**Willow River City Council Meeting**

October 5, 2020

Approved November 2, 2020

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Willow River City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, October 5th, 2020 via WebEx and at Willow River City Hall.

The Council met at 6:30 PM for the reviews of Kathi Bennett and Diane Nelson. Kathi was given a $1.50/hr. raise and Diane was given a $1.75/hr. raise as well as 2 hours PTO per pay period.

**Council Present:** Brent Switzer, Chris Ketchmark, and Vickie Whitehouse were present at City Hall. Sheldon Johnson and Kevin McGreanor were via WebEx.

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

**Others Present:** John Mikrot, Gerard Bennett and Aleana White via Webex.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Vickie makes a motion to approve the consent agenda. Chris seconded.

Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Chris Ketchmark - yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

**Special Guest, Barb Mlaskoch- annexation of property.** Barb did not call in to address the Council.

**Willow River Fire Department, Gerard Bennett**- the Fire Department has had 18 fire calls, 75 EMS and 1 other call for a total of 94 this year. The department is working on truck driving and operation practice. They have been getting the work done locally since we no longer have the FCI available. The department will start getting the trucks cold weather ready. We are still looking at a grant with Sandstone for radios with the Mutual Aid Association to upgrade radios. There was discussion regarding the Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) to purchase new radios. If new radios are purchased with those funds, Gerard said that they would still like to upgrade the base radios. October is Fire Awareness month and they don’t quite know how to stay in touch with the kids on that. They are thinking of making goodie bags for the school to hand out. The gun raffle is still happening. The night of will be quite different though. More details to follow. They are following COVID-19 standard operating guidelines. The department is sanitizing and cleaning equipment after each call. They will be looking at getting some new gear for a couple of the firefighters. There was a donation from the Gamst’s and also one from the Volk’s/Vandryk’s. Sheldon asked if there was anything else above and beyond that we could use the CRF for to assist the Fire Department.

**Water and Sewer, John Mikrot –** It’s been a busy month. John will be winterizing the bathroom. The final repairs will be done to the lift station this week. They will be flushing hydrants the first ½ of October. John has finished jetting the sewer mains. The media is still waiting. They have found a truck to suck the old media out so they should be scheduling it soon. The gate valves will be cleaned for winter. John patched some of the roads until he ran out of patch. Sheldon approved the purchase of more so that is ordered. The school contacted John and Vickie regarding the storm drain and when it is going to be fixed and John let them know that is was fixed last year. They are concerned that it is low. John thanked the Lumber yard for their assistance with unloading stuff for the City. They are always willing to help. Kathi brought up that Julie Mlaskoch has asked for the City to reevaluate her usage. She doesn’t have a meter for sewer, so it is averaged for the size of the house. She asked because her kids have moved out and it is just her there. The Council said that they would consider it and would get back to Kathi.

**City Clerk, Diane Nelson** – Checkbook is in balance. I did the follow up report for the CRF funds. Shelly Gockowski stopped in and she would like another speed limit sign on Chipmunk Lane. She said that a lot of people walk on that street and cars fly by. Kathi said that she has heard complaints as well. Shelly said that she has had 3 cars in her yard. Sheldon thought that we have enough signs out there. Brent agreed. Brent said that it will be taken under consideration.

**Water and Sewer Billing, Katie Bennett** – Kathi had a list of the accounts that are delinquent to go down to the County to be assessed to their taxes. Kathi talked about late fees and asked the Council if they wanted to continue to waive them or to start charging them again. If someone needs assistance from a COVID related hardship, they can come and talk to us. Diane suggested that we put something on our billing cards to have them come **in and** talk to us. Sheldon thought that we should start charging them again. Chris makes a motion to start charging late fees November 1st. Sheldon seconded.

Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Chris Ketchmark - yes

Kevin McGreanor – got disconnected from WebEx.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Sheldon brought up the fact that the City was not ordered by the state to waive those fees but did so to help residents out during a difficult time. Diane brought up that we will be having a Public Hearing at the beginning of next month’s meeting for the accounts that are delinquent and will have those amounts assessed to their taxes. Kathi let the Council know that we went to a 4 on a sheet postcard instead of 2 per sheet.

**Zoning – Sheldon**; there is nothing new to report

Vickie wanted to give an update on the dam. She attended a pre-bid meeting and there were 27 contractors there. The projected start date is November 1st. The DNR asked Vickie if we could close Pine Street and Lake Street to the dam to stop onlookers and from getting in the way of the contractors.

**Old Business**

1. MN Power agreement – nothing new
2. Hydrant locks – nothing new
3. Liquor Ordinance – nothing new
4. Air Exchanger (HVAC)- Diane talked to Chris and he hasn’t had a chance to look at our unit yet, but told us to figure about double and that should be close.
5. CRF – Diane reviewed what was decided at the special meeting: $7,500 for HVAC with HEPA filters; $12,000 - $14,000 for radios; $1500 for a sign board; a cabinet and PPE for the Fire Department; $250 for UV wands; $700 for a laptop; $1500 for 5 rolling chairs for the Council and 2 for the office and 16 folding chairs for the Hall. Vickie thought we should go ahead and order the chairs. We also thought we should check and see what a base costs for the radios. Diane will get the remaining items ordered and see where we are after that.

**New Business**  -

1. Future meetings – We will continue to use WebEx.

Motion made by Vickie to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded. Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Chris Ketchmark – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Diane Nelson