

Approved Minutes
February 9, 2016

NEW YORK MILLS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
January 19, 2016
4:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

The regular meeting of the New York Mills City Council was called to order at 4:31 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Hall Building at 28 Centennial 84 Dr., New York Mills, Minnesota, all members of the Council having been notified of the meeting and the business to be transacted.

Members Present Gerber, Maki, Roder, Hoaby, and Oakland

Members Absent None

Staff Present Administrative Assistant Jenny Geiser, Administrative Assistant Cheri Kopveiler, Public Works Director Kyle Mattson, Police Chief James Gritz, Fire Chief Ryan Brasel, Liquor Store Manager Joan Koep, Library Director Julie Adams, Maintenance Staff Mike Pederson.

Guests Present NYM Dispatch Reporter Connie Vandermay, along with her minor daughter, City Treasurer Al Berube, City Attorney Dennis Happel

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes A motion to approve minutes from the December, 2015 regular meeting was made by Roder with changes on page 5 of Sarah Carlson changed to being an interior designer and change the wording to say the barn will be enclosed on three sides, seconded by Maki. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Updates/Consent Agenda – Mayor Gerber noted the updates and consent agenda items,

A motion was made by Hoaby and seconded by Oakland to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Department Reports

Liquor Store Report - Manager Joan Koep addressed the council. Koep stated that the inventory numbers that were in question last month seem to have been fixed after December numbers came in. Assistant Manager Huff attended a supervisor training class. December was a good month before transfers and 2015's numbers looked good as well.

A motion was made by Hoaby and seconded by Oakland to approve the Liquor Store report. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Fire Department Report – Chief Brasel addressed the council. Burlington Northern asked if our grant request is still valid and Brasel reported to them that it is. The Fire Department applied for a FEMA grant for fourteen new breathing apparatus's, the current ones being used are out of date. The total cost for the new apparatus's \$84,000. If the Fire Department receives the grant funding the cost to the fire department would be \$8,400. We won't find out if we receive the grant until the end of 2016. The Fire Department needs a new heart monitor AED. Brasel talked about year-end statistics, they are about the same as the

previous couple of years. The annual meeting will be held February 3, 2016. The new washer extractor will be here this week. The extractor will be shared with Bluffton Fire department and will be tracked how often each department uses it to determine cost of repairs that may be needed in the future because of wear and tear on the machine.

A motion was made by Oakland and seconded by Maki to approve the Fire Department Report. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Library Report – Library Director Julie Adams addressed the council. Adams stated attendance and circulation have been holding steady the past few years. The number of registered patrons have increased. The total number of items owned is growing a little. Adams tries to put a monthly article in the paper about library services. Viking library system is doing a marketing campaign with posters, bookmarks, etc., which the New York Mills library is part of. The library has been using legacy grants for programming such as Mr. Lincoln, Moo, the summer reading program entertainer, which were all well attended. The library's siding was re-stained last summer, as well as plants planted around the library where small patches of grass were before. Friends of the library is presenting through the decades activities in January. All of the programs have gone very well. Roder gave kudos to Adams and Friends of the Library for putting together the program.

A motion was made by Oakland and seconded by Maki to approve the Library Report. The motion carried without any dissent.

Police Report – Chief Gritz addressed the council. He went through his written report, noting items of interest. Officer Peka missed the yearly training and has resigned. Jared Bachelder contacted Gritz to let him know he is interested in a part-time position with New York Mills since he already works part-time in Perham. Gritz would like approval to hire Jared Bachelder as a part-time police officer. There has been no word on the computer grants through the state. The 2008 Charger needed \$1,000 worth of repairs at the beginning of the year. Gritz would like to sell it and put the money towards a different vehicle. Over \$3,000 was spend on repairs last year also. Gritz asked if the police department could borrow from the city's capital outlay funds to purchase a car one year earlier. Squad car prices for a new SUV are the same as they were last year. Oakland asked what fuel mileage a new SUV and the old charger get. Gritz said they are very similar. If the old car were to be sold at auction, a minimum price could be set. Hoaby stated he thinks the City should sell the old car and borrow from the capital reserve project fund to get a new car this year. Eagle Bend has an old radar unit they are selling, which is newer than any of our radar units. Gritz would like to purchase this unit to replace one of ours. The cost with installation would be \$500.00. The police department is spending thirty hours in Deer Creek now. Gritz is starting to prepare for the different events coming up this summer.

