Liquor Store Policy, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**POLICE-CHIEF CARR-** Chief Carr stated that it’s fun to be back at the school. There was discussion about the SRO Agreement. Council member Carr asked if the Council could get a schedule of who is working when. Chief Carr reminded the Council that everything should get run through the Sheriff’s Office when it comes to getting ahold of an officer.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the School Resource Officer (SRO) agreement with the Verndale School, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

Erckenbrack asked if the City needs to review its Ordinance so that they are more enforceable. Current stated that if the verbiage needs to be changed so that it can be enforced now is the time to do it as the City’s Ordinances are being reviewed. There was discussion about the City’s Nuisance Ordinance. There was discussion about asking the League of MN Cities for guidance and looking at what other cities have for that kind of ordinance.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that there is a house that doesn’t have a curb stop so when the two (2) hydrants are replaced they will have a contractor put one in. Uselman stated that the service line runs down their asphalt driveway, so the City will need to patch that also. Ludovissie asked how much a walk behind snow blower for the treatment plant would cost. Uselman stated that he stopped into Torco and the smallest one was $880.00; he’ll have official quotes next month. Uselman stated that he received a quote for painting 43 hydrants at $118.00 per hydrant so the total would be $5,074.00. Uselman stated that it’s possible that not all the hydrants will get done this year. Sandblasting of hydrants was discussed.

Page 3

September 14, 2020

City of Verndale

Regular Council Meeting

A motion was made by Carr to approve the quote for the painting of 43 fire hydrants in the amount of $5,074.00, seconded by Ackerson. Voting in favor were: Ackerson, Carr, Erckenbrack and Ludovissie. Runyan was opposed. MC.

Uselman stated that trees will be planted at the Treatment Plant this week. Uselman stated that the Cemetery Committee needs to set up a meeting. A meeting was set for Thursday afternoon. Uselman stated that there is a resident that wants to pave behind their property to the alley. Uselman stated that the resident can’t pave all the way to the alley; they will be about three (3) feet short. Uselman stated that the alley right-of-way is 18 feet wide and is farther into the property than what anybody thinks.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current stated that the tax holiday that went into place on September 1 is optional. Current stated that the Secretary of State’s office and the League of MN Cities both confirmed that this is really a deferment of the taxes and that they would need to be paid back by April 31, 2021. Current asked if the City should offer the tax holiday.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to decline participating in the tax holiday, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

Current stated that a meeting date and time needs to be set for the final budget meeting and the truth and taxation meeting. Current stated that the Regular Council meeting for December is the 14th so the final budget meeting would need to be before then, but after November 24. Meeting dates were discussed. The final budget meeting was set for November 30 at 6:00 pm. The truth in taxation meeting was set for December 14 at 6:00 pm with the Regular Council meeting starting at 6:15 pm.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Off-Sale Liquor License: Current stated that she received an email from the state revisors office that stated that “may not” is synonymous with “must not” or “shall not”. Current stated that the City may not issue an off-sale license to another business, unless authorized by voters at a special election called for that purpose. Current stated that a special election may be ordered by the governing body of the municipality on its own motion or, upon a petition signed by a number of voters equal to 20 percent of the votes cast at the last municipal general election. Council stated that they do not want to move forward with a special election.
2. COVID-19 Business Assistance Program:

A motion was made by Carr to approve the City of Verndale COVID-19 Business Assistance Program, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

1. Resolution 20-0914B – A Resolution approving TIF District 1-4

**Austen Rife:** Rife stated that this project with the TIF District would be detrimental to their business. Rife stated that he didn’t know if it was in the best interest of the City of Verndale to pursue both the TIF and their business. Rife stated that they still haven’t closed on the purchase of the gas station as

they are still waiting for the results of the soil tests. Rife stated that there’s a large possibility that if this

Page 4

September 14, 2020

City of Verndale

Regular Council Meeting

project goes through, one of these two businesses are not going to make it. Carr and Erckenbrack agreed that the Rife’s would have a better location as far as getting on and off the highway. Ludovissie asked Rife if they would like to consider doing a TIF as well; it doesn’t hurt the City, it’s an investment. Rife stated that he didn’t think that their business would qualify for a TIF. Ludovissie stated that the City doesn’t want to be unfair, but if a business wants to come in, the City will do what it can to get it in. Rife asked how the City would feel about limiting the number of tobacco licenses. Council agreed that it would be unfair to limit the tobacco licenses unless it were to be only for the City to have one.

Ludovissie stated that the EDA did look at the TIF plan. Current stated that she talked to Jason Murray about the concerns that the EDA had with the number of jobs being created. Current stated that Murray said that if the number of jobs created isn’t the same as in the agreement then the City can cancel the agreement.

A motion was made by Carr to approve Resolution 20-0914B – Resolution Approving the Modification of Municipal Development District NO. 1, Modification of the Development Program Relating Thereto; The Establishment of Tax Increment Financing District NO. 1-4 Within Municipal Development District NO 1 and Adoption of the Tax Increment Financing Plan Relating Thereto, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC

D. Agreement Terms

A motion was made by Ackerson to accept to the Development Agreement Terms between the City of Verndale and Farmgard Products Corporation, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 20-0914 – Proposed Levy

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve Resolution 20-0914 – A Resolution Approving Proposed 2020 Tax Levy Collectable in 2021, seconded by Erckenbrack. AIF/MC.

1. Resolution 20-0914A – IRIS

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve Resolution 20-0914A – Recognizing National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day as October 15, 2020, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 pm, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Raye Ludovissie, Mayor