

Finlayson City Council – Regular Meeting

Finlayson City Hall

November 12, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.

1. **The regular city council meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 12, 2024 by Mayor Dave Auchter, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.**
2. **Roll Call: Council Members present:** Dave Auchter, Kim Schaefer, Russell Lucht, Barb Morgan.
Council Members absent: Joe Okun.
Others present: John Mikrot, Randy Millner, Wyatt Lucht, Liz Kelly, Bill Morgan, Ethan Bjorklund, Bruce Pogatchnik.
3. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - a. A motion was made by Schaefer to approve the October 14, 2024 regular city council minutes. Second by Morgan. All in favor. Motion carried.
4. **Approval of Bills**
 - b. A motion was made by Schaefer to approve the October bills paid. Second by Morgan. All in favor. Motion carried.
5. **Additions or Corrections:**
 - c. Addition: New Business F – Probationary Period Review for City Clerk (set date)
 - d. Addition: New Business G – Notice to Banning Junction Sewer & Water District for rate increase
6. **Petitions/Compliments/Complaints:**
 - a. Ethan Bjorklund – requested permission to host a Finlayson Fire & Rescue Department fundraiser in the Spring of 2025, with the idea that it would align with St. Urho’s Day tradition that used to occur in Finlayson. Ethan volunteered to supply the meat and coordinate, as well as the use of his license. City Clerk will research guidelines for fundraising as it pertains to the Fire Department/City & coordinate with Wyatt (Fire Chief) and Ethan. *Motion made by Morgan to approve a fundraiser in the Spring of 2025. Second by Schaefer. All in favor. Motion carried.*
 - b. Wyatt Lucht – notified council of possible complaint. Someone requested water to be hauled into their spot at the RV park off Banning. Wyatt declined due to the holding tank size and because this is outside the scope of duties. Complaint was not formally received by City. No action taken.
7. **Reports:**
 - a. **John Mikrot, Water/Sewer Operator:**
 - i. Mikrot reports hydrant by Petry’s still out of service & awaiting repair.
 - ii. Air valve on the filter at the Water Treatment Plant are still not working; he has a call in for repair with Kurita Water.
 - iii. Mikrot exercised gave valves throughout town.

- iv. VFD (Variable Feed Drive) – has been ordered & awaiting installment at the water plant.
- v. Mikrot was able to find Hydrant Pressure Relief Valves (approved at October council meeting) at a reduced cost. He will be purchasing three for \$3600 instead of two for \$3400.
- vi. City is running low on water meters & horns. John will be ordering a case, which is typically six, and is within the budget.

b. Randy Millner, Public Works:

- i. Millner returned unused ceiling tiles from Muni to Menards; they were unable to issue a refund for returned materials but accepted return. Clerk will work with Millner regarding status of refund.
- ii. The broom for the skidsteer has flat spots and council approved the purchase of new bristles in October. Millner is rotating current broom and will get new ones ordered.
- iii. A new blade for the skidsteer was approved in October & purchased; Millner had to modify it and it will be put in use. Millner also reports the salt machine is ready to go for the season.
- iv. Millner has started project of adding bartender entrance to the south side of the bar but there is electrical wiring that will need to get covered. Will work with a contractor regarding wiring and also to build a threshold to cover the wiring to ensure safety.

c. Joe Luedtke, Liquor Store Manager (absent; report provided by City Clerk)

- i. Team meeting held in November to communicate new procedures, upcoming events, kitchen staffing, and new scheduling app. Staff requested official t-shirts to be worn.
- ii. Luedtke is actively working to reduce off-sale inventory for the end of the year.
- iii. Luedtke is in need of a cook.
- iv. Still working on getting TV hung over bar facing South.

d. Wyatt Lucht, Fire Chief, Fire & Rescue Department:

- i. Lucht reports there were 17 calls in October: 7 fire calls, 9 medical/rescue, & 2 mutual aid. YTD, we've had 137 calls total; this time last year we had 113.
- ii. Annual testing & recertification occurred for fire vehicles to meet federal standards.
- iii. SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) purchase approved in October; Lucht reports plans to purchase a portion this year and a portion next year.
- iv. November 20 chili feed for mutual aid contracts with townships. Clerk will post possible quorum notice.

e. Liz Kelly, Clerk/Treasurer Report:

- i. Updated city logo to more modern; working on trademark process, to be compliant; initial check passed. Will utilize on all correspondence going forward to be more consistent & recognizable in a formal capacity with "finlayson.gov."
- ii. Water/Sewer issue of excess water use at Broadway addresses resolved. Meter readings provided were incorrect, resulting in the decimal place in the wrong spot. Going forward, Millner will report readings as displayed on meter, and Kelly will adjust spreadsheet accordingly. Kelly issued credits to those accounts for over-billing.
- iii. Office of the State Auditor's Office - OSA training conference on 11/20 all day, online.

