**Willow River City Council Meeting**

November 5, 2018

Approved December 3rd, 2018

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Willow River City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, November 5th at the 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, Chris Ketchmark, Darryl Poslusny and Vickie Whitehouse

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

**Others Present:**  Gerard Bennett, John Mikrot, Rosie Mielke, Dave Prachar, Debbie McAllister, Art Underhill, Tom Jensen, Steven and Victoria Prachar.

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

**Rick Borchardt, Willow River Fire Department Relief Association –** Funding mainly comes from the state for this. They are looking to increase the amount from $700 to $950. This amount is per year, per firefighter who makes 20 years. The fund currently has a surplus. Rick had paperwork showing what the numbers would be with the increase. With the increase, the fund would still have a surplus. By approving the increase, the City would have to cover any shortage if needed. However, there is currently enough in surplus to handle this increase and still have a surplus. Sheldon makes a motion to approve the increase from $700 to $950. Chris seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

**Special guest - Tom Jensen, property behind City Hall –** The City had asked Tom about selling a piece of property to the City to be used by the Fire Department. The property is behind City Hall between the parking lot for the city park and Wright’s building. Tom had prepared a handout with information regarding what he would be willing to sell it for. Vickie would like to table it and have Mike Bjerke look at this proposal. Brent agreed. Vickie commented that the people driving through the City lot to get to the building are going too fast. They discussed parking for both buildings. Vickie makes a motion to table this until Mike looks at it. Darryl seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

**Willow River Fire Department, Gerard Bennett**- the Fire Department has had 22 fire calls, 93 EMS calls and 1 other for a total of 116 calls. Gerard received a report from 2017 and wanted to let the Council know how proud he was that the department functions so well (as shown in the state report) especially since we are a small town department. Truck #5 is still in Sandstone. It is having 2 pumps and a hose reel installed. The snowmobile is currently down there for service. The Department is looking for a 6000 lbs. compressor for the SCBA’s. They are getting close to getting one ordered. They are getting bids and the majority of the funds will be coming out of the Relief Association. The Department is looking for pagers and radios (even used) to get us through until the upgrade. There are a couple of new grants that they are looking into. The gun raffle is November 17th. Gobble Wobble is Thanksgiving morning. Fire Prevention Week went well. Ben Partlow was accepted onto the Department and is probationary for the first year. Mariah Youngberg was accepted as a cadet. There was a donation for $300 from Linda Volk and John Wandryk. Gerard is asking to pay the cadets $5 per run and $5 per meeting? Vickie said that she didn’t think so but that she would look into it. Steve Ronning is going through firefighter I and II. The yearly reviews are going good and everyone has qualified so far.

**Water and Sewer, John Mikrot-** John is going to start dropping the tower down for the winter. The sewer pond liner work should be happening soon. John transferred over to the old secondary so that it can filter out.

**City Clerk, Diane Nelson –** The checkbook is in balance. I asked the Council for approval to pay the election judges earlier so that they don’t have to wait until the next meeting to be paid. The Council agreed. We received a letter from the Community Club asking for a donation. Vickie said that we never have in the past. She thought that since we were tax supported that we couldn’t. We were notified of a culvert workshop if anyone is interested in going. I asked if I could have a couple of days off in December. They said that would be fine. Brent asked that something be posted on the door if the office will be closed. I gave the Council a tracking sheet of meetings that I have them attending. I asked them to go over it and let me know of any changes. Vickie asked about Board of Equalization. We need to make sure that we have enough for 2019.

**Water and Sewer Billing, Katie Bennett –** Kathi figured out the bills for the laundromat. Kathi and Diane thought for audit purposes, that they be kept separate accounts. Kathi sent out 113 mailed bills and 29 e-bills. Three houses are shut off for the winter. Kathi asked who will be doing door hangers? We sent down certifications totaling $7803.93. Sheldon asked if that is a normal amount. Yes, it is. The Dracy’s are hooked up. Kathi asked if we could send Erin Dockal a refund of $26.44 since she has moved. Yes. We discussed write-off procedures. Kathi talked about the survey. 76 said they would continue to pay by check, 3 would use debit card and 7 would like ACH through the bank. 66 did not respond to the survey.

**Flood Update – Vickie –** The liner company had to take part of the liner back. The pesticide that we used out there is petroleum based and is having trouble adhering. The change orders are complete. The boat ramp should come in the next couple of days. If everything goes well we should be able to start the water balance test next week.

**Old Business**

1. Public Works- We didn’t clarify last month about reading meters. Vickie pointed out that Beckie is an employee of John’s. In John’s contract, it states that anything extra will be billed at $25/hr. John used to read meters, but there was talk about how often he did that. The Council thought that he should be doing that as part of his contract. Diane pulled John’s contract and there is nothing stating that he is responsible for reading meters. Sheldon said that it looks like it is a grey area. Vickie also brought up shoveling and cleaning City Hall. Sheldon thought that shoveling should be part of the snow removal contract as well as keeping the hydrants open. Brent asked how long it would take to City Hall. Kathi and Diane thought 2-3 hours/month. Sheldon said that he thought the people that work here should do that. Diane said that she is not cleaning. Kathi mentioned that when she did it, she was paid $15/hr. Vickie said that they weren’t paying that. Brent said that he would clean the toilet.
2. Bids for snowplowing – we have not had any bids. Diane said that she called Rick and that he was interested but he wanted to know more information. Sheldon was asked to go and talk to Rick. He said that he would. Sheldon asked Diane to look up what was paid in the past. Dan Walker said that he would bring in an estimate, but I have not heard from him. Sheldon said that he had someone who would like to buy the City equipment to then plow for us. The Council felt that we need someone in now.

**New Business**  -

1. Canvassing Board – Tuesday, November 13th at 5PM
2. Christmas lights – Vickie said that she would check the bulbs if they were brought to City Hall. They usually go up the Saturday after Thanksgiving or when the weather is decent. Sheldon was going to try to contact people.
3. School Community Service Day – Friday, December 21st. Melissa Johnson sent an email asked for projects around town that students could help with. Vickie mentioned cleaning City Hall. Brent said that he’ll look into it.
4. Contractor water usage – Diane said that we had a contractor come in and wanted to take the meter and use it during the week. Vickie didn’t think we let them take the meter. We are not here enough to be available for the contractors. Do we have them make a deposit? I thought we should have a policy. We should have something so that they know how to properly use the hydrant. Vickie said that it should not leave City Hall. Sheldon said that if they want to take it that they make a deposit that would replace the meter if we don’t get it back. Sheldon said that I should make up a form the contractor signs.
5. Approval of Liquor License – Squirrel Cage and The Corral are up for renewal. Sheldon makes a motion to approve the liquor licenses. Vickie seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
6. Personnel Policy – Vickie and Diane found one that was approved in 2014. We made some changes. We need to correct lunch breaks. Sheldon thought we should reword the policy to allow the breaks to be used in conjunction with lunch breaks at the employee’s discretion. Diane went over what changes that were made. Diane will make recommended changes and have it for approval at December’s meeting.

Motion made by Darryl to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded. Motion carried with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Nelson