

MINUTES
TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
City Hall, Council Chambers
Monday, June 14, 2021

The Agenda for this Meeting was posted Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at City Hall, the Post Office, and on the City's website. Copies were emailed to residents requesting such, and the Press was notified.

CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Vice-Mayor Ross Rivard.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Vice-Mayor Ross Rivard, Mary Murphy, Troy Aanonsen

Members Absent: Mayor Mike Buchite, Larry Julik-Heine

Others Present: Clerk-Treasurer Elizabeth Nealley, Fire Chief Jacob Vodenka-Reed, Sergeant Cliff Sheppeck (Chisago County Sheriff's Office), John Tangen, Denise Martin (Chisago County Press), Sandra Berg (Wannigan Days Committee), Amanda Oman (Wannigan Days Committee), Tim Lauer (Lions Club), Bill Davids (Lions Club), Don Lawrence (Lions Club), Barbara Nelson (CERT), unidentified couple

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Vice-Mayor Ross Rivard added a 3rd Consent Agenda item: Request from the Knights of Columbus for approval of gambling permit. He also added two New Business items: #6 - Request from Public Works to repair the pavement on West and Maple Streets, and #7 - Request from the Lions Club for approval for a pier at the Lions Club Park. Motion by Aanonsen / Murphy to approve the amended Agenda for the Monday, June 14, 2021 Taylors Falls City Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The agenda items were followed in this order: Item #7 and then items #1 through #6 in order.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to approve/accept the following Consent Agenda items: Minutes from previous meetings; Staff reports; Commission, Board, or Committee minutes/reports; Correspondence; as well as the following items:

Claims & payroll

The City Council approved by Consent Agenda payment of payroll check numbers 7989-8003 totaling \$18,178.89; as well as check numbers 31701-31722 and electronic check numbers 6302551-6302561 totaling \$124,029.96 for the previous month's expenditures.

Request from Public Works to pay invoice from Andrie Electric

Public Works requested approval by Consent Agenda for payment of \$2,425.00 to Andrie Electric for street light replacement.

Request from Fire Department to pay invoice from Exenvironmental Inc

The Fire Department requested approval by Consent Agenda for payment of \$1,600.00 to ExEnvironmental Inc for Enforcer extinguisher for the command truck.

Request from the Knights of Columbus for approval of gambling permit (amended)**

The Knights of Columbus requested approval by Consent Agenda for a gambling permit.

Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

Sandra Berg of the Wannigan Days Committee submitted a Public Forum card to speak before the Council. She provided an updated schedule of events. Vice-Mayor Rivard commended the committee for doing a fantastic job, and Sandra said that she had a fantastic committee, including Amanda Oman who had put together all of the kids events. She said that when she and Lynn Longnecker had started working on the committee, they had committed to having something free for every age group. She also brought out that the Lions Club were a very important part of the success of the festival. Sandra asked for more information about the Covid Relief Funding in 2020, the upcoming new website, and had an idea for the Council to consider - having the meetings streamed, possibly by iPhone. Council Member Murphy explained there were legalities involved, but said she would look into it. Discussion followed.

OLD BUSINESS

Request from the CERT for purchase of new radios (tabled at 05/10/21 meeting)

Council Member Murphy explained the CERT's request and the two radio bids. She explained that Ancom was the better deal and discussion followed.

Motion by Aanonsen / Murphy to approve the request from the CERT to purchase radios at \$4,298.00 and the charger at \$275.00 (for a total of \$4,573.00) from ANCOM to be paid from the general fund. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

City-wide survey regarding downtown Taylors Falls commercial property formerly owned by MNDoT

Council Member Aanonsen said that some residents had questions about the commercial property that has been on the market for about ten years now. He said that it is time that all the residents have an opportunity to make a decision, and at least have their opinions heard, and there has been a request for a city-wide referendum asking Taylors Falls residents whether the commercial (old MNDoT) lot should stay on the market as a saleable lot (or lots) or be taken off the market and maintained as a permanent public space. He further explained that it would cost under \$400.00 for these ballots or surveys to be sent to residents of the City. He asked that the votes be dropped off at City Hall for the volunteer commission members to count.

Council Member Murphy said she could give a little bit of history on how the situation with the lot evolved. In 2010 MNDoT (The Minnesota Department of Transportation) offered the opportunity to give us the downtown lot in exchange for the City building the stalls for sand, salt, and equipment at the City Hall property for MNDoT's use. The Council at that time wanted this deal but there was no funding for it and they didn't want to tax the taxpayers for it. The Chisago County HRA-EDA (Housing and Redevelopment Authority - Economic Development Authority) funded the city with \$150,000.00 as an interest-free loan, for however long it takes to develop the property. There is a contractual agreement on it that says the property has to be sold as a development site. If the property is made into a park, it will never ever collect taxes. If it is developed commercially, it will always forever collect taxes that will reduce the property taxes for the citizens of Taylors Falls. If the property is made into a park, the \$150,000.00 is callable immediately, which means that it needs to be paid now. If the HRA-EDA calls the payment, the resident's taxes will go up 23% in 2022 to pay for that lot. So you have to weigh the good with the bad, she said.

Discussion followed regarding the proper way to bring up an item for the agenda. Murphy said that this agenda item should have been brought up through the Parks and Recreation Commission, and brought out that anybody interested in having this land made into a park or public space should meet with the PRC. Aanonsen explained that this item was not being brought up through the Economic Development Commission or any other commission, he was just representing some people in the City. Discussion continued regarding procedures.

