**Willow River City Council Meeting**

January 7, 2019

Approved February 4, 2019

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Willow River City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, January 7th, 2019 at Willow River City Hall.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Brent Switzer.

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Council Present:** Brent Switzer, Sheldon Johnson, Darryl Poslusny, Chris Ketchmark and Vickie Whitehouse

**Staff Present:** Diane Nelson and Kathi Bennett

**Others Present:**  Gerard Bennett, John Mikrot, Rosie Mielke, Art Underhill, Jerry Kachmarzinski, Steven and Victoria Prachar and the Askov American.

Brent Switzer, Sheldon Johnson and Vickie Whitehouse took the Oath of Office.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Darryl made a motion to approve the agenda. Chris seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

**Willow River Fire Department, Gerard Bennett**- the Fire Department has had 0 fire calls, 2 EMS calls for a total of 2 calls. 2018 ended with a call total of 134 calls. Tanker #5 is still at the FCI. It is having a hydraulic water pump put on it. The snowmobile is back, it looks good and is ready to go. We also had helmets airbrushed for the WRFD at the FCI. The 4500 lbs. compressor is going in Tuesday. The Department is looking at getting pagers and radios. The money that was donated for the compressor frees up some monies to go to the radios and pagers. Brent Switzer also donated $1100 to the Fire Department which will go towards the radios and pagers as well. That should be good to keep them going. They are still looking for a long term solution. Truck #1 needed some repairs. That cost around $2000. Denham Run donated their cans to the Fire Department which brought in around $777. It is much appreciated. The Sturgeon Lake Lions donated $10,000 to the Fire Department to go towards the compressor. That is huge and greatly appreciated. Yearly reviews went well and we had 1 that didn’t qualify for retirement and he is aware and going to try to do better. Gerard discussed the contract increase. He has talked to others on the department and feels that 3% is fair. He is aware of rising costs and also the need to keep taxes in line so he feels that 3% would be fair. Vickie makes a motion to increase the contracts 3%. Darryl seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

**Water and Sewer, John Mikrot –** There was a hydrant on Old Sawmill Road that was broken. John had drained it 3 weeks earlier and it was fine at that time. He feels that the hydrant was used and it doesn’t drain properly and it froze. It could have been very costly. Rural water helped to fix it and since we are members, they didn’t charge us. The City had to notify the residents that water would be shut off for a short time on December 26th. It ended up being shut off for only about 20 minutes and the hydrant was broken in the fully open position. It is an ongoing problem. Someday something is going to go very wrong. Brent asked what he suggested. He replied that if he would catch them “taking” water he would call the Sheriff’s Office because it is stealing and a felony. It is very serious if it is uncontrolled. He is not talking about the contractors who come to the office and get approval from the City and use the meter. He is talking about those that do not contact the City prior. There could be some serious issues, especially if the system would become contaminated. Vickie asked if we should put trail cameras up. John didn’t know but said that what we are doing isn’t working. Sheldon asked if we can shut those hydrants off and John said “no”. John stated that we got lucky this time that it wasn’t much worse. The Council discussed locks. We would also need to check with the LMC regarding how that affects insurance and Fire Department response. Gerard mentioned the concern of people using the hydrants that don’t know how to properly use them. That can do serious damage as well. Kathi mentioned that we don’t make that much on hydrant usage by contractors.

**City Clerk, Diane Nelson –** The checkbook is in balance. We have a special election coming up for the State Senator seat. The Primary is January 22nd and the Election is February 5th. I was thinking that I could get by with just 2 additional election judges. Sheldon makes a motion to approve 2 election judges. Vickie seconded. Motion carried with all in favor. We had students come from the school and they did some community work. They cleaned and put plastic on the windows. We will have the auditors here on January 29th. There is a local government meeting on January 29th in Pine City. The census 2020 meeting is coming up and someone will be out Tuesday, Jan 8th to do a presentation for Vickie and I. Rick Fjosne has said that he has used up all of the sand. He would like to know if we want to pay by the load or by the yard. The load cost $800 or $14/yard. Darryl said it by the yard. Chris makes a motion that it is charged by the yard. Darryl seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

**Water and Sewer Billing, Katie Bennett –** Kathi sent out 117 mailed bills and 28 e-bills. The total billing was $11,177.06. Late fees totaled $98.90. 13 shut off notices were mailed and 4 door hangers were hung with no shut offs.

**Flood Update – Vickie –** We need to approve payment to TNT for $44,609.95. The contractor requested that the retainage be reduced to 1%. There is a punch list that they need to complete in order for us to release that retainage. By approving this payment we are agreeing to the retainage reduction.

Vickie and Brent received an email from Jason Boyle of the DNR. The County wants a bridge and the DNR wants a culvert. So, that is what is being discussed at this time.

**Old Business**

**New Business**  -

1. Organizational Resolution – Motion made by Darryl to keep the organizational resolution the same. Sheldon seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
2. Fee Schedule – Chris makes a motion to approve the fee schedule. Diane noted that the only change would be the 3% increase to the fire contracts. Sheldon seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
3. Fire Chief – Gerard has submitted an application for Fire Chief. Sheldon makes a motion to accept Gerard as Fire Chief. Darryl seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
4. Light at water plant- a light is out at the water plant. Sheldon said to have John get it fixed.
5. Garbage at park – Jerry has changed it for us. How do we want to handle it? He said that he doesn’t mind changing it.
6. Audit agreement – Motion made by Vickie to approve the agreement with Eide Bailly to audit our records. Sheldon seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
7. Historical Society donation- last year we gave $300. Sheldon makes a motion to donate $300 donation to the Pine County Historical Society. Vickie seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
8. Gambling permit – Fire Relief Association. Darryl made a motion to accept the gambling permit for the Relief Association. Sheldon seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
9. Special Election – see above under Clerk.

Motion made by Darryl to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded. Motion carried with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Nelson