

TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
City Hall, Council Chambers  
Monday May 22, 2023

The Agenda for this Meeting was posted May 18, 2023 at City Hall, the Post Office. Copies were emailed to residents requesting such, and the Press was notified.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Brandon Weiberg.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag was recited.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Brandon Weiberg, Vice Mayor Lee Samuelson, Tim Grote, Larry Julik-Heine, Troy Aanonsen  
Also present: Attorney F. Knaak, Michelle Hansen, Sandra Berg, Brian Berg, JoAnn Kuntemeier, Diane Nelson, Carol Schumann, Kevin Schumann, Julie Samuelson, Darrel Caneday

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

*Grote Moved, Julik-Heine second to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.*

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Aanonsen asked about two cash expenses/distributions on the check list from the General Fund on May 11, \$352.92 and \$5,556.21. Grote explained it is the amount of payroll.

Aanonsen also asked if the difference between the Paid Register and the Employee Pay Hours, if one is after benefits, taxes etc.

Grote answered, “ Yes, one is gross and the other is net pay, the Employee Pay Hours is the gross pay.

Samuelson asked about Clerk Tomnitz getting paid 4.5 hours of overtime, while only working 67 hours of regular time.

Mayor Weiberg believed she had used some PTO, but will ask Mary tomorrow.

Aanonsen brought up an old topic from last month about Abdo Financial solutions invoice from 3-31-23, and stated the Brad made a mistake in the coding.

*Julik-Heine moved, Grote seconded to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion passed unanimously.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

There were no minutes to approve

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Diane Nelson gave thanks to all that helped with the public clean up. Proposed a few new projects: Paint the guard rail, clean the trash receptacles, also to order some new surrounds for some of the trash receptacles, Juneberry Cafe requested a trash receptacle outside their building, they would like to clean up the information center. She also mentioned some safety concerns they have, the sidewalks outside the Bead Store and the Juneberry Cafe need repair, also the river walk behind Schoony’s and also a few paths back there, she asked if it could be barricaded.

Community Garden update: Nelson said Jason Riebe mentioned a site that could work for the garden site, and she also has a friend who is 4 or 5 miles out on Vista Rd that has a piece of land she is willing to donate for the garden.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Shafer Fire Contract – Update**

Aanonsen said the Shafer Board approved the 2023-2024 contract in the amount of \$19,032.00 per year, for 2 years, of 2023 and 2024 payable to the City of Taylors Falls, in 4 payments over the next 2 years and those payments will be made on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June and December of each year.

Grote asked if the attorney had viewed the contract. The attorney answered, yes. Grote also asked, what is the difference between the 2021-2022 and 2023-2024 contract from a financial perspective?

Aanonsen responded it is about a \$3,000 difference.

Grote asked if it was the percentages that really changed?

Aanonsen responded that the estimated market values had a lot to do with it. He broke it down to get estimated market values for home in the area where our Fire Department serves and the Shafer Clerk helped him with that.

Grote made a point for future reference; Taylors Falls is bearing the burden of the entire cost of capital, and we are not charging that out.

Weiberg agreed, especially since we are going into budget season, we need to make sure they have a truck, because at the end of the two years, the opportunity will be done. He then asked if we do get called out to Shafer township more can it be re-negotiated.

Aanonsen answered no, it would have to be part of next year's budget.

*Aanonsen moved, Samuelson seconded to approve the Shafer Fire Contract. Motion passed unanimously.*

### **City Coordinator/Zoning Administrator – Update**

Weiberg stated Elizabeth Ullrich Hass has accepted the position with a start date of 6-20-23.

Aanonsen asked about her pay rate.

Weiberg answered \$32.00 per hour, with one full week of PTO and the regular accruing in our policy of PTO will stay in place, and we did not include the pay raise after the 3 month review, we gave that to her ahead of time.

Weiberg mentioned all of this info will be included in the next meetings packet.

