

**Sandstone City Council Meeting Minutes**  
**April 4, 2018**

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Kester, Franklin, Spartz, Devlin and Palmer

Members absent: None

Staff present: Administrator George and Recording Secretary Nelson

Others present: Craige Hiler, PeopleService

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Council, guests and staff recite pledge of allegiance.

**ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

**Motion Kester, second Palmer to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 5-0.**

**PETITIONS OR COMPLAINTS BY RESIDENTS AND/OR COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

There were comments about the time delay in clearing the sidewalks after a recent snowfall. There was dialogue regarding whether the streets or the sidewalks should be cleared first. It may be necessary to hire an on-call person to come in when necessary.

The Chamber of Commerce has yet to get someone to oversee the Quarry Days Festival. Does the Council want the City to take on that role? There was discussion regarding how many hours it can take. The advantage would be that there would be consistency from year to year. The Administrator pointed out that the first year, learning the ropes, is the difficult part. After that, it's tweaking things to be better each year. She stated that the whole staff pitch in, if the Council decided to take over the event. Council Members pointed out the difficulty in finding volunteers and it is usually the same people who end up doing it year after year. There is the possibility that the festival won't take place if someone does not step forward. The consensus was to wait another month to see if the Chamber is able to find someone. If they do not, the Council can revisit the subject.

The Administrator reviewed the log of complaints received from residents for the past month. A new property owner complained about water drainage issues; complaints were received regarding holes in the road on Jay street, Hwy 23 and Oriole St. There were complaints about a house in disrepair and about sidewalks not being plowed during the last few snowfalls. There was a concern about water quality and orange film on towels. Craige Hiler, with PeopleService, has been talking with this resident and didn't see any evidence of the orange film, only the caulk between the shower pieces turning yellow. However, he is planning to have a water sample tested.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** None

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Motion Franklin, second Palmer to approve the following Consent Agenda items:**

**(1) Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from March 7, 2018**

**(2) Revised Deputy Clerk/Utility Billing, Deputy Clerk, and Streets and Park Supervisor Job Descriptions.**

**Motion carried 5-0.**

## **OLD & CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

### MN Department of Public Safety – Termination of Lease; Drivers Exam Station

Last month, the Council received a letter from the MN Dept of Public Safety notifying them that the lease for use of the Council meeting room will be terminated on April 30, 2018. They are moving the Drivers Exam Station to Moose Lake “in order to serve more Minnesotans”. Council asked the Administrator to follow up and see if there is anything the City can do to change their mind.

The Administrator spoke with Josh Sipola, DVS Manager for Region 9. He stated that they already have a lease with Moose Lake and they will not be changing their mind. Last year, they re-mapped all 10 regions and are making adjustments based on population density. He also noted that they cannot offer CDL tests here in Sandstone; however, they will be able to offer them in Moose Lake. The written tests are not offered in Hinckley and are very limited in Pine City which will leave this area underserved.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### Pine County Tax-Forfeited Land Sale

The City received notification from Pine County of the proposed tax-forfeited land sale that will occur this year. There are 8 properties on the list that are in the City of Sandstone:

329 Minnesota Street

Vacant lot at the corner of Minnesota St & Palisade Ave

1114 Birch Avenue

313 Park Avenue

310 Park Avenue

605 Park Avenue

The Old Creamery Site

A sliver of land along Birch Avenue

The City can request the acquisition of any of these properties for certain and specific purposes, including a discounted purchase to correct blight issues. The City must respond within 60 days if interested in acquiring any of these parcels. The property would be pulled from the list for a 6-month period to allow County Board review and, if approved, for the acquisition to take place.

The Administrator spoke with Greg Beck of the Pine County Land Department about 605 Park Avenue. This property is, in her opinion, the worst of the bunch and definitely needs to be demolished. Beck said that the City could possibly acquire it for \$1 so that the structures can be demolished and clear the blight, preparing the lot for a new home. Neighbors have been complaining about this parcel for a number of years.

Council Members discussed two additional parcels that they would like to see acquired so that the structures can be demolished: 329 Minnesota Street and 1114 Birch Avenue. The Council is mostly concerned that these properties will be purchased and turned into rental property as is.