- iv. Current maintenance worker position is at 30 hours / week, which does not meet full-time classification requirements. Proposed to increase position to 32 hours pre week to meet full-time classification requirements. The additional two hours per week can be justified through the intent of the Clerk to develop & utilize routine maintenance schedules across all city properties (including the Fire Hall, City Hall, Municipal, City Garage, Community Center, Picnic Shelter, Compost, streets, etc.) *Motion by Schaefer to make the City Maintenance Worker position a full-time position. Second by Lucht. All in favor. Motion carried.*
- v. Clerk will be working with Cyber Security & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to learn about free assessments available to the City to help detect vulnerabilities & weaknesses in our technology. Will report back in December.
- vi. Camera system upgrades are necessary; see attached proposals.
- vii. Renewing MN Dept of Rev License Application for Cigarette & Tobacco products.
- viii. D&E will be installing new HVAC at City Hall in the next week. Kelly will work with them to take over routine maintenance of all HVAC and to discontinue with Aquarius.
- f. **Planning and Zoning Committee report by Auchter:**
 - i. Unofficial minutes included in this agenda; Auchter reports they will be revised.
 - ii. PZ is working on resident survey for the comprehensive plan, has requested that Clerk get names & addresses for City of Finlayson residents to mail survey. PZ working on a visitor's survey as well, with a QR code.

8. Ordinances & Resolutions: *Motion by Morgan to adopt resolutions #25 & 26. Second by Schaefer. All in favor. Motion carried.*

- a. Resolution #25 - Election Results Canvassing
- b. Resolution #26 - 2025 Regular Council Meeting Schedule
- c. Resolution #27 – (from old business b, below) – Sewer Rate Policy for Irrigation. *Motion by Schaefer to adopt resolution #27. Second by Morgan. All in favor. Motion carried.*

9. Old Business:

- a. Pine Co Opioid Settlement – Clerk will provide update in December Clerk's Report
- b. Sewer Rate Policy for Irrigation & pools – Policy 2024-11 was turned into Resolution #27.
- c. Schaefer Memorial Park – tabled until 2/25
- d. PTO Policy & Handbook – Personnel Committee will set a date to finalize prior to 1/1/25.
- e. Feral Cat concern – letter sent to resident; invited resident to attend future council meeting where animal ordinance (#32) will be reviewed.
- f. 2023 Public Safety Aid – roughly \$2500 remaining. Clerk will look to apply this towards security cameras; if not approved Lucht will assist with the procurement of traffic barriers.
- g. Abandoned house at 2326 Hwy 18 – Will cost roughly \$3500-\$6000 in a legal proceeding, in addition to demolition costs if the City pursues it. City Clerk will review if prior legal costs were assessed. No action taken.
- h. Creamery Building – Waiting to see if a second asbestos survey will be completed by the County.

- i. Northern Contractors WAC/SAC fees – City attorney has made contact with the contractor’s attorney & an update will be provided at the next meeting.
- j. Finlayson Properties – Broadway Development – City attorney has made contact with the contractor’s attorney & an update will be provided at the next meeting. In the meantime, it has been noted that another home has been started but a building permit has not been solicited, nor has any building permit issued by the City.
- k. Liquor Store Parking Lot Lease Agreement – City attorney has made contact with the property owner’s attorney & an update will be provided at the next meeting.

10. New Business:

- a. Camera Upgrade quotes provided by People’s Security. The two quotes will replace the current system at the bar/liquor store as well as add additional cameras within. The second quote adds cameras at City Hall, to cover the alley and the east/west directions on Finland Ave. Cameras will capture vehicles in motion as well as images in the dark/low visibility. *Motion by Schaefer to purchase the camera systems as quoted, totaling \$12,225. Second by Auchter. All in favor. Motion carried.*
- b. Proposal to move from Adam’s Pest Control to Precision Pest Control, as Adam’s will increase in 2025 and Precision offered \$2/month lower than the current rate. Change in vendors will take place 1/1/25 and does not require council approval.
- c. Council wants to publicly acknowledge the contributions made to the City by the interim clerk, Lois Okun. The council pooled personal money and signed a card to be delivered to Lois.
- d. 2025 Proposed Budget, presented by Bruce Pogatchnik.
- e. Letters – reviewed as presented.
- f. Probationary period review (90-day) for City Clerk. Review is due at the end of November and will be held at following the regular December council meeting, in a closed session at the request of the Clerk.
- g. Notice to Banning Junction Water & Sewer District (BJWSD) for 2025 rate increase; was sent in July.

11. Miscellaneous announcements:

- a. The council would like to publicly acknowledge Bruce Pogatchnik’s volunteer time & expertise in reviewing the City’s financials and for his assistance with the 2025 budget.

12. Adjournment. *A motion by Morgan to adjourn an 9:14 p.m. Second by Schaefer. All in favor. Motion carried.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Kelly
City Clerk