

Finlayson City Council - Regular Meeting
Finlayson City Hall
August 14, 2023 @ 6:30pm

The regular city council meeting was called to order Monday, August 14, 2023 by Tom Price, Mayor at 6:30 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Members present: Mike Drahosh, Nadine Hedtke, Barb Morgan, and Russell Lucht

Council Members absent: none

Others present: John Mikrot, Wyatt Lucht, Hayley Erickson, Bobbi Eaton, Bill Morgan, Vickie Oetterer, Dave Auchter, and Sarah Colsrud

Additions: 5.C. Planning & Zoning 3. Northern Contractors building permit

Corrections: In regards to the July 10th, 2023 meeting, “Old Business B: Bonuses & Incentives”, it was stated an addendum was required to acknowledge the latest information brought forth. The following outlines both original and new content. July’s minutes have been updated noting the correction.

~~**B: Bonuses and Incentives;** Currently we are obligated to pay bonuses out this year. Moving forward any bonus will be purely performance based. Will be discussed more at a budget meeting. Admin, Maintenance and Bar Leads will be reviewed by the council and bartenders will be reviewed by the Bar Leads or Manager. A motion was made by Drahosh to accept bonuses this year seconded by Hedtke.~~

ADDENDUM: While generating bonus/incentive checks, it was disclosed to the Deputy Clerk that employee bonuses are not an allowable use of public funds unless they are tied to a performance incentive pay program. There are certain criteria to follow for awarding bonuses. Any compensation must be tied to job performance.

Compliments and Complaints: No compliments or complaints were received; however, Mayor Price did mention implementing a 5-minute time limit when addressing issues and concerns to avoid prolonged meetings. If an agreement cannot be reached, or a topic unable to be concluded, the subject will be tabled for the following month’s meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Morgan to approve minutes from the July 10th, 2023 regular council meeting provided an addendum was made pertaining to “Bonuses & Incentives”, seconded by Drahosh with all in favor and carried.

Reports:

John Mikrot, Water/Sewer Operator:

Mikrot indicated the City’s water and sewer are operating fine. Mike Johnson was at a residence in town on Highway 18 recently tending to tree roots obstructing the property owners’ sewer lines. The City will not be billed for work completed. Mikrot jetted a third of the town, with only two lines done at this time. There were an inch or two of tree roots found. The couple fire

hydrants in town that are in need of repair still have not been fixed. Councilmember Lucht noted those should be tagged so the fire department is aware they are currently out of order.

Wyatt Lucht (Fire Chief) Fire Department:

Since the last city council meeting, there have been 16 calls; 4 of which were fire and 12 medical, for a total of 220 man hours year-to-date. The yearly physical performed by MedCompass was completed and results showed all members for fire and rescue passed. An application was turned in to the fire department. The applicant is fully trained, has a CDL, and was previously an instructor. Mayor Price questioned if there is room on the roster for an addition, to which Fire Chief Lucht replied one member recently resigned. Morgan motioned to add a new member to the City's volunteer fire department, Drahosh seconded, with all in favor and carried. The current applications for the fire department are outdated and don't contain necessary disclosures and are missing relevant informational fields. A resident voiced her concern of SSN's being on the applications for security purposes, but was reassured all sensitive information is kept locked in a secure location.

W. Lucht is also employed with the City of Finlayson and inquired about the status of his employment. W. Lucht indicated he has not been asked to work in quite some time other than preparing streets for the 4th of July, and questioned the reason for lack of hours with the City. W. Lucht stated the possibility of seeking other employment options if he is no longer needed at the City. Mayor Price responded that himself, W. Lucht, and the other maintenance employee will gather to discuss any potential conflicts. It was mentioned that if W. Lucht does leave, the current maintenance employee or a new hire would need to have their CDL obtained for snow removal in the winter. Two employees are required for removing snow from streets and sidewalks. In October of 2021, E. Blaisdell was hired with the stipulation of receiving his CDL, which has yet to be done. Drahosh motioned, and Hedtke seconded to set a deadline of six months for Blaisdell to get his CDL certification once LMC has been contacted and clarification of the prior agreement is given.

Planning & Zoning: A building permit for a structure on Finland Ave was approved, motioned by Hedtke and seconded by Morgan. A building permit was also approved for a home to be built on Broadway, motioned by Drahosh and seconded by Hedtke. An individual had inquired what was necessary for a property on Sherman Road that also had a guest house. He questioned if a holding tank could be installed rather having to replace the septic. The council advised to contact the county being the City is no longer in charge of that.

