

**Minutes for a Regular Meeting
Of the Winthrop City Council
Monday July 7th, 2014**

A regular meeting of the Winthrop City Council was called to order at 7 p.m. on Monday, July 7th, 2014 in the City Council Chambers of City Hall for the purposes of conducting the business of the city.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by Mayor Dave Trebelhorn at 7:00 p.m.

- II. **ROLL** Council members Rob Edwards, Lyle Muth, Pete Machaiek, Ed Pelletier and Colleen Dietz were present. City Administrator Mark Erickson, City Attorney Don Lannoye, Mike Mattison, Gordy Grack, Mark Santelman, Shelly Zacate, Luis Zacate, John Woods, Sue Rothmeier, Leah Zacate, Sarah Koskela, Barb Ahlbrecht, Jenny Hazelton, John Springer and Karen Johnson were also present

- III. **OPEN PUBLIC FORUM**

- IV. **ESTABLISH AGENDA**
 - a. Motion Edwards second Pelletier to add City Staff Transition, Work Session to the agenda, remove the possible zoning recommendation from the agenda and approve as presented. Passed on a voice vote.

- V. **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**
 - a. Motion Dietz, second Edwards to approve the consent agenda as presented. Passed on a voice vote.

- VI. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- VII. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. **Election Officials Resolution** – Motion Edwards, second Dietz to approve the 2014 Election Official Resolution as presented. Passed on a voice vote.

 - b. **Tax Exempt Status for former Hanson Drug building and former Tom Miller Plumbing Property** – Erickson asked the council if they wanted to apply for tax exempt status of the two properties recently purchased by the city. Annual taxes before the purchase were about \$9,700 for both properties. The purchase price of \$115,000 should lower the taxes to about \$6,000. The city can apply for tax exempt status as long as they don't rent the buildings out or make them available for a commercial purchase. Erickson said tax exempt status would be temporary until a new owner is found. Motion Pelletier, second Dietz to apply for tax exempt status for both properties. Passed on a voice vote.

- c. Lights on Old Water Tower** – Erickson said the Winthrop Foundation contacted him about raising funds to put lights on the old water tower. Previously the Foundation was interested in lights on the newer water tower but has since changed their mind. They would be responsible for all costs but would want the city to pay for the electric. Mayor Trebelhorn said he would like them to consider solar lights if possible. Street. Supt. Grack said there is not electricity at the top of the old tower. Motion Edwards, second Muth to allow the Winthrop Foundation to move forward with putting lights on the old water if the Foundation raises the necessary funds to pay for them. Passed on a voice vote.
- d. Mosquito spraying in the park** – Erickson said the first Music in the Park event was well attended. It rained so it was held at City Hall but the bugs will be a problem at the next one the week after Farm City Fun Fest. He asked if the council would consider hiring someone to spray for mosquitos just in the area where the music event will be held. Motion Lyle, second Pelletier to pay for spraying for mosquitos for music in the park. Passed on a voice vote.
- e. 5-Ton Load Limit on 2nd Street** – Erickson said that recent repairs to 2nd Street put the load limit on the street at five tons. He would like authority from the city council to post the street at five tons and send the county engineering and county commission a letter stipulating to the load limits and informing them that loaded county trucks will not be allowed to use the street. Motion Edwards, second Dietz to post 2nd Street as a five ton street and have the city administrator send the county engineer and county commission a letter informing them of the load limit. Passed on a voice vote.
- f. Possible Overlay of High Street** – Erickson said he was approached by council member Machaiek about the poor condition of High Street by Good Samaritan. He asked if an overlay is needed for the street. Delivery trucks turning into Good Sam cause continual damage to the street. The council directed Erickson to explore options to fix the situation.
- g. Letter to MnDOT regarding Highway 19** – Erickson said in a discussion with MnDOT Engineer Scott Thompson recently he asked if MnDOT could move up their 2016 overlay of Highway 19 through Winthrop to 2015 when the stop lights will come out. Thompson said a letter from the city council would help them make that decision. Erickson asked for permission to write to MnDOT. Motion Dietz, second Edwards to have the city administrator write a letter to MnDOT requesting they overlay Highway 19 in 2015 instead of 2016. Passed on a voice vote.
- h. Inspection Tour Follow Up** – Police Chief Karen Johnson informed the council that letters will be sent soon to residents and properties owners agreed to on the inspection tour. She added that after a discussion with City Attorney Don Lannoye it was decided that two of

the properties would not receive letters but more direct action aimed at litigating the situation if it is not remedied. Johnson followed with her police report. She said that the department has received two older M-16 automatic weapons that needed parts and repair to operate. The cost of the parts is \$250 with the labor is being donated. Each rifle has a value of between \$700 and \$1,000 each. Motion Dietz, second Edwards to pay for the parts to fix the weapons and accept the donation of labor for the repairs. Passed on a voice vote. She added that everyone did a great job during the flood, including the fire department, city crew and volunteers.

VIII. REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

a. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Erickson informed the council that he would like to take a one year sabbatical from his duties as city administrator but remain the EDA Director. His base pay would be reduced by 50% but he would retain his benefits. City Clerk Hazelton would move up to the administrator position for that time and City Utility Clerk Barb Ahlbrecht would become the city clerk. A part time utility clerk for up to 30 hours per week would be hired at a wage between \$9 and \$10 an hour. Erickson would move out of his office into the former EDA office and be available to help Hazelton. Hazelton would train Ahlbrecht and Ahlbrecht would train the utility clerk hire. Hazelton would receive a \$1,000 per month increase in wages and Ahlbrecht a \$700 a month increase in wages. After one year Erickson would come back and Hazelton and Ahlbrecht would return to their previous positions at their former wages. Erickson will present the council with a status report on his leave of absence and/or intentions to return by June 1, 2015. After discussion there was a motion by Dietz and a second by Edwards to approve resolution 20140707 -1 to allow Erickson to take a one year leave of absence. Passed on a 4-1 vote with Machaiek voting no.

b. LEGAL DEPARTMENT REPORT

Lannoye said he received a letter from an attorney representing a landlord in town about the legality of the amended utility ordinance in 2014. The attorney claimed the ordinance was not legally passed because the city did not hold a hearing. Lannoye informed the council and will send the attorney a letter informing him that under Minnesota state law and city ordinances a hearing is not required to amend a city ordinance and the ordinance was legally amended. He said he made an offer to the representative of the newly formed police union three months previous but has not heard from them.

c. WATER/SEWER REPORT

Joe Ziegler talked about the flood relief efforts. He said he learned a lot from the recent flood and added that everyone worked together

well. Mayor Trebelhorn asked if area farmers could be contacted to possibly provide pit pumps to help pump out the storm and sewer lines during another larger rain event. Ziegler said he would talk to some ag producers about doing that.

- d. **RS FIBER** – Erickson said there really isn't much of an RS Fiber update to give. The project continues to move forward.

- IX. MISCELLANEOUS** – Mayor Trebelhorn asked the city administrator to post the Sibley Broadband meeting set for July 22nd in Gaylord as a council work session in case a majority of the council attended.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk-Treasurer