**CITY OF VERNDALE**

**WADENA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday October 12, 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:**  Tyler Savaloja, Police Officer; Matt Uselman, Public Works Manager; Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer

**STAFF ABSENT**: Michael Madsen, Fire Chief, Cory Carr, Police Chief

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Robin Fish, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bartlett Township; Trinity Gruenberg, Verndale Sun; Joel Beiswenger, Kim Aagard, Tom Mayfield; Tri County Health Care

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

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES AND OCTOBER PAYABLES**

A motion was made by Carr to approve the September 14, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes as written, seconded by Erckenbrack. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve the October payables in the amount of $28,294.04, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

**ACKNOWLEDGE VISITORS**

**Clif Allen - Moore Engineering:** Allen wasn’t in attendance but sent a Memo.

A motion was made by Runyan to approve Change Order #6 which adjusts the contract value to the actual value based on actual cash allowance usage in the amount of -$27,891.25, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Carr to approve Partial Pay Estimate #17 (Final) for Eagle Construction in the amount of $130,202.67 contingent on final inspection, seconded by Erckenbrack. AIF/MC.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT – MIKE MADSEN-FIRE CHIEF-** Madsen wasn’t in attendance. Current stated that Madsen sent her message stating that there were 10 calls for the month; 7 fire and 3 medical. Carr stated that the Fire Department had a truck up at the school and went over safety with the kids for Fire Prevention Week.

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**LIQUOR STORE - MELISSA CURRENT-** Current stated there was a net loss of $4,989.89 for the month. Current stated that sales decreased in the amount of $8,052.01 over last year. Erckenbrack asked if there were any notable reasons for the decrease. Current stated that she needed to look at last year’s numbers. Erckenbrack stated that she would like her to look back and see if September is always a down month. Current stated that Meat Raffle started on October 2 and it went well; there will be a Meat Raffle every Friday at 6:00 pm. Runyan asked if the Liquor Store was open for the Vikings games. Current stated that the Liquor Store is supposed to be open until 6 pm on Sundays. Current stated that she didn’t realize it was a night game this week, so it might not have been open. Current stated that Pool Leagues are forming and the Liquor Store will be sponsoring one league. Current stated that the Liquor Store was asked to have a Bar at the Community Center on October 17 for the Fire Department’s Fish Fry.

**POLICE-CHIEF CARR-** Ludovissie asked Officer Savaloja if everything was good. Officer Savaloja stated yes. Erckenbrack asked if there is an officer at the school during the hybrid learning. Officer Savaloja stated yes. Council member Carr stated that the Police Committee needs to have a written schedule. Ludovissie asked to have a monthly report turned in. Officer Savaloja stated that he would make a note of it.

**PUBLIC WORKS- MATT USELMAN-MANAGER-** Uselman stated that he will be having a final walk through of the Treatment Plant with MDH and the engineers on the 14th. Uselman asked if there should still be an open house. Ludovissie suggested postponing this until next year. Erckenbrack asked if Uselman had time in his schedule to take the one or two people that have asked. Uselman stated yes. Uselman stated that the Cemetery Bylaws are being updated with the help of the Cemetery Committee; when they are done they will be brought to the Council for approval. Uselman stated that they are working on expanding the single lots at the Cemetery as there are only three (3) single lots available for purchase. Uselman stated that he was made aware by the mechanic that the City should probably start looking into a different plow truck; it is very rusted up in the engine compartment and the frame. Uselman stated that it would cost thousands of dollars to make all the repairs. Uselman stated that the City has had this truck for three (3) years and it paid for itself the first year in use. Uselman stated that he plans to get through this year and see what comes on the market. Uselman stated that he can watch MNBID to see what comes up, but it is a government run auction. Uselman stated that the plow trucks would have a lot of highway miles on them. Ludovissie asked if Uselman had it budgeted. Uselman stated no. Uselman stated that it would be beneficial if the Council set an amount that he could spend on a plow truck. Current stated that there are some funds available in the general fund. There was discussion about how expensive of a plow truck to be looking for. Uselman stated that he thought $25,000 should buy a decent truck that should last several years. Uselman stated that he would need a three-way plow and not a one-way plow.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve looking for and purchasing a plow truck that costs $25,000 or less, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

Uselman stated that Graba will be taking is CDL road test as soon as he can make an appointment; hopefully later this month.