Dawn Tasler, Deputy Clerk:

Tasler reports the liquor store had a net income of \$30,562.00 for the month of July. Much of the income was accrued during the annual 4th of July celebration. The City hired Shelly Goodman to replace Ashley Lucht as the new City Clerk. Goodman was currently employed with the City as a bartender at the Muni. The League of Minnesota Cities will be hosting a "Clerks Academy" in September. It was highly suggested for both admin, particularly Shelly, to attend this training. Clerks to be reimbursed for mileage and lodging. The MPCA permit renewal has enough sufficient data to be able to proceed. This comes after a two-month delay of being able to attain proper information and figures. The council asked who is responsible for submitting the permit renewal as well as other documents to the MPCA to which Tasler answered it is in the City's contract with John Mikrot that he is to prepare and send required reports to the MPCA. Tasler

also noted she has been the one to complete the monthly DMR reporting since she started in October of last year. Price motioned being the contract with Mikrot states he is the responsible party for submitted MPCA documents and the City is paying him to have it completed, that Tasler is no longer to execute those tasks, seconded by Drahosh, with all in favor and carried. The new furnace for the Post Office was installed at the beginning of August. A new water heater will need to be installed in the near future.

Bobbi Eaton & Hayley Erickson, Lead Bartenders:

Eaton inquired the budget for the bar's entertainment. The annual budget is \$6,000, which was not expressed to her as she took on her new role as one of the lead bartenders. Eaton will review what entertainment is scheduled for the remainder of the year and attempt to stay within means. The entertainment budget amount could be revised when the budget committee gathers in the following month. Eaton asked about purchasing new apparel to be sold. The bar is attempting to clear out their current inventory and replenish with new shirts, sweatshirts, and hats. The budget amount of \$2,000 was then relayed to Eaton and Erickson. Councilmember Drahosh also gave praise to bar employees Kevin and Collin for their assistance with a medical emergency that occurred recently at the bar.

Motion made by Drahosh to accept July financials and pay bills, seconded by Morgan with all in favor and carried.

Old business:

A: Clerk hiring – Bank resolutions; A new resolution will need to be done at the bank to have A. Lucht removed and Goodman added. Motion made by Morgan and seconded by Hedtke to update resolution replacing Ashley with Shelly.

New business:

A: Resolutions; Three resolutions were presented to the council. Resolution 2023-05 for a donation to the fire department in the amount of \$200.25 from Ethan Bjorklund was motioned for acceptance by Drahosh, seconded by Hedtke. Resolution 2023-06 for a donation from the Finlayson Community Club in the amount of \$300.00 for the City to use towards 2023's National Night Out was accepted, motioned by Drahosh, and seconded by Morgan. Resolution 2023-06 for a donation of numerous gifts and prizes to be put towards National Night Out from Town & Country Insurance was also accepted, motioned by Drahosh, and seconded by Morgan.

B: Drainage & Utility Easement; A property owner at the end of School Street would like an easement drawn up between himself and the City of Finlayson. Documents from Cabak Law Office assume a quit claim deed, rather than an easement which is preferred by the resident. Said easement would allow for proper drainage of storm drains that are the main drainage from the north side of town. The City had cleaned out the ditch approximately a year and a half ago, but routine maintenance need to be completed. The property owner considers the area to be a public safety hazard since a sinkhole has appeared and is concerned of an injury occurring. The hole is roughly 5' deep and 10'-12' in diameter. It was suggested the clerks contact the city attorney to advise on how to proceed and determine the responsible party for this matter. Subject tabled.

C. Cannabis; With the recent legalization of cannabis in Minnesota, Tasler presented the council with examples of documents from other cities within the state. Examples ranged from ordinances, designating moratoriums, and license applications. The MN Statute states smoking

cannabis is only allowed inside the home or on homeowner's property. It cannot be done in public places. The Muni offers beer infused with THC. A buyer can only purchase per can, not by the case or pack. Bartenders also refrain from opening the drink when purchased. The new cannabis law has not seemed to bring upon any issues at the bar.

Before the meeting was adjourned, a resident living on MacArthur Street made a complaint regarding an abundance of traffic on her road and turning around in her driveway. She suggested having a dead end sign installed. Mayor Price stated it is a public road and even with a dead end sign, it probably wouldn't deter drivers from traveling down the road. Other council members also spoke up about dead end signs on their roads and drivers turning around in their driveways. The resident with the complaint asked if she could install a gate. Fire chief Lucht, whom also does the city's snow removal, said it could be done but would be troublesome to maneuver through when plowing. A private property sign was then suggested.

Drahosh made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Hedtke seconded, with all in favor and carried.

Dawn Tasler
Deputy Clerk