### **Bolton & Menk – Update on Proposal for Updating Zoning and Ordinances**

Weiberg clarified for the residents, why the City is contemplating paying Bolton & Menk \$7,840.00 to update the zoning and ordinances. He said it is because there are multiple books, as well as a flash drive, with amendments, that were not put into the zoning and ordinance book, and Bolton & Menk are going to help pull that all together.

Aanonsen mentioned Lindstrom has disclaimers right on their ordinances, letting them know there has been amendments.

Aanonsen thanked Harry for all his work. He expressed support for Harry and Elizabeth working together, so they can hit the ground running. He has concerns about Environmental Social & Governments Movement (ESG) that some Zoning contractors seem to promote from time to time. He is concerned about keeping the character of this town intact.

Julik-Heine believes this is a wise move. Harry is already familiar with what needs to be done, and it's a good idea to have another set of eyes on it.

Grote expressed his support for it, and agreed with how well Harry has been doing.

Weiberg also expressed his support and agreed with needing to keep Taylors Falls charm.

*Aanonsen moved Julik-Heine seconded to approve the proposal for Bolton & Menk to update the Zoning and Ordinances. Motion passed unanimously.*

## NEW BUSINESS

### Past Due Water Bills

Weiberg announced that delinquent letters went out to residents that were 90 days past due. We kept names off of the list this time around, because we do not have a proper procedure in place at this time. There will be another letter that will go out after 30 days from the date of this current letter, and then names will be available to the public. In the letters that went out, we included assistance information through Lakes and Pines. We are \$37,383.37 past due 90 days and our water fund is hurting. He mentioned we are also working on online payment options. He said we do not need to make a decision today, but just have a conversation as to what to do moving forward, whether we shut the water off or certify to the County to be put onto the owner's taxes.

Grote mentioned how we have not been adding interest or late charges to these past due accounts, and historically that has been the policy.

Grote thinks we should come up with a different way to bill for these small, storm water only accounts.

Aanonsen asked the Attorney his thoughts on the topic.

Mr. Knaak answered that it is really up to us. Although, if we haven't had a policy in place, we need to start from that point. First, publish a policy, and then move forward from there. Then, yes, we can shut the water off, and yes, we can certify to the County.

Julik-Heine wanted to go on record saying, that shutting off someone's water is extreme, and that should be the very last option.

Aanonsen thanked the city staff for bringing this to the Council's attention.

Weiberg asked all Council members to bring some ideas to the next meeting in June. Then we can develop policy moving forward.

Mr. Knaak added that if we shut off the water, we deem the building uninhabitable.

No action was taken by Council.

### Credit Card – Online Payment Options

Grote summarized his meetings with the credit card companies.

#### Xpress Bill Pay-

Offers credit cards, debit cards, and electronic checks. This would be a link on our website to an external website. They are PCI1 compliant, which is the highest level for security. It does cost, and there are two ways to pay. The first option is the owner to pay the transaction fee of 3%. The second way is the City to pay the transaction fee at a reduced rate of 1.5%.

There is an initial set up fee of \$500 and a \$35.00 monthly fee to be non-integrated.

To be fully integrated into Banyon it would be a \$69.00 monthly fee, which would need another module (price unknown) and a set up fee of \$1500.00. If we decide to upgrade to fully integrated at a later date, then the \$500 initial set up fee would be credited towards the \$1500 set up fee, so it would only cost an additional \$1000.00. Xpress would also cover liability if there was a breach.

#### Clover- from Fiserv (Midwest One Bank)

Offers only credit cards, no debit cards. Does not integrate with Banyon.

There is a monthly fee of \$35.00

***Aanonsen moved Grote seconded to approve moving forward with Xpress Bill Pay for online payment. Motion passed unanimously.***

***Julik-Heine moved Samuelson seconded to approve the 1.5% fee, the City will absorb, and we will move forward with paying the one-time fee of \$500.00, and \$35.00 a month fee to Xpress Bill Pay. Motion passed unanimously.***

## City Office Job Descriptions – Splitting of Positions

Weiberg spoke of a meeting that he had with Mary, Michelle, and Attorney Knaak about bringing Michelle over from Express Employment to become an employee and then split the Clerk/Treasurer position into two positions.

