**Willow River City Council Meeting**

March 1, 2021

Approved April 5, 2021

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Willow River City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, March 1, 2021 via WebEx and at Willow River City Hall.

**Council Present:** Brent Switzer, Kevin McGreanor and Vickie Whitehouse and Sheldon Johnson.

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

**Others Present:** Gerard Bennett and John Mikrot

**Approval of the Agenda:** Vickie makes a motion to approve the consent agenda. Kevin seconded. Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

**Willow River Fire Department, Gerard Bennett**- Runs to date; Fire- 0, EMS-11, and other-0 for a total of 11 calls. All of the equipment is holding its own. Truck #3 needed a new starter and truck #9 needed a battery charger. Looking at getting I-gels and hopefully getting a grant for those. A grant is in the works for a radio grant through FEMA with other Pine County departments. Still waiting for the PCSO to distribute their old radios. They will be helping the Community Club with Fun with the Easter Bunny. There is still one cadet that is interested and one adult. The heat in the hall is repaired. The Commercial Club is still looking for a location for a Marquee sign. Gerard is still looking to set up a refresher here at City Hall. Sheldon asked about the roof over the fire portion of City Hall. Gerard said that it is leaking. Gerard said that we should get a roofer to look at it. Sheldon said that it should be fixed. Vickie mentioned that we may need a couple of bids depending on the price. Brent said that he would make a few calls.

**Water and Sewer, John Mikrot –** John brought up the dehumidifier that went out last summer. We currently have a small one in there and it is working fine. John had checked on getting it fixed and was told that it probably wasn’t worth fixing. John felt we would be fine using this little one. The school contacted John about the storm drain. Somehow the roof drains into the storm sewer and it was backing up. Apparently, it had frozen up and John and Kevin got something figured out. John has been checking the water temperature and there are a few residents that he has recommended running their water to avoid freeze-up. If it gets any lower then we may need to do more. We finally have a date to get our media changed. It is May 3rd. Peggy Sue asked John and wanted to know if we could do anything about the water (after a rain) pooling in front of her café. John got ahold of the county engineer and asked if there was anything they could do when they are resurfacing Hwy 61 this summer and it sounded like they could and would look at doing that (possibly a storm drain). John asked about sweeping the streets. John said the County would reimburse the City to do so. Diane will check into it. Kevin said that he talked to Clint about where he hit the water plant. John thought it would take more to fix than just nailing it on. Kevin said that he will go look at it.

**City Clerk, Diane Nelson** – The audit has been finalized and I should have the Financial statement for the Council next month. The Community Club asked me to check with the Council for approval to have the drive thru Fun with the Easter Bunny at the park and if the weather is bad if they could use City Hall. March 27th 12-2. The Council said “yes”. I updated the fee schedule to address the lawn mowing since it is contracted now. The Council felt the wording of it was fine. Vickie brought up advertising for bids for lawn mowing. Diane will put an ad in to run the last two weeks of the month with bids due April 1st.

**Water and Sewer Billing, Katie Bennett** – Kathi sent out 149 bills. 27 were emailed and the total was $10,207.22. The late fees totaled $176.45. Two houses are currently shut off. Kathi asked for formal approval. Kevin makes a motion a motion to have Kathi estimate the residents whose water is running to prevent freeze up. Vickie seconded. Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

**Zoning – Sheldon**; nothing new to report.

**Dam Update – Vickie;** Vickie has been in contact with Jason Boyle. They will be leaving this week. Vickie said that we need to come up with a way to keep ATV’s and all off-road vehicles from going into that area to prevent their erosion control mats from being destroyed. They are going to put big boulders there to help deter the traffic. Hanson-Anderson American Legion contacted Vickie to let us know that they would like to donate a new flag pole and flag for the park. The Council talked about “No Trespassing” signs there and how to protect that area until it is done.

**Old Business**

1. MN Power agreement – nothing new
2. Hydrant locks – nothing new
3. Liquor Ordinance – We received a copy of a proposed ordinance from Chelsie. Kevin said that the biggest difference is the definitions. It states intoxicating liquor and 3.2 malt liquor. Hours and sales are more defined in the new one as well. Sheldon said it would be nice if we somehow knew what the exact changes were from our existing to the proposed. Diane mentioned that one of the questions she asked Chelsie was that since we are going through the process to change the ordinance, can we amend all of our existing liquor ordinances into one. She said that we could. The Council will look over the ordinance Chelsie wrote and Diane will check with combining them for the next meeting.
4. Annexation – Chelsie sent the Council some information to review. Diane said that the next step is to approve or deny the request. Sheldon asked Diane if she had asked Tom what his plans are for the park. I did not because we had someone back out and the confusion with that. I apologized and will check with him. The council discussed the road maintenance again. Diane mentioned that we can put conditions on the annexation that would need to be followed such as following RV park regulations that we could put into an ordinance. That way we could add to the City and both parties could get what they want. Sheldon reiterated that the City will be getting tax dollars from additional homes. There was some talk if there was a rental agreement or covenant that Tom would have at the RV park and Diane mentioned that it would be more enforceable if it was an ordinance. Covenants are also only valid for a certain length of time. Vickie said that she was going to check with the League of MN Cities. Sheldon also talked about zoning and what to zone that. Vickie said that we should table this. Sheldon asked if the Council has any issues with the Mlaskoch annexation. Vickie makes a motion to table this until we get more information. Kevin seconded. Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

1. Future Council meeting format- Keep doing what we are doing.
2. Flag poles – Kevin had a bid for flag poles from Display Sales. He also talked with Sue from the Garden club regarding what they wanted. Display sales does do price breaks for certain quantities. The main thing was to replace the poles that were breaking off the flowers. Kevin thought that would be about 8. The first price break is for 12. The Council thought that we should go ahead and get 12. Vickie makes a motion that we order 12. Sheldon seconded. Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

**New Business**

1. Resolution to pay standard monthly bills – There was something with a previous clerk in the minutes that stated she could pay the standard bills more that once a month, however the resolution was unclear. Diane asked that we pass this resolution so that it was clearly stated that it could be done. Vickie makes a motion to pass the resolution. Kevin seconded. Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

1. Resolution for weak-mayor council – Brent wanted to clarify the mayoral duties of a weak mayor council. We need to follow state guidelines for a weak mayoral council. Vickie said that she was told that the Mayor could only vote in the case of a tie and could not make motions. That is not what the guidelines state. So, we just need a clarification of the correct information. Kevin makes a motion to pass this resolution. Sheldon seconded. Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – I don’t care

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

1. Water at creek backup- There is water backing up by Hwy. 61 and also on Pine Street. That is due to a culvert that is blocked over on Willow Street. Originally it was thought that is was due to debris, but it turns out that it is frozen after the extreme temperatures.

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

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Diane Nelson