Council Member Murphy summed up by saying that to make this land a park or public space, the \$150,000.00 would have to be paid back right away, bringing everyone's taxes up 23% next year. She further mentioned that 40% of that property was already earmarked for greenspace. Discussion followed once again regarding procedures.

Vice-Mayor Rivard asked Council Member Aanonsen if he wanted to make a motion.

Motion by Aanonsen / Murphy to approve a city-wide referendum asking Taylors Falls residents whether the Commercial Lot (MNDoT Lot, PIN 200021200) should stay on the market as a saleable lot(s) - or be taken off the market and maintained as a permanent public space. Motion denied 2 to 1, with Rivard and Murphy voting nay.

Request from Public Works to update lift station #1 with a float system

Vice-Mayor Rivard explained the request from Public Works Superintendent Mike Kriz for a float system to be installed in lift station #1. Kriz had said that countless hours were spent last winter repairing it when it froze up - this will be more modern and efficient, and will do a better job and not freeze up. Discussion followed.

Motion by Aanonsen / Murphy to approve the request from Public Works to update lift station #1 with a float system to be installed and purchased from Andrie Electric LTD at a cost of \$3,994.00, to be paid from the sewer fund. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-06-01 Accepting grant from Walmart

Fire Chief Jacob Vodenka-Reed explained that the \$1,500.00 received in the Walmart grant would be used to buy 2 new nozzels for the pumper. Council Member Murphy commended him for going for grants.

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to adopt Resolution 21-06-01: Accepting grant from Walmart for \$1,500.00 for the Fire Department. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 21-06-02 Accepting donations for the Wannigan Days fund

Vice-Mayor Rivard said that there were many donations given towards Wannigan Days and that the group running it is doing an excellent job. He highlighted the sentence from the resolution stating that the City Council of the City of Taylors Falls expresses its thanks and appreciation. Discussion followed.

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to adopt Resolution 21-06-02: Accepting donations for the Wannigan Days fund from various donors at a total amount of \$7,950.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Sponsorship for the Minnesota Real Estate Journal North Metro Development Summit

Council Member Murphy explained that it would be a \$250.00 sponsorship contribution towards the Chisago County HRA-EDA entry, which would include being able to send a representative from Taylors Falls and marketing material and advertising. Discussion followed.

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to approve sponsorship for the Minnesota Real Estate Journal North Metro Development Summit in the amount of \$250.00 to be paid to the Chisago County HRA-EDA. Motion carried 2 to 1, with Aanonsen voting nay.

Request from Public Works to repair the pavement on West and Maple Streets (amended)**

Vice-Mayor Rivard explained that the pavement on West and Maple Streets had been damaged when a water main broke. Discussion followed.

Motion by Aanonsen / Murphy to approve the request from Public Works for the repair of the pavement on West and Maple Streets by Prefer Paving at a cost of \$3,000.00 to be paid from the paving fund. Motion carried unanimously.

Request from the Lions Club for approval for a pier at the Lions Club Park (amended)**

Tim Lauer of the Lions Club explained that in order to proceed with the pier at the Lions Club Park, a cooperative agreement between the City of Taylors Falls and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources was needed for the pathway from the parking lot of the Lions Club Park to the fishing pier. They need a copy of the Taylors Falls City Council Meeting minutes showing the intention to approve the cooperative agreement in order to proceed and to not lose the DNR grant money before the end of the month. He mentioned that the U.S. Corp of Engineers had been involved and that there was a question of whether a permit was needed. He brought out that the pier was not going to disturb the river bottom, as it would just be wheeled in. Council Member Rivard mentioned that the Lions Club are doing a great job and that the improvements to the park are constant. Council Member Aanonsen asked if it is the Lions Club's understanding that the Zoning Administrator has everything he needs, and Tim said yes. Council Member Murphy asked to word the motion in such a way that the Lions could move forward but the City was not held responsible for things out of the City's control.

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to approve a cooperative agreement with the MNDoR for the pathway from the Lions Club Park parking lot to the fishing pier on a contingency that we have all the necessary paperwork approved for the Lions Club to get the pier process done, so that we can approve the ability to let the Lions Club move forward with the pier. Motion carried unanimously.

LIAISON OR COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Council Member Troy Aanonsen

- said that he wanted some clarification on the meeting minutes of the 05-26-21 Library Board meeting, where it says that visitors will be asked if they have been vaccinated. Council Member Aanonsen said that this violates HIPAA regulations. Council Member Murphy said that this does not fall under HIPAA regulations, and that it is up to the Library Board to make their own decisions. Discussion followed. Vice-Mayor Rivard asked Clerk-Treasurer Nealley to contact Librarian Diane Dedon about the issue. Discussion followed as to what was to be said.

- said that he was meeting with the Economic Development Commission. They had previously been discussing vendors, food trucks, and regulations regarding these. There had also been discussion of renting a trolley for Wannigan Days.

Council Member Mary Murphy

- said that she had a Heritage Preservation Meeting to attend on Wednesday.

Council Member Ross Rivard

- said that Public Works was working on maintenance.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Aanonsen / Murphy to adjourn the meeting of the Taylors Falls City Council held this Monday, June 14, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Michael D. Buchite, Mayor

Elizabeth Nealley, Clerk-Treasurer

Ross Rivard, Vice-Mayor

APPROVED

Monday, July 12, 2021