**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday August 9, 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:** Michael Madsen, Fire Chief; Cory Carr, Police Chief; Matt Uselman, Public Works Manager; Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer

**STAFF ABSENT**: None

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Katie Heppner, Economic Alliance; Clif Allen, Moore Engineering;

**OPENING PRAYER:** The opening prayer was led by Tony Stanley, Verndale Alliance Church

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**POLICE-CHIEF CARR-** Chief Carr stated that Officer Savaloja turned in his resignation. Chief Carr stated that he would like the Council to approve a wage increase of $1 for the full time Officer position to make it more appealing. Council Member Carr asked if the police were contracted with the school again this year. Chief Carr stated yes; he believed the contract would stay the same.

A motion was made by Stanley to approve $21.17 as the starting wage for the full time Police Officer, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

There was discussion about the Tobacco Ordinance and whether or not to allow the sale of Flavored Products. There was concern with surrounding towns selling the products and it hurting the businesses here. Stanley asked if the enforcement side was as robust for vaping (flavored products) as it is for tobacco. Chief Carr stated yes. Council agreed that they would rather respond to vaping (flavored products) if enforcement doesn’t work down the road.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve the resignation of Officer Savaloja and to pay out any comp. time, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND AUGUST PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Carr to approve the July 12, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Stanley. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the August payables in the amount of $94,843.44, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

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**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS:**

**Katie Heppner – Economic Alliance:** Heppner gave an overview of what the Economic Alliance has done for Verndale in the past and what is ongoing/upcoming. Heppner asked Council to consider being a Civic Partner with the Economic Alliance which is a $5,000 donation. Council will consider this during the budgeting process.

**Clif Allen - Moore Engineering:** Allen gave project updates. Allen stated that payment is recommended for Partial Pay Estimate #6 for Contract C – Water Tower Replacement in the amount of $77,356.60 for Maguire Iron for site fabrication/painting and other mis. items.

A motion was made by Carr to approve Partial Pay Estimate #6 for Maguire Iron in the amount of $77,356.60, seconded by Stanley. AIF/MC.

Allen stated that payment is recommended for Partial Pay Estimate #2 for Contract D – Water Meter Replacement in the amount of $25,071.81 for Dakota Supply Group for work completed.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve Partial Pay Estimate #2 for Dakota Supply Group in the amount of $25,071.81, seconded by Stanley. AIF/MC.

Current stated that there is funding available through the American Rescue Plan. Current stated that the City would need to apply to get funds and it’s based on the City’s population. Current stated that the City would have four (4) years to use the funds. Allen started that there are a lot of funding scenarios out there. Allen stated that there are guidelines, stipulations and requirements on how the money gets spent. Allen stated that these funds are intended for infrastructure, specifically broadband. Allen stated that he didn’t think the City would have a problem being able to spend the funds. Allen stated that there could be more funding coming from DEED. Allen stated the he wouldn’t pass up the opportunity to get this money.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS CONTINUED:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT –MIKE MADSEN-** Madsen stated that there were 10 calls for the month; 4 were medical and 6 were fire. Madsen stated that the #1 Engine needs pump repair as a seal is going out in the pump. Madsen stated that the #1 Engine will be out of service for three (3) days for the repairs; which are estimated to be $5,000.00. Erckenbrack asked if there was money in the budget. Madsen stated no, but there is money in the truck fund in the Money Market. It was suggested to not give a dollar amount in case the repairs end up being more than the estimate.

A motion was made by Stanley to approve repairing the pump on the #1 Engine, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Stanley asked if there was any grant money to purchase smoke detectors for every house in Verndale. Madsen stated that it used to be that they could go through the State Fire Marshall’s

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Office and purchase 100 smoke detectors using a grant. Madsen stated that then a program is put on at the Fire Hall or a letter is sent out stating that they have smoke detectors and to contact them to get them installed. Erckenbrack asked Madsen to bring information on this to the next meeting.

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated that there was a net profit of $11,888.25 for the month; Net Profit for the year in the amount of $26,084.24. Current stated that sales were up from 2020 in the amount of $3,344.30. Current stated that Verndale Days went well, there just needs to be clearer communication. Current stated that she received a quote from Keith Waln in the amount of $10,600.00 to replace the AC unit and the Furnace. There was concern about putting the furnace upstairs as this will take away some space that is needed. Council asked Current to come back with a quote for the furnace to be downstairs.Current stated that bar stools need to be replaced and they cost about $60 each plus shipping. Council agreed to let Current spend within the budget to replace the stools.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that he will be gone for three days for the MN Rural Water Conference. Uselman stated that he is on the local advisory team for the MN Dept. of Ag groundwater protection rule. Uselman stated that there is also a sensor that has failed causing the Treatment plant to run off of one (1) RO unit. Uselman stated that the RO units need to be cleaned so the company that installed the RO system will be coming to train them on how to do a CIP (clean in place) on the RO units. Uselman stated that this will be a three-day training which will cost $5,100.00. Uselman stated that he is a little concerned about the water levels for the City and asked for water use restrictions. Uselman stated that he would recommend banning non-essential outdoor water use, especially lawn watering, washing of cars and buildings and filling of swimming pools. Uselman stated that this ban would include residence with private sand points or wells within the City Limits. There was discussion about watering gardens and flowers.

A motion was made by Stanley to approve banning non-essential outdoor watering and allow two days per week for watering of gardens and flowers by hand with an effective date upon receipt of a letter from the City, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current stated that a date needed to be set for the first budget meeting. Council agreed to August 30 at 6 pm. Current stated that she is officially a Minnesota Certified Municipal Clerk. Current stated that she will be gone August 10 and 11 and August 26 and 27. Current stated that the City received $8,940.00 in Small Cities Assistance that is for the construction and maintenance of roads and needs to be used within two years.

A motion was made by Runyan to transfer $8,940.00 from the General Fund Checking account to the General Fund Money Market account designated for streets, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

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**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 21-0809 – Resolution Accepting a Donation from the Verndale Lions

A motion was made by Carr to approve Resolution 21-0809 – Resolution Accepting a Donation from the Verndale Lions in the amount of $18,991.23 to be put in their Building Fund, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None

Mayor Erckenbrack adjourned the meeting at 7:43 pm.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Tara Erckenbrack, Mayor