**CLERK/TREASURER- MELISSA CURRENT**- Current asked the Council if the City could bring in a standalone policy for dental. Current stated that this would be something that the employees would pay

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for themselves. Current stated that the City currently doesn’t offer dental.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to allow a standalone dental policy for the employees that want it, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

Current stated that Health Insurance premiums for 2021 went up $46.76 per person per month; changes to the 2021 Budget have been made to include the increase. Current stated that Mike Willis is watering his yard after leveling it and asked if he could get a sewer credit. Council stated that they would like to have Willis billed first and then bring the bill to the next Council meeting in order to get the credit. Current stated that Joe Ingebrand from LMC has retired the City now hasJoe Gehrts as a contact. Current stated that she had a phone conference on Oct. 6 about driver and vehicle safety management operations. Current gave a list of Gehrts’ suggestions. Current stated that General Elections are on November 3 and the polls open from 7:00 am – 8:00 pm. Current stated that the final budget meeting is November 30 at 6:00 pm and the truth in taxation meeting is December 14 at 6:00 pm with the Regular Council meeting to follow.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. COVID-19 Business Assistance Program:

Current stated that four (4) applications were received. Current asked how they wanted to award each applicant. Council set up a committee consisting of Ludovissie and Erckenbrack to review the applications. Decisions on funds was tabled until Nov. 9, 2020. There was discussion about opening up a second round of funding.

A motion was made by Runyan to open up a second round of funding with applications due by November 5, 2020, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Resolution 20-1012 – TCHC

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve Resolution 20-1012 – A Resolution Approving, on a Preliminary Basis, Financing for a Project of Tri-County Hospital, D/B/A Tri-County Health Care, seconded by Runyan. Voting in favor were: Ackerson, Carr, Ludovissie and Runyan. None were opposed. Erckenbrack abstained as she is employed at the hospital. MC.

1. Resolution 20-1012A – CCY

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve Resolution 20-1012A – A Resolution of Sponsorship of the Community Concern for Youth Program with Todd-Wadena Community Corrections in the amount of $941.00, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

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1. Resolution 20-1012B – Donation to FD

A motion was made by Carr to approve Resolution 20-1012B – A Resolution Accepting a Donation from Coors Beverage Company to the Fire Department in the amount of $365.00, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

1. Tobacco License – The Pirate’s Den, LLC

A motion was made by Ackerson to approve a tobacco license for The Pirate’s Den, LLC, seconded by Runyan. AIF/MC.

1. Tobacco License – Rife’s

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to approve a tobacco license for Rife’s, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

1. Cemetery Plot Issue – Muriel Towler: Current stated that Towler had purchased the lot over the phone because she lives far away and wanted to proceed with marking a spot so that her husband could be buried. Current stated that about a week later Towler called and stated that she wasn’t happy with where her husband was buried and wanted him moved. Current stated that she told Towler that she would be responsible for the costs of moving him and Towler agreed. Current stated that she had Towler come to the Office and pick out the lot in person so that the right location would be marked. Current stated that she got a call from Towler after receiving the bill for moving locations asking if the City was paying for the moving of her husband. Current told her no, “I told you that you would be responsible and you agreed.” Current stated that Towler stated “I might have said that, but I was in grief and I don’t think that that is fair. Will the City pay half of the cost of $750.00; this was a misunderstanding” Current stated that she told Towler that she would talk to the Council. Ludovissie asked if Towler had signed off on the original of where she wanted him. Current stated yes, but she was in a hurry. Ludovissie stated so there was a mistake made but it wasn’t on the City’s end. Current stated that she didn’t believe it was on the City’s end. Uselman stated that the Cemetery Bylaws will be changed to state that all Cemetery lots must be purchased in person.

A motion was made by Carr to uphold Muriel Towler to the original Deed purchased for the Cemetery and not pay for the change in location, seconded by Ackerson. AIF/MC.

A motion was made by Erckenbrack to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 pm, seconded by Carr. AIF/MC.

**Submitted by: Attest:**

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Melissa Current, City Clerk/Treasurer Raye Ludovissie, Mayor