**Motion Kester, second Spartz to have the Administrator check on acquiring three properties – 329 Minnesota, 1114 Birch Avenue, and 605 Park Avenue for clearing of blight. Motion carried 5-0.**

### Upcoming Training Opportunities

There are several training opportunities that would be beneficial for staff and Council to attend: MN Mayor’s Association Conference – April 27-28; in Perham; First time attendee \$90 (plus lodging). Spartz is interested in attending.

MN Municipal Clerk's Institute – April 30 – May 4; in St. Cloud; \$445 – however, a \$300 scholarship has been received, bringing the registration down to \$145 (plus lodging). The Administrator would like Deputy Clerk / Utility Billing Jackson to attend.

Municipal City/County Managers Association (MCMA) – May 2 – 4; in Nisswa; \$400 (plus lodging)  
The Administrator would like to attend.

League of MN Cities (LMC) Annual Conference – June 20-22; in St. Cloud; \$400 regular attendee; \$150 first-time attendee (plus lodging). Devlin is interested in attending.

**Motion Kester, second Franklin to approve staff and Council Members attendance at the aforementioned trainings. Motion carried 5-0.**

Old School Arts Center (OSAC) – Application for Temporary Liquor License

The City received an Application for a Temporary Liquor License from Fran Levings, President of the Old School Arts Center. They are planning an Art Opening event that will take place on May 18<sup>th</sup> at OSAC.

**Motion Franklin, second Kester to approve the Temporary Liquor License for the Art Opening on May 18<sup>th</sup> at OSAC. Motion carried 5-0.**

**REPORTS:**

Fire Department

The Department responded to a motor vehicle accident on Tuesday and had a good turnout of firefighters. There was a delivery of fire hose that came in before normal working hours. The driver required the City provide a fork lift to unload the hose. Staff contacted Lambert's Lumber and they helped to unload the hose at the Fire Hall.

Park & Rec Commission Meeting – March 9, 2018

**Special Event Permit Application – Rapids Riders Whitewater Canoe and Kayak Club**

The City received a Special Event Permit Application from Derek Grisbeck on behalf of the Rapids Riders Whitewater Canoe and Kayak Club. They are planning a Rapids Riders Canoe U event for June 1-3 and would like to camp at Robinson Park. They anticipate having 15 event staff and 50 attendees. They plan to rent two portable toilets.

The Park & Rec Commission recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

- Fires are only allowed in fire pits, as follows:
  - 1 existing fire ring across from the bathroom by the picnic pavilion
  - 3 existing fire rings in the camping areas
- Cutting of trees for firewood is not allowed;
- Designate an area for vehicle parking, with signage;
- Portage only to camp sites – no vehicles;
- The Sheriff's Department should be made aware of the event.

It was brought up that this is quite a few people using the park and it looks like it might be a commercial use. The Administrator will provide them with the Commercial Use form if they are charging money for the attendees. The Council discussed going over the fees for camping the next time the fee schedule is updated.

**Motion Palmer, second Devlin to approve the Special Event Permit from Rapids Riders Whitewater Canoe and Kayak Club, with the Administrator to follow up on the commercial use question. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Appoint New Commission Member – David Chasson**

With the resignation of Tesla Chester, the Park & Rec Commission has a vacant seat. Efforts were made to recruit a student from East Central or from Harvest Christian School; however, no students have come forward. David Chasson has been attending the meetings for the past two months and expressed interest in serving on the Commission. The Park & Rec Commission recommends the City Council appoint David Chasson to fill the vacant seat. He does not live in Sandstone but spends a great deal of time in Sandstone and is vested here.

**Motion Franklin, second Spartz to approve the appointment of David Chasson to the Park & Rec Commission. Motion carried 5-0.**

Planning Commission Meeting – March 14, 2018

**Accept Resignation of Commissioner Cassandra Linder**

The Planning Commission recommends the City Council approve the resignation of Cassandra Linder. Linder stated that she is unable to attend the meetings. **Motion Franklin, second Spartz to accept the resignation of Cassandra Linder. Motion carried 5-0.**

The Planning Commission continues working on updating the zoning ordinance. In March, they worked on the Traditional Residential District.

EDA Meeting – March 28, 2018

- Tom Reppe from the Dept of Ag was present to discuss the Skunk Creek sediment sample results.
- The EDA approved the tax increment revenue note for Golden Horizons Midwest Properties.
- Representatives from One Roof Community Housing will be coming to the next EDA meeting to discuss potential projects in Sandstone.
- Franklin is interested in attending the BR&E training course May 23-25, 2018.