Grote supports the splitting of the positions, although worries about the cost involved with adding another position.

Julik-Heine is not ready to move forward just yet. He would like to hold off until we see how things go with the new Zoning Administrator.

Samuelson supports the idea of splitting the position, but thinks we should post the positions.

Aanonsen agrees with Samuelson that splitting the position is a good idea, and would also like to see it posted. He feels the citizens should have a chance to serve their community.

Julik-Heine does not agree with posting the positions, he believes we have a good team in place, and to post the position and start the interview process would set us back from our progress.

Grote asked Aanonsen, because of the way he phrased his last statement, if he believes a resident should get bonus points if they were to apply for one of these positions.

Aanonsen answered no, it doesn't mean that the resident would be more qualified than the employees we currently have working here.

Weiberg asked Mr. Knaak his thoughts on the topic, and if they are going about this correctly.

Mr. Knaak commented that you are doing it methodically, and he doesn't see any problem with the way it's being done. It is up to the Council.

Weiberg and Julik-Heine are worried about current staff quitting if these positions are posted.

Aanonsen doesn't understand how an employee would take posting their position personal, or why an employee would quit if their position was posted.

Weiberg remarked how it would make him feel if someone posted his position.

There was discussion on how long to post the positions.

Grote commented on the cost of posting the positions in two different newspapers, and the time and effort it will take for interviews.

***Grote moved Julik-Heine seconded on splitting the position of City Clerk/Treasurer to a City Clerk and a City Treasurer. Motion passed 4/1 Yeas- Weiberg/Grote/Aanonsen/Samuelson, Nay- Julik-Heine***

There was a discussion amongst all Council members about how to go about posting the positions. If the current staff would have to re-apply to their current position, or to both positions if they so choose to.

***Aanonsen moved Samuelson seconded to post the two positions for a two-week period, in both newspapers, as well as the League of MN Cities. Motion passed 3/2 Yeas- Weiberg/Aanonsen/Samuelson, Nays- Julik-Heine/Grote***

## Council & Commissions Meetings

Grote talked about Commission Meetings and how he is interested in attending them, and asked if we should be posting everything as a potential quorum. He spoke of adding all the meetings on the website calendar, and suggested all the meeting be live streamed in the chambers.

Weiberg agrees, and wants all the Commission Chairs to get their schedules for meetings to the office, to have put on the website calendar.

Aanonsen agrees as well.

Samuelson asked Mr. Knaak his opinion, and he answered, yes, posting is a normal thing amongst other cities.

No action was taken.

## Chemical Treatment System

Grote stated that the public works team identified some issues with our chemical treatment system/community water system, it's the fluoride/chlorine treatment that we do. They received an estimate for \$3,500, but that is not a firm estimate.

Grote asked for approval of up to \$5,000.00 for the repair costs.

***Grote moved Samuelson seconded to authorize Public Works to spend up to, but not to exceed \$5,000.00 for the repair of our chemical treatment system for our water. Motion passed unanimously***

**LMC Loss Control Consultation – Informational only**

Grote summarized the meeting with the League of MN Cities. They supply Municipalities with an annual review from a risk perspective. He mentioned inspections that should be taking place on a regular basis. He commented how we will need to develop a formal program moving forward.

Grote asked for approval from Council for a training program called NeoGov, for all paid staff, it costs \$15.00 per employee annually.

Weiberg mentioned the office can spend up to \$1000.00 without Council approval, so go ahead and move forward with it.

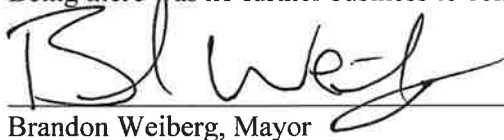
Grote also brought up the Grant through OSHA for safety improvements that he will be looking into.

No action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***Grote moved Julik-Heine seconded to adjourn the meeting of the Taylors Falls City Council held this Monday, May 22, 2023 at 9:03pm. Motion passed unanimously.***


Being there was no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.



Brandon Weiberg, Mayor

APPROVED

07/24/2023



Michelle Hansen, Office Assistant