

November 13, 2023

Regular Meeting

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Halstad was duly called and held at the Halstad Telephone Company community room in said city on November 13, 2023, at 5:15 p.m.

Vice Mayor Brandon Mickelson called the regular meeting to order at 5:17 p.m.

The following council members were present: Brandon Mickelson, Gaylord Christianson, Mayor Darin Johnson (via Zoom) and Donna Scholl (via Zoom). Absent: Peter Jacobson. Others in attendance: Jay DeLong, Lori DeLong, Stephen Slick, Charles Aarestad, Emily Finney, John Walsh, Shantel Niemand-Walsh, Bjorn Solberg, Lucas Spaeth, HMU Utilities Superintendent, and City Clerk/Treasurer Alli Tice.

Additions to Agenda – None. Motion to approve agenda by Gaylord Christianson, seconded by Darin Johnson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Approval of October 9, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes - Motion to approve minutes as presented by Gaylord Christianson, seconded by Brandon Mickelson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Approval of October 30, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes – Darin Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Gaylord Christianson seconded, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Public Forum and Correspondence- Lori DeLong approached the council to get an update on the cull potato issue as presented to the council at the October 9 meeting. City Clerk Alli Tice stated that an ordinance violation letter had been sent to the owner giving him 30 days to remedy the issue and also invited him to the next city council meeting. Mayor Darin Johnson discussed the research that he had found on how other states handle cull potatoes. Bjorn Solberg was in attendance and told the council that the cull potatoes will be tilled in before the ground freezes. The council will follow up on the issue and make sure the cull potatoes are tilled in.

Consent Agenda

Darin Johnson moved to approve the consent agenda, Donna Scholl seconded, unanimous vote, motion carried. The following items were on the consent agenda:

- A. Monthly claims for October 2023
- B. General checking bank reconciliation for October 2023

Wimmer and Sunrise Report- Lucas Spaeth reported that he applied for a CERTs grant for the Wimmer laundry room to upgrade the electric and HVAC. There are 2 units open at Wimmer Homes and 3 units open at Sunrise Apartments. A 10% increase in rent at both the Wimmer Homes and Sunrise Apartments for January 2024 was recommended. Motion was made by Gaylord Christianson to increase rent at both the Wimmer Homes and Sunrise Apartments by 10% as presented, Donna Scholl seconded, unanimous vote, motion carried. New leases with the approved rent increase will be sent to all existing tenants to sign.

Utilities Report-Spaeth reported that the employees have been working on switching a few overhead electric services to underground. There is an estimated 200 hours of control again this heating season for the off peak program. Visser Trenching repaired one sewer service line, one curb stop and one sewer main that wasn't used in the sewer system. Minnesota Rural Water Association will be in Halstad on November 20th to assist with smoke testing on the wastewater system. AE₂S has been working on the Small Cities Development Program application and the Preliminary Engineering Report for the water system.

Unfinished Business:

Blighted and Dangerous Properties- There is no new information to report.

Landmark- (Halstad School and Property) – The Halloween Party was held on October 28th. It was a good turnout, and the committee received a lot of positive feedback about the event. The Holiday Kick Off vendor fair is coming up on November 25th. The first Lunch and Learn was held on November 8th and there were 21 in attendance.

RFP for Redevelopment – The RFP deadline was extended to 12/31/2023.

Building – There was discussion with the Ada Borup West School about the possibility of hosting a basketball game in Halstad. The gym floor would have to be looked at to see if a game could be played on it or not.

LMCIT Liability Coverage Waiver form – Emily Finney with River’s Edge Insurance was in attendance to provide more information to the council about the liability coverage waiver options. The State of Minnesota has a statute in place for tort liability limits. LMCIT allows cities to purchase higher limits. This would add extra coverage in extreme liability events. About 15% of cities in Minnesota waive the tort limits. After the council was presented with this information, a motion was made by Darin Johnson to waive the tort limits established by the MN Statutes, Gaylord Christianson seconded, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Sale of parcel #28-3382000 – The city received two offers for parcel # 28-3382000. Discussion was held by the council that the house needs to be torn down regardless of which offer is accepted. It was suggested that a deadline be given for the removal of the house and that closing on the property does not take place until the removal is complete. Motion was made by Darin Johnson to accept a down payment of \$1000 from John Walsh and Shantel Niemand-Walsh for the purchase of parcel #28-3382000 with the buyer paying closing costs and with the conditions that the offer will be retracted if the house is not torn down by July 15th, 2024 and the down payment will be forfeited, seconded by Donna Scholl, unanimous vote, motion carried.

New Business:

VOTER Account Agreement – The Voting Operations, Technology, & Election Resources Account Agreement was received from Norman County. The agreement states that Norman County will retain the VOTER account funds received by the State of Minnesota because Norman County administers all of the balloting for our precinct. Darin Johnson made a motion to approve the VOTER Account Agreement, seconded by Gaylord Christianson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

HTC Grant Application for Northern Dental – Northern Dental Access Center is applying for a Halstad Telephone Community Cooperation Fund grant which requires local government approval prior to submittal. The grant would be used to improve the employee parking lot for NDAC and installing a fence to separate the parking from the adjacent apartment parking. Motion by Gaylord Christianson to approve the grant application, seconded by Darin Johnson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library – Donation request – Gary Cares requested a donation from the City of Halstad for the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library at the October 9 meeting. After further research, donations cannot be made from public funds. No donation was approved.

Liquor License Renewal – Valley General Store – All of the required documents were received from Valley General Store to renew their off-sale liquor license. Gaylord Christianson moved to approve the 2024 Liquor License Renewal for Valley General Store, seconded by Darin Johnson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Resolution 2023-11-13-Authorizing and Supporting a Small Cities Development Program application – Stephen Slick with AE₂S was in attendance to present on the SCDP. This is a starting point for the Preliminary Engineering Report for the water department. This funding can be used as the local match for other federal funding opportunities. Motion to approve the resolution by Gaylord Christianson, seconded by Darin Johnson, unanimous vote, motion carried.

Valley United-Sale of Property – Valley United would like to sell the south portion of land on the old railroad bed to the city for semi parking. A survey for the land sale was estimated at \$3000. All that is needed is a legal description of the property for the purchase agreement. Lucas Spaeth will contact Hanson Law Office about writing up a legal description of the property as they were the attorney for the elevator when the land was purchased from the railroad.

Other:

Upcoming events- Shop Small Saturday 11.25.23, Truth in Taxation 12.11.23.

Brandon Mickelson moved and second by Gaylord Christianson to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 pm, vote unanimous, motion carried.

The next Regular meeting of the City Council will be on Monday, December 11, 2023, at 5:15 pm.