

**Sandstone City Council Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Kester, Gaede, Spartz, Palmer, Riley

Members absent: None

Staff present: Administrator George, Recording Secretary Nelson

Others present: Alanea White with Pine County Courier

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Council, guests and staff recite pledge of allegiance.

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

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

PETITIONS OR COMPLAINTS BY RESIDENTS AND/OR COUNCIL MEMBERS:

There were comments about the lack of Christmas lights and a flood light by Lion's Hill. The Christmas lights will not be going up this year due to weather, a personnel shortage and timing of the recent snow storms. The American flags were taken down as they are becoming tattered. There have been several complaints regarding mail boxes damaged by the snow plow. The City requests that citizens repair/replace their own mail box and send the bill to the City. Also, several complaints about snow plowing, along with several compliments. Another comment was received about the "cow tunnel" at the end of Lion's Hill, concern regarding safety. A complaint was received from a resident in the Senior building because her rent went up 13% (\$102.00). She asked if the City would entertain the idea of limiting rent increases to 3% per year.

PUBLIC HEARINGS OR PRESENTATIONS:

Public Hearing: Summary Enforcement – 205 Division Street

Motion Palmer, second Riley to open the public hearing regarding 205 Division St. at 6:07 p.m.

Motion carried 5-0.

City staff has been trying to get this property cleaned up since last summer. Several attempts to communicate with the owner have been made by staff and the Building Official. A City Notice of Intent to Terminate and Abate Nuisance was sent to property owner on October 30th, noting building materials and construction debris in yard, including siding, paint cans, bath tub, door, plywood, windows and wood.

Administrator George reported that the property owner did make some efforts to clean up the debris prior to the snow fall. It is difficult to determine if additional efforts are required now, since everything is covered with snow. George stated that the owner stopped into City Hall this week and said he is trying to fix up the house and then plans to sell it. He filled out the paperwork required by the Building Official for the work he is doing as well. George stated that staff will continue to monitor this property.

Motion Spartz, second Kester to delay any action until the spring when the snow is gone. Motion carried 5-0. Motion Spartz, second Riley to close the public meeting at 6:10 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Presentation: Truth in Taxation Meeting

The Administrator pointed out that the handout she has put together is available to anyone wishing to have one and can be picked up at City Hall. She went on to explain the different tax levels and classifications,

estimated market value, taxable market value and tax capacity number. The general fund expenditures were expounded upon. The revenue sources were covered. If the 2020 Proposed Levy is approved, the City tax rate will go from 81.0351% to a projected 72.5346%, a decrease of 8.5%. The tax impact on home owners was elaborated upon. George explained that some changes were made to the budget/levy since the 2020 Preliminary Budget and Levy were approved in September. She added a revenue of \$10,000 in the General Fund for Police Aid that is received every year. She also eliminated the \$25,000 contingency place-holder that was in the preliminary budget. These changes resulted in a proposed levy decrease of 2.61%. George also reviewed the Tax Capacity and Taxable Market Value numbers for Sandstone as compared to other Pine County cities. She noted that increasing the market value in Sandstone is critical in order to reduce the tax burden on property owners.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion by Palmer, second by Gaede to approve the November 20, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting minutes and the 2019 Operating Transfers as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

OLD & CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Sale of Parcels 45.5250.001 and 45.5250.002

The City acquired 1114 Birch Avenue last year along with 4 other tax forfeited properties. Since that time, the City conducted asbestos testing and abatement, followed by demolition of all structures on the site. Expenses incurred to date on this property total \$12,655.20.

This property acquisition involves three separate parcels: 45.5251.000 (the property with the structures on it), 45.5250.001 and 45.5250.002 (both of which are bare land).

The City advertised for bids in the 11/7, 11/14 and 11/21 editions of the Courier. One bid was received from Karry White for two of the parcels: 45.5250.001 for \$2,000 and 45.5250.002 for \$500 (both bare land).

Motion Kester, second Gaede to accept the bids from Karry White for the purchase of parcel 45.5250.001 for \$500 and 45.5250.002 for \$2,000. Motion carried 5-0.