A motion was made by Hoaby and seconded by Oakland to approve the Police Report, sell the Charger and replace with a new vehicle, the radio purchase and the part-time new hire of Jared Bachelder. The motion carried without any dissent.

EDA Report – Mayor Gerber provided the EDA report, noting that the group met on December 15th at 8:30 a.m. She reported the balance of the revolving loan fund was \$159,805.14, with \$136,682.63 being EDA funds and the balance of \$23,122.51 being the State MIF funds. There was no payment from Sugar Creek Woodworking. New member Jason Schik was welcomed to the EDA. Berry gave information on MMCDC, which is interested in partnering with EDA's. The EDA is looking into streamlining their loan applications. There was discussion of asking West Central Initiative to handle the EDA loans. The County building is looking at putting a daycare in the basement. The new owner of the CAC building wants to fix the building up and put it into use. Annexation was discussed and decided that Hanson and Berry would get dialogue together to talk to townships.

A motion was made by Roder and seconded by Maki to approve the EDA report. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Public Works Report – Kyle Mattson addressed the Council. There was some overtime as shown in the report due to equipment repairs and snow removal. He reported the snow pusher is working great, it cut removal time in half. The sweeper and dump truck needed major repairs, which we were able to fix ourselves. The interior of the water treatment plant has been painted and Mattson has been working on year end gas reports. Dollar General has been in contact and has proposed they run forced main with their own sewer system and tie into the City's sewer. City Engineer Pratt thinks it would be in the City's best interest to force a six inch main with a hydrant. We don't have fire protection out there currently. The City should think about what we require and get the City Attorney involved. Mattson will do some more research on the matter and try to have something put together for next month's meeting. The utility department is working on gas and water meter change outs. Mattson asked for approval to change the uniform policy to include pants or jeans to wear at work only because of the chemicals they work with. Mattson has checked into using a uniform service and purchasing jeans for utility workers would be less costly. The fire department gave the utility department their old washer and the work clothes would be washed in the utility shop so the chemicals wouldn't be taken home on their clothes. Mattson noted some gas departments require flame resistant clothing be provided and all gas departments may be required to do so soon. Mattson is asking for the policy to be changed to allow purchase of three pairs of jeans per utility personnel per year. Mattson is asking for approval for vacation February 15-23, 2016.

A motion was made by Roder and seconded by Oakland to approve the Public Works report along with the uniform policy change to allow three pair of jeans per utility personnel per year and Mattson's vacation as proposed. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Public Forum

At about 5:01 p.m., Mayor Gerber asked whether anyone present wished to address the council. Nobody responded, and so the Public Forum was concluded.

Public Requests

Wenzel Zeller sent a picture of a replica statue of liberty head statue to see if there is interest in it for the sculpture park. Roder stated she had talked to him previously when he was talking about the whole statue and inquired about the cost to move. Zeller checked into it and said it would be cost prohibitive. The Cultural Center thinks it is an interesting idea, but doesn't have the funds to purchase the statue. Zeller has never given a clear cost. Happel asked if Zeller has approval to use it because the Statue of Liberty is probably copyrighted. Roder will follow up with Zeller.

Administration Report – Geiser referred to Berry's written report. Berry will be on leave for an unknown amount of time. The refunding of two existing bonds was completed as planned. Gerber stated that with Berry being gone for an extended time, year- end reports due and the audit in February Geiser asked for extra help in the office. Gerber would have time to fill in part-time, which is allowed as long as it is not full-time if the council would be interested in this. Oakland and Hoaby expressed concern about the conflict of interest having Gerber fill in. Maki stated we need to support having someone with a working knowledge of the City fill in.

