**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday March 8, 2021**

**6:00 pm**

**Verndale City Hall**

**101 Brown St SW**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Ardith Carr, Tara Erckenbrack, Jim Runyan, Tony Stanley

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Daryl Jacobson

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

**STAFF ABSENT**: Michael Madsen, Fire Chief;

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Robin Fish, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bartlett Township; Trinity Gruenberg, Verndale Sun; Mike Weyer, Wadena County Commissioner; Kim Aagard, TCHC; Tom Mayfield, TCHC; Joel Beiswenger, TCHC

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

**NEW BUSINESS:**

D. Resolution 21-0308B – Approving TCHC Note

Beiswenger stated that they plan to break ground for the new Tri-County Health Care in early May. Mayfield stated that this would be the last time the City Council would need to take action on this. Mayfield assured the Council that the City would have no liability and that Tri-County provides an indemnification so if the City faces any expenses, they will pay for it or reimburse the City. Mayfield stated that the City is a conduit financer bonding $9.7 Million.

A motion was made by Carr to approve Resolution 21-0308B – Resolution Approving the Issuance of a Health Care Facilities Revenue Note, Series 2021 (Tri- County Health Care Project), seconded by Runyan. Voting in favor were: Carr, Runyan and Stanley. None were opposed. Erckenbrack abstained as she is an employee of Tri-County Health Care. Motion Carried.

Runyan asked what the status was for the clinic in town. Beiswenger stated that the Verndale Clinic is closed at this time; they are holding it in reserve as a potential COVID free site; this will be continued for an indefinite amount of time. Beiswenger stated that if it is remobilized it could be something different than a primary care clinic. Beiswenger stated that they lost their provider at the same time COVID hit; they would need to recruit a new provider; they are really looking at their options. Runyan expressed concern about it not remaining a clinic.

Stanley left the meeting.

Page 2

March 8, 2021

City of Verndale

Regular Council Meeting

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND MARCH PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Carr to approve the February 8, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve the March payables in the amount of $32,476.13, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS:**

**Mike Weyer: Wadena County Commissioner:** Weyer started that he is the new Commissioner for this District. Weyer stated that the City of Verndale has a vacancy on the Charter (Advisory Board) for Transit (Friendly Rider); they are looking for someone to fill the vacancy. Weyer stated that the term for the Advisory Board is three years and they meet once every two months from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. Weyer stated that the Friendly Rider comes to Verndale twice per day and last year they had 2500 rides. Weyer stated that it would be beneficial for someone from Verndale to fill the vacancy. Carr asked when the next meeting would be. Weyer stated that the next meeting is April 13. Jim Runyan stated he would be interested in filling the vacancy.

**Clif Allen - Moore Engineering:** Allen was not in attendance. Erckenbrack asked Uselman if he had any updates. Uselman stated no. Current stated that Allen had sent an email stating that the contracts for the water tower and meters were dropped off with the attorney for signatures and the LRIP applications have been submitted.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – MIKE MADSEN-FIRE CHIEF-** No Report

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated that there was a net loss of $5,944.60 for the month. Current stated that this is partly from paying insurance. Current stated that there was a decrease in sales from 2020 but numbers are comparable to 2019. Current stated that there is a need for bartenders and an ad was placed in the paper and posted on Facebook. Current stated that there were five (5) applicants so far so she would set up interviews. Current stated that a plumber was called to replace the pipes under the dishwashing sink.

**POLICE-CHIEF CARR-** Chief Carr didn’t have anything to add to his report. Erckenbrack asked when they were going to schedule the ride arounds. Chief Carr stated whenever you want to.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that Verndale Alliance Church would like to close First Ave S between Brown St and Farwell St and possibly part of Farwell St downtown for their Father’s Day Motor Show.

Page 3

March 8, 2021

City of Verndale

Regular Council Meeting

A motion was made by Runyan to approve closing First Ave S between Brown St and Farwell St and possibly part of Farwell St downtown for Verndale Alliance Church to have their Father’s Day Motor Show, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Uselman stated that the driveway behind the bar is falling apart. Uselman stated that he would like to cement the whole thing and bring it up to the door level at the building and slope it back towards the alley. Uselman stated that there would be a valley gutter that brings the water down to the storm drain. Uselman asked if he should look into getting a quote for it. Carr stated no, she would like to see that happen after the bar is back to 100% capacity. Erckenbrack stated that the City should contact the DAC and see if they would want to piggy back on it. Uselman stated that the DAC was contacted by Elena Sharma last year to see if they wanted to go in on it and they were not in the position at that time to do it. Erckenbrack asked if it would be a City alley improvement or a Liquor Store improvement. Uselman stated Liquor Store. Uselman stated that the concrete guy should be coming in to do the sidewalks in the park and he thought he would have them give him a quote. Runyan stated to have them give a quote then. Uselman stated that he would like to get a listening device to try to find water leaks. Uselman stated that he found a device that is lower frequency to hear in plastic pipe for $3,750 and it comes with a 5-year warranty. Uselman stated that this would hopefully help expedite finding leaks in the future. Uselman stated that he can call MN Rural Water and see if they think it is a good idea or if there is a certain brand that does better.

A motion was made by Carr to give Uselman authority to research and purchase the listening device that is best recommended, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current stated that the Board of Review is set for Tuesday April 6 at 3:00 pm. Current stated that the City was awarded a Safe Routes to School 2021 Planning Assistance Grant. Current stated that this went to Region 5 so the process of setting up the Safe Route to School Plan can begin.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Employment Policy:

1. Comp. Time: Uselman stated that the City isn’t allowed to make an employee use their comp. time first before vacation; overtime time needs to be paid out. Carr asked if it gets paid out as it happens. Uselman stated it can, or it can be kept like it’s always been. Erckenbrack stated that she didn’t see the benefit in paying it out at the end of the year, she would rather pay it out each pay period. Uselman stated that the benefit to allowing employees to bank their comp time is that if they use all their vacation time then they can use their comp. time. Uselman stated that comp. time needs to be used at the employee’s discretion; the City can’t force them to use it. The employees agreed that they would like to keep comp. time the way it is and not be paid the overtime each pay period.

Page 4

March 8, 2021

City of Verndale

Regular Council Meeting

A motion was made by Runyan to approve taking out the line that states Comp. time must be drawn down to zero first, then vacation time may be used, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED:**

1. Resolution 21-0308 – Resolution with MN Rural Water

A motion was made by Runyan to approve Resolution 21-0308 – Resolution of the City of Verndale, Minnesota Approving and Authorizing an Advance Agreement with Minnesota Rural Water Finance Authority and Authorizing Participation in Joint Powers Authority, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

1. Resolution 21-0308A – Donation from Verndale Lions

A motion was made by Carr to approve Resolution 21-0308A – Resolution Accepting a Donation from the Verndale Lions in the amount of $6,127.52 to be put in their Building Fund, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Runyan stated that Council should think about making the meetings more payable so that members come. Carr and Erckenbrack agreed that it isn’t the pay that is preventing members from coming, it is other obligations.

Mayor Erckenbrack adjourned the meeting at 6:59 pm.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Tara Erckenbrack, Mayor