Ordinance No. 20191218-01 Amending City Code 1310 – Parking Regulations

This item was discussed at the November Council meeting. Council Members and Staff worked together to address concerns about people parking in front of mailboxes, as well as disabled vehicles being parked on City streets for extensive periods of time.

Motion Palmer, second Kester to adopt Ordinance No. 20191218-01 amending City Code 1310 – Parking Regulations. Motion carried 5-0.

Water Loop Project Update

The City was contacted by a property owner from Creekside Lane, who is interested in hooking up to City water if the project will run by his property. In considering the possibility of modifying the proposed route for this project, a meeting was held with area property owners on December 10th. Seven property owners were invited, two attended. Also in attendance were City Engineer Greg Anderson, Mayor Pete Spartz, Council Member Phil Kester, and Administrator Kathy George.

Anderson reviewed the original plan to run the water main down Old Military Road. He also discussed the option of jogging off OMR and running down Creekside Lane, then jogging back to OMR. Another option discussed is continuing down OMR as originally planned, but providing an extension over to Creekside

Lane. Anderson stated that the two options discussed regarding Creekside Lane amount to about an extra 100' of water main.

Of the two property owners in attendance, one is definitely interested in getting City water, the other is not. The group thought that the option to jog over to Creekside Lane and then jog back to OMR was the best option because it provides continuous flow.

Motion Kester, second Gaede to amend the water loop project route to include a portion of Creekside Lane. Motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

Proposed Amendments to City Code 1330 regarding Snowmobile Regulations, adding Off-Highway Vehicles

The question has come up from time to time about whether or not ATVs are allowed in City limits. There is confusion because the regulations address state and county roads, and even township roads in some circumstances, but are silent about city roads, except to say that "You may not ride in any area restricted by local ordinances".

Currently, the Recreational Areas ordinance prohibits motorized vehicles or machines of any kind from driving on or across any park. The noise ordinance prohibits operation of any minibike, snowmobile or other recreational vehicle not licensed for travel on public highways between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

The City does have a Snowmobile ordinance, which also sets an acceptable route for travel through the City. In reviewing this ordinance, Administrator George stated that it would be fairly easy to amend it to include OHVs [which includes all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), off-highway motorcycles (OHMs) and off-road vehicles (ORVs)].

Additionally, staff has been talking about the designated routes and have some suggested changes. The Council discussed the current regulations and where the ATVs actually drive. Various suggestions were made regarding the route of travel. Administrator George will continue to work with staff on the map and bring it back to the Council for approval.

Ordinance No. 20191218-02 Rescind City Code 1335 Motorcycles and Motor Bikes

Administrator George reviewed Section 1335 regarding motorcycles and motor bikes. It appears that this ordinance is not necessary, as the use and operation of motorcycles and motor bikes is addressed in State law. A separate City ordinance is not necessary.

Motion Kester, second Gaede approve Ordinance No. 20191218-02 rescinding City Code 1335 Motorcycles and Motor Bikes. Motion carried 5-0.

Proposed 2020 City Budget & Levy

The Council approved the 2020 Preliminary Budget & Levy on September 18, 2019. Now is the time for the Council to approve the 2020 Final City Budget & Levy. The Preliminary Levy proposed an increase of 4.63%. Since that time, Administrator George added a revenue of \$10,000 that is received every year for Police Aid. She also eliminated the \$25,000 contingency placeholder that was set in case anything came up between September and December. If approved, the final 2020 City Levy represents a 2.61% decrease from the 2019 City Levy.

Motion Spartz, second Palmer to approve the Resolution No. 20191218-01 adopting the final 2020 City budget with a Total Operating Budget of \$2,453,877. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion Palmer, second Spartz to approve Resolution No. 20191218-02 adopting the final 2020 City Levy of \$471,214. Motion carried 5-0.

Proposed 2020 EDA Budget & Levy

The Council approved the 2020 Preliminary EDA Budget & Levy on September 18, 2019. Now is the time for the Council to approve the 2020 Final EDA Budget & Levy. The final 2020 EDA Levy represents a 14.2% increase over the 2020 EDA Levy.

