**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday October 11, 2021**

**6:00 pm**

**Verndale City Hall**

**101 Brown St SW**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

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

**STAFF ABSENT**: Cory Carr, Police Chief

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Clif Allen, Moore Engineering; Trinity Gruenberg, Verndale Sun; Tahna Rurup, Family Life Church; Robin Fish, Amos Self

**OPENING PRAYER:** The opening prayer was led by Tahna Rurup, Family Life Church

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND OCTOBER PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Carr to approve the September 13, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the October payables in the amount of $32,094.39, seconded by Stanley. AIF/MC.

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS:**

**Clif Allen - Moore Engineering:** Allen gave Water Tower project updates. Allen stated that payment is recommended for Partial Pay Estimate #8 in the amount of $37,050.00 for coatings (painting) completed.

A motion was made by Stanley to approve Partial Pay Estimate #8 for Maguire Iron in the amount of $37,050.00, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT –MIKE MADSEN-** Madsen stated that there were 8 medical calls for the month. Madsen stated that Don Ismil will be retiring in January and has a broken foot which has rendered him inactive until his retirement. Madsen stated that the Fire Department would like approval to hire Marcos Gomez as he was second choice of the last opening. Madsen stated that he would like to get Gomez trained as classes are starting in November.

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A motion was made by Runyan to approve hiring Marcos Gomez as a Fire Fighter, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

Madsen stated that the Fire Department received an anonymous donation of $2,000 and they would like to use this to replace their vent saw.

A motion was made by Carr to approve spending the donation on a vent saw, seconded by Stanley. AIF/MC.

Madsen stated that the school received a donation of 300 smoke detectors and the school will pass them out to students. Erckenbrack asked Madsen about reaching residents that don’t have kids in school. Madsen stated that he would pursue the grant with the Red Cross. Madsen stated that Fire Prevention week went very well. Madsen stated that they received a grant from One Zero K Pipeline in the amount of $2,395.00 to purchase a drop tank and hose.

**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated that there was a net profit of $7,327.87 for the month; Net Profit for the year in the amount of $34,580.24. Current stated that sales were up from 2020 in the amount of $9,987.42. Current stated that there is a bartender position open. Current stated that there will be Karaoke on Sat. Oct. 30 from 9 pm – 12 am with a costume contest. Current stated that work on the furnace and AC should begin next week.

**POLICE-CHIEF CARR-** Officer Erickson stated that things are pretty slow right now.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that he offered the maintenance job to one of the candidates and he has a tentative start date of October 18. Uselman stated that Fleisher will be laid off on October 19 and work when needed for snow removal. Uselman stated that street sweeping will probably start next week. Uselman stated that the water table has not rebounded yet, so the water restrictions are still in place. Uselman stated that he would like to put the furnace that is in the bar now in the shop since that furnace isn’t heating well.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current stated that she needs approval to transfer $56,010.72 from the Water Money market account and $21,141.09 from the Sewer Money Market account to the General Fund Checking account to pay Public Facilities Authority for the General Obligation bonds.

A motion was made by Carr to transfer $56,010.72 from the Water Money market account and $21,141.09 from the Sewer Money Market account to the General Fund Checking account to pay Public Facilities Authority for the General Obligation bonds, seconded by Stanley. AIF/MC.

Current stated that a System Replacement Fund is required for the PFA loan for the Water Treatment Plant. Current requested to set up a CD for this fund and deposit into it once per year.

Erckenbrack asked how this would be budgeted for, as the budget is complete. Current stated that it comes from the Water budget so it won’t affect the levy.

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A motion was made by Jacobson to approve setting up a CD for the System Replacement Fund with a deposit being made yearly, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Current stated that there is a MN Water Assistance Program which helps customers facing water or wastewater disconnection or past due water and wastewater bills. Current stated that the program makes payments on behalf of the eligible residential customer however, the City would need to register as a Vendor for our residents to use this program. Current asked if the City should register.

A motion was made by Carr for the City to register as a vendor for the MN Water Assistance Program, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

Current stated that West Central Telephone offers IT Support. Current stated that they would like them to come in and look at what the City has for software/backups. Current stated that there would be no cost for this; after their inspection they would then give estimates of what it would cost to have them do upgrades, etc. Current stated that the City could then decide if they want to move forward with anything. Current asked if this is something the City would be interested in. Carr asked if the City has IT people now. Current stated that the City uses Total Tech Support from Best Buy. Council agreed that if there is time for them to come then it wouldn’t hurt to get the estimate.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Tax Abatement Policy

Current stated that Ray Ludovissie had reviewed the policy and thought it was a good policy; he wasn’t aware of a policy being in place for this.

A motion was made by Runyan to accept the Tax Abatement Policy, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 21-1011 – Resolution Accepting a Donation from the Verndale Lions

A motion was made by Stanley to approve Resolution 21-1011 – Resolution Accepting a Donation from the Verndale Lions in the amount of $13,808.98 to be put in their Building Fund, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

1. Resolution 21-1011A – Resolution Accepting a Donation to the Verndale Fire Dept.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve Resolution 21-1011A - Resolution Accepting a Donation to the Verndale Fire Department in the amount of $500.00 from the Dale Deyounge, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

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1. Resolution 21-1011B - Resolution Accepting a Donation to the Verndale Fire Dept.

A motion was made by Jacobson to approve Resolution 21-1011B - Resolution Accepting a Donation to the Verndale Fire Department in the amount of $2,000.00 from anonymous., seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

1. Resolution 21-1011C - Resolution Accepting a Donation to Greenlawn Cemetery

A motion was made by Carr to approve Resolution 21-1011C - Resolution Accepting a Donation to Greenlawn Cemetery in the amount of $150.00 in memory of Harry & Clarinda Gumke, seconded by Jacobson. AIF/MC.

1. Amendment to Code of Ordinances: Chapter 111: Tobacco

Current stated that the publishing company didn’t change the age to 21 in the Purpose and Legislature has increased retailer penalties for furnishing or selling to persons under 21 and eliminated criminal penalties for underage possession, use or purchase (PUP) violations, allowing only non-monetary, civil penalties for underage use of false identification to purchase or attempt to purchase.

A motion was made by Carr to approve the Amendment to the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 111: Tobacco, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

1. Settlement -Nelson Auto Center

Current stated that the attorney needed the City to accept the settlement before he could sign off on it.

A motion was made by Jacobson to accept the settlement from Nelson Auto Center in the amount of $158.06, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

Mayor Erckenbrack adjourned the meeting at 6:35 pm.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Tara Erckenbrack, Mayor