A motion was made by Hoaby and seconded by Oakland to name Jenny Geiser as deputy clerk with Geiser and Kopveiler each receiving a \$3.00 increase in pay during Berry's absence. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

A motion was made by Roder and seconded by Maki to approve the temporary part-time hiring of Julie Gerber as office help as needed during Berry's absence at \$16.69 per hour. The motion carried with Gerber abstaining.

A motion was made by Hoaby and seconded by Roder to approve the Administration report as presented. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Old Business

Nicholson Property Update-

Happel reported the judge is leaving the June 15, 2016 deadline to get the property cleaned up. Nicholson's attorney asked to submit the name of a contractor to see if everything we are asking to have done is really necessary. The judge gave him thirty days to submit a name, 60 days to look at the property and give a report. February 22, 2016 is the date the thirty days is up to give the name of a contractor. Happel clarified that the City will be happy if Nicholson does clean up what Harvela said in his report

New Business

Remove and Replace Tiles and subfloor in the ballroom – Mike Pederson addressed the council. The ballroom floor was patched during the remodel and needs repairing again. There are estimates from contractors and flooring stores for tile. The estimates are all from local contractors. Maki asked if they can all work within the timeline. They are all aware of the timeframe.

A motion was made by Hoaby and seconded by Roder to approve up to \$6,000 to be used for fixing the floor and Pederson to choose the contractor and flooring store to use. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Benefit Proposal –Roder spoke to the council. Health insurance premiums came in flat and we had anticipated a 15% increase for this year so there are extra funds in the budget. She proposed using the savings to provide additional benefits for employees. Dental insurance would cost \$381 per month if the City paid for 75% of employee and children premiums. City would pay 0 of spouse coverage. Short and long term disability for full time employees would cost \$318.22 per month. This would be for short term disability starting after 15 days. The personnel committee recommends that life insurance increase from a \$10,000 policy to a 50,000 policy. This would cost \$119.60 per month. Even after paying for these benefits this year, there would still be a savings of \$27,000. Maki stated we should offer these benefits to keep current with other companies. Roder noted it is a good way to show employees our appreciation.

A motion was made by Oakland and seconded by Hoaby to approve the new benefits of dental insurance, short and long term disability, and increased life insurance. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Otter Tail County Public Hearing Re: Off Sale License Play Time – Play Time Sports Bar has applied for an off-sale intoxicating liquor license. Otter Tail County has a hearing scheduled for February 9, 2016. The county has not issued any off-sale licenses outside of cities. If the city chooses, they could write a letter asking them to keep not issuing the licenses. Happel noted off-sale is a big source of revenue for cities and the licenses have always stayed within cities. Cities provide services for people with revenues and a private party would not.

A motion was made by Roder and seconded by Maki to draft a letter opposing issuance of an off-sale license to Playtime Sports Bar. The motion carried with Oakland dissenting.

Annual Appointments and setting of depository and newspaper

Annual appointments were made. All committees, depositories, and newspaper remained the same.

A motion was made by Oakland and seconded by Hoaby to approve the annual appointments and two depositories as discussed and included in the packet in draft. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Cultural Center Grant Approval Request –Roder addressed the council. The Cultural Center would like the City to apply for a grant from Lake Region Arts Council. Staff at the Cultural Center would write the grant for the expansion sculpture park. Oakland asked if the City is liable if someone gets hurt on sharp sculptures. Roder said the League of MN Cities Insurance representative was just out and told them to put a sign on the barn when completed saying “don’t climb on sculptures”. Kopveiler said a lot of things considered art would not comply with the zoning ordinance.

A motion was made by Maki and seconded by Oakland to approve the grant application with the City as a facilitator. The motion carried with Roder abstaining.

Future Meeting Dates –The regular meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, February 9, 2016, at 4:30 p.m., and Tuesday, March 8, 2016, as 4:30 p.m.

Payment of Claims – Mayor Gerber noted that the bills are as in the packet, with no additional bills being presented for payment.

A motion was made by Hoaby and seconded by Maki to approve the payment of bills. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Financial Reports

A motion was made by Maki and seconded by Oakland to approve the financial reports. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Maki and seconded by Oakland to adjourn. The motion carried without a dissenting vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jenny Geiser
Deputy Clerk