PeopleService Report – February 2018

Craig Hiler of PeopleService was present to answer any questions Council Members may have about his monthly reports. The City contracts with PeopleService to operate the water and wastewater systems for the City. Council had specifically wondered why there was a spike in water usage last January. Hiler explained that if the water usage and waste water pumped out is fairly close then everything is okay. It's when there is a great deal more water used than waste pumped out that indicates there is a leak or some other odd usage. He explained that the water going down the street drains is separate (this is stormwater). He stated that Inflow & Infiltration can be a problem. This occurs when stormwater is getting into the sanitary sewer system, which is then unnecessarily pumped to the sewer ponds. There are some trouble spots in town where I&I is occurring. The upcoming River Bluff project will address one of these trouble spots. Hiler stated that he checks the water usage, hours run on the pumps, chemicals used etc. every morning. Hiler then reviewed his monthly report with the Council. There were questions regarding the meters being used in Sandstone and the need for new meters at some properties.

Library Report

Librarian Jeanne Coffey reported that patrons are getting accustomed to the new hours; the new meeting times worked out better for the book clubs and by the end of the month the Story time was going strong.

The Friends of the Library have been asked to develop a welcome-kit for newcomers to the City modeled after the old Welcome Wagon. Staff answered 282 reference questions by the time the report had been written and had 1,475 visitors in March.

#### Building Inspection Report – March 15, 2018

Building Inspector Richard Drotning reported that he replied to email questions and phone calls regarding the proposed Pine County Government Center building and the proposed ambulance garage at Essentia Health Sandstone. He met with Mr. Bonander regarding reroofing 302 Main Avenue this spring. He also spoke with Mr. Allen regarding 501 Court Ave N; broken windows are to be boarded up by June 15<sup>th</sup>. The owner is also pursuing bids to reroof the building and address the pigeons.

#### Financial Reports

The Council reviewed the Cash Balance, Revenue & Expenditure Report for February, the Vendor Approval Summary Report – March 7, 2018 (Paid Claims) and the A/P Clerk Claims –March 8, 2018 through April 4, 2018. Mayor Spartz mentioned that the water rates were raised in previous years and that seems to have made a positive difference in the Water fund. There was a question regarding whether City staff is traveling to Mora to pick up auto parts and also whether cats are being trapped when complaints are received or on a constant basis. It is only when the City receives complaints. Staff will follow up on the auto parts question.

**Motion Devlin, second Palmer to approve reports and pay claims. Motion passed 5-0.**

#### **WRITTEN NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

The City submitted a letter to the MN Public Facilities Authority to request placement of upcoming water projects on the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund Intended Use Plan.

The City received an award letter from East Central Regional Arts Council for the Kettle River Watershed Mural. The project is now 75% funded. The Park Commission will probably cover the rest. It was noted that the Sandstone Area Chamber of Commerce and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe paid for the initial design work.

**ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:** The Administrator reported on the following items.

#### EDA Business Breakfast

- April 5, 2018 – 7:00 – 9:00 a.m. at Grace Lutheran Church

#### Lundorff Drive Ribbon Cutting

- April 5, 2018 11:00 a.m. – Meet at Members Co-Op Credit Union

#### Spring Clean Up

- Mondays in May – there may be conflicts with trash collection vehicles
- Something different each Monday – metal/appliances; tires; household items (couches, mattresses, etc.)
- Out on curb by 9:00 a.m.
- Street Crew & PHASE will pickup
- Anderson Recycling will take metal/appliances (no charge) and tires (charged by the ton); household items will be taken to the dump
- A notice will be placed in the paper and it will be in the newsletter

- Girl scouts are planning to do park cleanup on Saturday, April 28

#### Library Ceiling

- Adding support to suspended ceilings
- Replace damaged panels in conference room
- Degerstrom Construction - \$2,560

#### Maurena Griffin – CED Loan

- Withdrew her application

#### GPS 45:93

- The next meeting is April 27<sup>th</sup> in Sandstone at the Golf Course, 10:00 a.m. – noon with lunch optional
- Great opportunity to check it out

#### NLX – March 28, 2018

- Strategic Planning to help the Alliance make the transition from planning to lobbying for funding. The Administrator is working on getting Sandstone’s story to the legislature.

#### **ADJOURN**

**Motion Franklin, second Spartz to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Motion carried 4-0.**

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Peter Spartz, Mayor

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Kathy George, Administrator