Motion Kester, second Riley to approve Resolution No. 20191218-03 adopting the final 2020 EDA Budget with a Total Operating Budget of \$38,112. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion Riley, second Palmer to approve Resolution No. 20191218-04 adopting the final 2020 EDA Levy of \$10,883. Motion carried 5-0.

REPORTS:

Sheriff's Deputy Report – November 2019

The report was included in the Council packet. The Council discussed how many calls the deputy received over the month – 225 in November.

Fire Department – November 2019

Training in November was record-keeping and SCBA usage. The Department also held a training burn exercise on city-owned property at 310 Park Avenue. The Department received eight calls during the month of November; 1 regarding the sprinkler system at the John Wright building, 1 false alarm, 1 vehicle fire, 1 vehicle extrication, 1 building fire, 2 medical assists, and 1 assist other government entity. Mayor Spartz commented that the call regarding the “spinning light” in the John Wright building is very much appreciated.

Resolution No. 20191218-05 Accepting Donation from Essentia Health

Motion Palmer, second Gaede to approve Resolution No. 20191218-05 accepting the \$1,691.00 donation from Essentia Health to be used by the Sandstone Fire Department to purchase AED's for city buildings and emergency services in the City of Sandstone. Motion carried 5-0.

Library Report – November 2019

Librarian Jeanne Coffey submitted November's report noting the hosting of author Dean Hovey who spoke to several of his devoted readers. A Legacy program was held with an Origami expert and attendees made some very attractive designs. During a library board meeting, the City Administrator George gave an update on the “Rock” project. The Friends of the Sandstone Library met to plan activities for the upcoming year. Staff answered 215 inquiries and helped 1,150 patrons and had 3 story times with a total of 32 kids attending. Council members inquired about the new heating system. George stated that staff has been working with the subcontractor to get controls worked out.

Personnel Committee Report – Streets & Parks Maintenance Worker

The Council directed the Personnel Committee to undertake the process of hiring a full-time Streets & Parks Maintenance Worker. The position was advertised in the 11/7, 11/14 and 11/21 editions of the Pine County Courier. Four applications were received.

The Personnel Committee (Mayor Spartz and Councilor Kester), including Administrator George and Streets & Parks Department Supervisor Hiler, conducted interviews on December 9th of all four candidates. After review, scoring, and discussion, the Personnel Committee recommends the City offer the position to Waylon Franklin effective January 1, 2020, with a starting wage of \$22.34/hour. According to the union contract, a .50 cent increase will apply after the satisfactory conclusion of the probationary period. The full union wage for this position is required after one year of employment.

Motion Gaede, second Riley to approve the recommendation of the Personnel Committee to offer the Streets and Parks Maintenance Worker position to Waylon Franklin effective January 1, 2020 with a starting wage of \$22.34/hour. Motion carried 5-0.

Planning Commission Meeting – December 11, 2019

The Commission worked on the residential planned unit development criteria. They also looked at accessory building structures, deciding to move this language into each district so it can be found more readily. The Commission discussed the process of inviting the public in to let them know that there are proposed changes to the zoning ordinance. They also looked at City Code 800.19 regarding streets and sidewalks; new buildings are required to have an impervious surface driveway from the curb to the property line. This language will also be moved into each district so it is more easily found.

Park & Rec Commission Meeting –December 13, 2019

The Robinson Park Legacy Grant was approved by the Greater MN Parks & Trails Commission in the amount of \$902,654. This recommendation will be forwarded to the State Legislature for approval. The amount approved is \$255,000 less than requested. Items that were eliminated by GMPTC were restrooms, picnic shelters with tables, and the concrete shelter plaza.

The Commission agreed to host the City Skate and Slide again, which will occur on Saturday, February 1, 2020.

The meetings for 2020 will take place at Sprouts on the second Friday of the month at 8:30 a.m.

Appoint Oliver Dykstra to Commission

Mary Franklin has tendered her resignation from the Park & Rec Commission, as she is leaving the area. The Commission regrettably accepted her resignation and recommends that the City Council appoint Oliver Dykstra to fill the vacant seat.

Motion Riley, second Spartz to appoint Oliver Dykstra to fill the vacant seat on the Parks and Recreation Commission. Motion carried 5-0.

