**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**Final Assessment Hearing**

**Monday September 25, 2017**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Verndale Fire Hall**

**102 Butler St SE**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tara Erckenbrack

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Donald Weniger, Gary Dahlvang, Anthony J Dolezal, Merlyne Bissell, Kevin Hanlon, Sandra & David Gould, Curtis Miller, David Gronlund, Monica Pilgrim, Lois Strobel, Wayne Mills, Paul Brownlow and Kevin Wernberg (WSN)

Ludovissie opened the Final Assessment Hearing at 6:00 pm and turned the meeting over to Wernberg for his presentation.

Wernberg gave a summary of what was done and the costs for the sanitary sewer project. Wernberg stated that any assessment not paid within 30 days of the Council adopting the assessment rolls will be certified and filed to the County to get put on the taxes starting 2018. Wernberg stated that this project was assessed the same way that the project was assessed in 2009 and 2011. Wernberg went over the assessment policy. Wernberg stated what parts of the project the City did not assess and what the City invested into the project. Wernberg stated there is an option to defer the payments of the assessments, but that needs to be done at the City office. Holmes stated there is a cost of $46 made payable to Wadena County to defer payments. Wernberg stated that any objections to the process or the numbers presented needs to be presented in writing tonight.

The deferment policy was addressed.

Mills stated the Methodist Church Parsonage was charged back when they did the alleys. Mills asked if the church is still paying for street frontage. Wernberg stated another service was put in. Mills stated that was paid for. Holmes stated there was water service put in that they paid for. Mills asked if the Parsonage was paying street frontage for that? Holmes stated yes. Mills asked we are paying that too? Holmes asked Mills if they had paid assessments on anything prior. Mills stated yes, when they went down the alley. Holmes asked which year that was in. Holmes asked if the assessment was all under the church at that time since it was one parcel then. Mills stated the church had their service in the alley and the parsonage was tied into it. Ludovissie asked if those two properties are separated. Mills stated yes, those two properties are separated. Holmes stated the assessment should just be for the parsonage since a new service was put in.

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Holmes stated she would check to see if they had already been assessed in 2011, if they have been assessed, the Church would not get assessed again for the Parsonage. Holmes stated the assessment is just for sewer, the water portion has already been taken care of.

Pilgrim stated that in the future, if there’s a project like this make sure grass is being planted, not 95% weeds. Pilgrim stated most of what she has is dandelion and thistles that she spent over two hours weeding. Wernberg stated the contractors are not landscapers, they do seed it, but what happens is the native vegetation which is the dandelions and sandburs will take over right away.

Wernberg restated that if anyone objects to the assessments they need to sign a document saying they object to it and the reason why. Holmes stated that the objections need to be turned in tonight, just flip over a piece of paper and write it down.

Strobel stated that the sewer line only goes partially into their yard in the back, but they are charged for the whole frontage road around the corner up to Mike Carr’s place. Strobel asked if that’s not a little excessive when you only have partial sewer in the back and get charged for everything around or does the sewer go back farther. Wernberg stated that it’s no different than if someone lives at the end of the line, they receive the same benefit as someone right next to them. Uselman stated it’s not where the sewer line goes to that is assessed it is the front footage. Wernberg stated that their property was actually calculated using the adjusted front footage because of the shape of the lot so they are probably charged less front footage than what they actually have. Holmes stated they are being assessed 185 feet instead of the 300 and some feet all the way around.

There was discussion about what happens if you don’t do anything with the assessment.

There was discussion about paying the assessment off at a later date and the interest that would need to be paid.

Hanlon stated he owes $18,000 for his assessments in Verndale. Hanlon stated that this is not Silicon Valley or New York City, this is Verndale, the assessments shouldn’t be that much. Holmes stated that Hanlon owns three parcels that were assessed and the $18,000 is for all three. Ludovissie stated the City understands but there is nothing the City can do about the cost.

Gould stated they have three (3) Lots but didn’t have sewer improvements done on the Lot that has the storage unit, why are they paying for improvements on that Lot. Wernberg stated the Lots are benefited just like anyplace else. Gould stated it will never be used for anything but storage. Wernberg asked what if you sell it. Gould stated no one would put improvements in there it’s a set of garages, no one will ask for water usage in a storage unit. Wernberg stated that that is what you are using the property for, the next user might want to put a house on it, it’s big enough, it’s a regular lot right. Gould stated it was a full lot. Carr stated they had this happen

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previously, there were two lots and the house was on one, but because there was potential it was way cheaper to put it in then to go back years down the road. Wernberg stated they still benefit from the pipe and the mainline being there. Gould stated everyone else does but he doesn’t. Wernberg stated it adds value to the property. Gould asked if both sides of the street were being charged. Holmes stated yes. Gould stated the City will be making a lot of money then. Wernberg stated no, they are spending a lot of money. Carr stated the City isn’t making any money. Carr stated that what was being assessed comes out to be 1/3 of what it cost the City to put the Sewer in, the City is paying the other 2/3, there is no money being made.

Bissell asked if the City has applied for everything that is possible to get the project paid for. Ludovissie stated the City has done everything they possibly could to get grant money for this.

Ludovissie stated that if anyone wants to stay around and look at their property on the map to see how the footage was figured out Kevin would be here.

Ludovissie closed the Final Assessment Hearing at 6:41 pm.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, Deputy Clerk Ray Ludovissie, Mayor