**Willow River City Council Meeting**

June 1, 2020

Approved July 6, 2020

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Willow River City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, June 1, 2020 via Webex and at Willow River City Hall.

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

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

**Others Present via Webex:** none

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

Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Chris Ketchmark – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

**Willow River Fire Department, Gerard Bennett**- the Fire Department has had 7 fire calls, 44 EMS and 0 other calls for a total of 51 for this year. Trucks and equipment are holding their own mechanically. Gerard said that they will be doing H2O transfers with the City’s blessing. They have applied for the 2020 - 2021 DNR grant and that is a 50/50 matching grant. We are still looking at a grant with Sandstone for radios with the Mutual Aid Association to upgrade radios. The Fire Department participated in the cap and gown ceremony for the 2020 graduates at the football field on May 8th and also their graduation parade on May 22nd. On May 9th, the department did a drive by birthday parade for a 10 year old. They are following COVID-19 standard operating procedures. Gerard said that one application has been received and they are waiting until the pandemic is over. Hydrant locks and bollards are also on hold until after COVID-19.

**Water and Sewer, John Mikrot –** MN Pump works was in town and did their biannual pump inspection. Wyatt’s Cove lift station pump pipe (the one that froze up a couple of years ago) and an air release valve is fading. John got a quote to do that work from them. The quote would be for an air release valve and stainless steel piping to fix the broken piping below check valve and labor. It was $4516.70. The pump at the main lift station has water and oil in it so he changed it and put it back down. John didn’t know how long that one would last. It would be cheaper to do a scheduled repair instead of an emergency repair. They really don’t know how much it will cost until they take it apart but thought the ballpark price would be around $2500. It depends on how much needs to be replaced and how long it takes. Brent mentioned it would be roughly $7000 to get it all fixed. Chris asked if this is normal wear and tear. John said yes. The phone line at the water plant was not working and that calls John when something malfunctions so Diane called and Frontier will be out to look at it. Brent asked about getting another quote. Chris mentioned shopping around for future work. Chris made a motion to do the needed work. Vickie seconded.

Roll call vote:

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Chris Ketchmark – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Motion carried with all in favor. John found parts and pieces to fix the toilet in the park. He is thinking that it will be fixed by the end of the week.

**City Clerk, Diane Nelson** – The final paperwork was sent in to finish up the DEED Grant. Notice came in on the 1st that they are paying out $16,929.49. Vickie was happy to be done with the 2016 flood. The quit claim deed has been signed and the original sent to MN DNR. I am putting together a manual for my job because when I came in I didn’t have anything to guide me as to what needs to get done. So, when I eventually leave the next clerk should have something. I let Sam know that we were ready for the camera. I have also spoken to all of the election judges regarding going to the mail balloting. Beckie and I will be going down for the Primary election. Our two back up judges are Sue Sloper and Renita Sarvela. We received notice from Pine County that the property on Willow Street that has been an issue is in tax forfeiture. I mentioned that I have not received the proof of insurance for Eaton’s Lawncare. I have reached out to them to ask for it again. The building at the park that they hit is still not fixed either. Chris suggested that we hold the check until we get the proof of insurance. Brent mentioned that he could fix it and take it off of their check. Sheldon said that they should fix it. Brent suggested giving them the option. We received a letter from a resident asking if we were looking for someone to mow. Diane suggested that we ask if he would be willing to do odd jobs for us. Brent suggested that we go ahead and send a letter and ask.

Chris asked if we are allowing people out at the dam. He saw a guy there and thought we had it closed. Brent said that he would be willing to go and talk to them if he sees people again.

# Water and Sewer Billing, Katie Bennett – The billing for May’s usage will go out this coming Friday. Last month’s billing was $11,761.83. There was 121 bills mailed and 29 emailed. There would have been around $250 in late fees and Kathi is wondering if we should start charging yet and doing shut offs. Kathi mentioned that we could do payment arrangements for anyone going through a tough time. Brent asked if we have many that are late. She said that it is the same people and we really only currently have one that is over 90 days late. Chris told Kathi to keep checking with the Council. Kathi is working on the official billing policy. She has brought it up to what League of MN Cities suggests. The Ordinance may need to be looked at with that.

**Zoning, Sheldon –** Sheldon has given a permit out for a new house on Lakeside Dr.

**Old Business**

1. MN Power agreement – have not heard.
2. Hydrant locks – nothing new
3. Liquor Ordinance – Mike Bjerke has it and is reviewing it.

**New Business**  -

1. Sign at park about cleaning – Diane said that League of MN Cities had on the clerk forum that some cities are posting a sign stating that the parks aren’t routinely cleaned. Vickie thought that our parks are not being utilized enough. Vickie suggested that we keep the bathroom closed. There has been garbage dumped there again as well.
2. Future Council meeting format – Diane thought we could maybe open up the office and have meetings. The Mayoral Proclamation has expired. The Council discussed options. Brent said that we could open the office to the public again as long as the staff feels comfortable with it. Chris thought as long as we can social distance it would be fine. Sheldon thought that in the past we have had too many people in attendance for that to work. The Council decided to keep it the same format for next month.
3. Response to DNR – there was an article in the Askov American that they were accepting response to the rock arch rapids that is proposed at the dam. Brent was wondering if we wanted to comment. Vickie said that we have given them our opinions.

Chris asked if we received any response from the Squirrel Cage regarding the letter we sent them. No, we haven’t.

Vickie was wondering if we made any decision on the garbage at the City Park. Kevin asked what we should do to prevent people dumping their household garbage. Sheldon suggested that we call the Sheriff’s Office. Kevin will call it in. Vickie suggested that we pull the 55 gallon drum. Brent will do that.

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

Vickie Whitehouse – yes

Sheldon Johnson – yes

Chris Ketchmark – yes

Kevin McGreanor – yes

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Diane Nelson