EDA Meeting – December 16, 2019

The EDA received a presentation from Mark Jacobs, Dovetail Partners, on the proposed ATV training/obstacle course. Of the surveys that were received, 50% were in support, 44% opposed, with one person remaining neutral. The Dovetail team will be looking at the comments received, doing some environmental review, and then bring recommendations back to the EDA.

The EDA also received reports from Karl Schuettler and Amanda Vuicich from the Northspan Group. One report compiled the results of Business Retention & Expansion interviews they conducted with 15 local business owners. The second report they provided was a cluster and rail study.

Other updates were provided: The Business Park is now considered shovel ready by DEED. Proposals are due from developers for the redevelopment of The Rock by Friday. There is a contractor working on patching the roof of The Rock. The John Wright building is still undergoing cleanup from the flood that occurred there.

Rental Inspection Report – November 2019

There is still quite a long list of correction orders. Two units had first time inspections. There were no re-inspections or any that have been brought into compliance. The inspector gives residents plenty of time as long as they are actively working on repairs.

Pine City has implemented an administration fine ordinance. Administrator George will obtain a copy. Implementing this ordinance may be a way to encourage landlords to comply with the City's ordinance without going through the court system.

Council Members asked about the smoke detector rules – how long an owner has to get them installed/repaired. It was suggested that the Rental Appeals Board meet quarterly to discuss some of these details more thoroughly.

Building Inspection Report – November 2019

One building, one maintenance, one demolition and one right-of-way permit were issued in November. There are five current building projects going on, with four right-of-way permits ongoing.

Streets & Parks Supervisor Report – November 2019

Along with the regular potholes, garbage, trees and snow, a culvert replacement and Lion's Hill chalet upgrade, there was a downed street light that had been hit by a car. There was a question regarding a sign in the chalet that is written on notebook paper. There is still an alarm going off in the John Wright building because the system is not connected to a phone. At the city shop, the septic tank was pumped. The Chevy truck that the council authorized was purchased for \$46,000 and came with two plow attachments. The 1998 Ford F-450 and the 1994 Ford F-250 will be offered for sale on the Public Surplus Auction site. Equipment maintenance is ongoing.

PeopleService Report – November 2019

Administrator George reviewed the report with the Council. She mentioned that the contractor had trouble finding the water shutoff valve for the Credit Union building when it was being prepared for demolition. The contractor is still having trouble with high water at lift station #2 due to the natural spring underneath the ground.

Financial Reports – November 2019

The Council reviewed the Cash Balance, Revenue & Expenditure Report for November and the A/P Clerk Claims.

Motion Kester, second Palmer to approve the Cash Balance, Revenue & Expenditure Report for November and the A/P Clerk Claims in the total amount of \$477,870.06. Motion carried 5-0.

WRITTEN NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS: None

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

- ❖ Pine County Updates
 - True County Assessing System – meeting November 26 was attended by George and Mayor Spartz

- Local Government Officials Meeting – January 28, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome.
- ❖ Sewer Lining Project – Washington, Court, Minnesota
 - Originally schedule for December 9 – 12, rescheduled to December 26-27
 - Contractor will notify the neighborhood
 - 2 sections cannot be slip lined: the section near the foundation of the nursing home and another section in Minnesota St. Alternatives are being explored.
- ❖ City Hall Boiler Project
 - Staff is working with the contractor to figure out the balancing/temperature controls
- ❖ Fire Hall Building Improvements
 - Subcontractor was in town yesterday to check the main front door, making minor adjustments and sealing it better
- ❖ River Bluff Project
 - SEH is working with contractor on final documents required
 - Final Pay application should be presented at January meeting
- ❖ Decorative Street Light
 - Unidentified person/vehicle hit the decorative street light on the corner of 3rd & Main
 - Insurance claim has been filed, the repair will be \$6,186
- ❖ Essential Ambulance/Rent Agreement
 - Contract will terminate February 1
- ❖ Minnesota Power Franchise Agreement
 - Mayor Spartz, Council Member Palmer and Administrator George met together December 11
 - Will start conversation with MP and see where it goes

ADJOURN

Motion Riley, second Kester to adjourn at 8:22 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Peter Spartz, Mayor

Kathy George, Administrator