



CITY OF TOWER
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
Civic Center and e-GoToMeeting

September 14, 2020

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Mayor Kringstad called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Present: Councilor Kevin Norby, Councilor Sheldon Majerle, Mayor Kringstad, Councilor Mary Shedd, Councilor David Setterberg

Staff Present: City Attorney Mitch Brunfelt, Ambulance Director Dena Suihkonen, Fire Chief Paige Olson, Clerk/Treasurer Victoria Ranua

Others present: John Bassing*, Joan Broten, Marshall Helmberger, Nancy Larson, Lee Peterson*, Dave Rose, Lisa Sanderson, Keith Scheweiberger, and three unidentified attendees*

*e-attendee

2. Accept Agenda

A motion by Setterberg to accept the agenda. Second by Norby. Motion carried unanimously, with Shedd absent from vote.

3. Accept minutes

A motion by Setterberg to accept the minutes of the July 13, 2020 Regular Council meeting, the August 5, 2020 Special Council meeting, and the August 10, 2020 Regular Council meeting. Second by Majerle. Motion carried unanimously, with Shedd absent from vote.

4. Public Input

Joan Broten (Tower) spoke about questions and concerns surrounding former Riverside Dump and plans to develop the area by Dave Rose.

Dave Rose (New London) spoke on behalf of himself and his neighboring property owner, Geoff Griffin, about being informed by City and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) staff on the need to perform testing on their property which overlaps with the former Riverside Dump location in order to make certain permit and enforcement decisions. Dave made a statement that he feels its unfair that he must pay

the \$5,000-\$10,000 for the testing, when the City was informed by the MPCA about the need to perform these tests prior to development in 2016. He stated that if he does the testing, he then assumes the liability.

Nancy Larson (Soudan) spoke about importance of the Council encouraging the utility users filling out the current income survey to help the City apply for grants, like the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), that apply to low-to-moderate income communities.

5. Correspondence

Tower Cemetery Association in a letter dated August 28, 2020 inquiring if the City of Tower intended to continue to support the association.

The Prospector Trail ATV club issued an undated letter of thanks for recent permission to improve City trails with the assistance of City staff.

6. Consent Agenda

A motion by Shedd to accept the consent agenda. Second by Norby. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Unfinished Business

7.1 Human Resources, Personnel Policy

7.2 Human Resources, Performance Review

Councilor Setterberg and Clerk/Treasurer Ranua gave an overview of efforts to adopt a Personnel Policy and Performance Review standards.

Setterberg made a motion have a working session to discuss a Personnel Policy and Performance Reviews in the next two weeks. Second by Norby. Motion carried unanimously.

7.3 Report ad-hoc Pre-Compliance Blight Committee

The ad-hoc Pre-Compliance Blight Committee gave a report on the status of their efforts which have only met with partial success. Next step for properties is to issue a Compliance Order (Citation), but City has no Blight Enforcement Officer.

A motion by Shedd to appoint Kringstad as City Blight Enforcement Officer. Second by Majerle. Motion carried unanimously.

7.4 Report, Audit Management Workgroup Report

Councilor Setterberg gave an overview of the efforts to address various audit management points. Informational only.

7.5 Propane Bid Opening

The City received two sealed propane bids, each which differed slightly.

Como: \$1.049/gallon, no delivery fee, no tank swap needed, kept on keep-fill status

Superior Fuel: \$0.959/gallon, \$3.98 delivery fee, new install at airport \$199.00 + 10 feet copper line, tank swap within 2 weeks of paperwork execution.

The Council tabled this analysis for further review due to City Attorney needed to leave.

7.6 Cell Tower Lease

City Attorney Brunfelt verbally gave Council an analysis of the current American Tower lease agreement. Stating that our current terms are good the proposal presented by American Tower in Fall 2019 does not need to be acted on. That proposal was also a perpetual easement. Even with our City Charter provision against perpetual easement, the attorney did not recommend a perpetual easement. We also received a proposal from Tower Point (Atlanta, GA) for a long-term lease buyout.

8. New Business

8.1 Ambulance, Status of Vehicles

A motion by Shedd to declare the 2011 GMC Ambulance surplus equipment. Second by Majerle. Motion carried unanimously.

Ambulance Director Suihkonen will get a valuation on the vehicle to for the Council to evaluate the disposal method.

A motion by Setterberg to pursue CARES ACT funding for one or two ambulances. Second by Majerle. Motion carried unanimously.

8.2 Airport, Seaplane Noise Abatement

Airport Manager John Burgess presented an overview of noise abatement procedure approved by the Airport Commission. This procedure will be included in a MNDOT publication sent out to all pilots. Informational only.

8.3 Fire, Post Officer Positions

A motion by Shedd to post Assistant Fire Chief and Captain positions. Second by Setterberg. Motion passed unanimously.

8.4 Data Practice Policy

A motion by Setterberg to adopt a data practice policy. Second by Norby. Motion passed unanimously.

8.5 Grant Writing

Reviewed an unsolicited proposal by Community Coaching for grant writing services for needed identified by our emergency responders. Half of the cost can be covered by an IRRR grant, and more can be secured by certain grants. New ambulance cost over \$200,000 and some ambulance equipment around \$25,000 or more.

A motion by Shedd to accept proposal by Community Coaching for grant writing. Second by Norby. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion by Majerle to accept Resolution 2020-03X Authorizing IRRR funding for Grant Writing. Second by Setterberg. Motion carried unanimously.

8.6 Resolution 2020-03X Certifying Unpaid Utility Bills against property Taxes

Clerk/Treasurer Ranua presented delinquent utility accounts. If the Council approves the presented resolution at the October City Council meeting after a hearing of any delinquent users, the delinquent amounts of over \$19,000 will be certified against their respective property taxes. Some Councilors noted that this was not the most effective tool to get delinquent accounts rectified.

8.7 Public Works, Sidewalk Proposal

There is a \$50,000 IRRR Streetscapes Grant with a balance of \$30,000 to make improvements around highly visible sections of the City. This was gained by using the matching City funds allocated for the improvements around the Scenic Rivers Clinic and Tower-Soudan Elementary School on Spruce Street and 2nd Street North.

A motion by Setterberg to approve the quote by CC Winger for \$29,000 to replace the sidewalks at the Civic Center and City Hall. Second by Majerle. Motion passed unanimously.

8.8 Hoodoo, Long-term Dock Renewal Request (Schweiberger)

A motion by Setterberg to table the dock lease request by K. Schweiberger.
Second by Norby. Motion passed unanimously.

8.9 Budget FY2021

A motion by Shedd to have the Clerk/Treasurer present a budget by September 22, 2020 to be reviewed at Special Meeting for September 28, 2020. Second by Setterberg. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Pay the Bills

A motion by Shedd to pay the bills. Second by Kringstad. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Adjourn

A motion by Majerle to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,



Victoria Ranua
Clerk/Treasurer

Approved by Council on:

October 12, 2020