

**MINUTES**  
**TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**City Hall Council Chambers**  
**Monday, December 27, 2021**

The Agenda for this Meeting was posted Wednesday, December 22, 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 7:00 pm by Mayor Mike Buchite.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Mike Buchite, Ross Rivard, Larry Julik-Heine, Mary Murphy, Troy Aanonsen

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Clerk-Treasurer Elizabeth Nealley, Geri Aanonsen, Brian Berg, Sandra Berg, Becky Caneday, Molly Irish, Lee Samuelsen, Rich Smith, Brandon Weiberg and possibly other visitors who didn't sign in.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Vice-Mayor Ross Rivard had asked for the removal of New Business item #5, Request for continued employment of temporary employee, which referred to the temporary eight hours or less per week position held by Shawn Nealley for filing old documents according to the document retention schedule. Councilmember Aanonsen asked why it was removed. Vice-Mayor Rivard said that they would discuss it at the next meeting in January. Vice-Mayor Rivard then asked that the 12/13/21 Council Meeting minutes for approval be removed from the consent agenda, "...just because I haven't had a chance to read them." Mayor Buchite then confirmed: "Okay, so the minutes from our last meeting, December 13th - you want those removed and then put on at the next meeting?" Vice-Mayor Rivard said: "Correct, I just haven't had a chance to read them, so." Mayor Buchite said: "So we'll put them on the January meeting for review and approval." Then Vice-Mayor Rivard surprised the Clerk-Treasurer and asked for New Business item #6 to be added: Setting the date change for receiving the investigation report. Motion by Julik-Heine / Aanonsen to approve the Agenda as presented for the Monday, December 27, 2021 Taylors Falls City Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**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**

Payment of payroll check numbers 8080-8096 totaling \$21,373.34; as well as check numbers 31974-32022 and electronic check numbers 6302597-6302607 totaling \$201,567.91 for the previous month's expenditures

**1. Payment of invoice 51126 to Complete Automotive of \$1,386.00 for vehicle maintenance**

Payment of Public Works Invoice.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

## NEW BUSINESS

### **1. Resolution 21-12-03 adopting final 2022 budget and tax levy payable in 2022**

Councilmember Aanonsen asked about an amount in the 2019 column for the HPC. Mayor Buchite said: That just needs to be corrected. Clerk-Treasurer Nealley explained that we can't go back into the software and change the prior years. The report is correct, 2018 with the balancing entry doesn't show because the software only shows 3 years at a time. She further explained that there was a lot of little things like that in these prior years that she had already researched and made a note of. She said that if anyone ever has any questions on what's going on with the funds or cash balances, they could stop by when the office is open and she would definitely get them an answer. All past years have been audited and are correct.

General Fund	395,900.00
Library Fund	12,800.00
Economic Development Fund	2,000.00
Community Center Fund	2,000.00
Park Improvement Fund	12,200.00
Heritage Park Fund	10,000.00
Special Projects Fund	20,000.00
Capital Equipment Fund	70,000.00
City Buildings Debt Svc Fund	55,000.00
PW Bldg Debt Svc Fund	5,000.00
Well #4 Debt Svc Fund	15,000.00
Street Improvements Fund	90,000.00
Total Levy	\$689,900.00

Motion by Murphy / Julik-Heine to approve Resolution 21-12-03 adopting the final 2022 budget and tax levy payable in 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

### **2. Resolution 21-12-04 transferring funds from the general fund to the special projects fund for payment of sidewalk paving project**

Because this project cost more than was budgeted in the special projects fund, the council approved paying the balance from the general fund. This resolution is to transfer those funds into special projects fund.

Motion by Rivard / Julik-Heine to to approve, table, or deny Resolution 21-12-04 transferring funds from the general fund (101) to the special projects fund (413) for payment of the sidewalk paving project in the amount of \$7,964.01. Motion carried unanimously.

### **3. Request to contract with Abdo for year end tax/payroll reporting**

Mayor Buchite said that this was a request "...to contract with Abdo and this is something that we have done several years in a row. What they're doing, if I understand this correctly, and correctly if I'm wrong Elizabeth, is they come in at the end of the year. They do the final to prepare for the audit for 2021 which happens in January or February, something like that. Is that what this is for?" Clerk-Treasurer Nealley explained that no, this was for something else. (Nealley is currently being trained to do the audit prep herself by Abdo, as per the motion at the May 2021 City Council meeting.) Nealley explained that this request is to have the 1099 and w2 year end forms completed, since the administrative office is short on time. Mayor Buchite asked: "Okay, have they done this in the past for us?" Nealley: "In 2019." Mayor Buchite: "Okay, that's what I thought." He then asked if it should come from the general fund, and Clerk-Treasurer Nealley agreed, since that is where accounting services is paid from, as well as wages when she normally completes this task herself. Mayor Buchite then checked with the Council where it should be paid from. Councilmember Julik-Heine said the general fund.

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to approve request from Clerk-Treasurer to contract with Abdo to complete 1099 and w2 year end forms at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.00 from the general fund. Motion carried unanimously.

### **4. Request allowing City staff to carry over PTO hours to 2022**

Mayor Buchite explained: "Because of some of the pandemic that is still ongoing and other circumstances we've had an accumulation of PTO hours. I know for Public Works as a liaison that Paul has been doing a lot of double duty because he was the only one for two months in a row, so he's accumulated quite a bit of PTO. I know Elizabeth has accumulated some." This was also due to lack of staff, and having to cancel scheduled PTO days in 2021. Mayor Buchite explained: "Rather than punish them and take it all away what we are allowed to do as a Council is to allow them to carry that PTO over into next year, and then to encourage them to burn it down as rapidly or as much as they regionally, reasonably can for the year 2022, so."

Councilmember Julik-Heine said: "All right, they earned it and they worked hard to get it and I would approve this." Vice-Mayor Rivard said: "I agree, it's just because circumstances and everything. No reason to penalize them. And we've done it in the past." Councilmember Aanonsen clarified that the two employees were Clerk-Treasurer Nealley and Public Works Maintenance Worker Paul Stenger. Mayor Buchite confirmed and said that Zoning Administrator Heth had used all his, and newly rehired Public Works Superintendent Kriz didn't have any. Councilmember Murphy said: "I agree and Paul has been doing a great job and he deserves it and he's been doing it alone for three months."

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to approve request allowing city staff to carry over PTO hours from 2021 to 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **5. Request for continued employment of temporary employee**

#### **6. Setting the date change for receiving the investigation report.**

Vice-Mayor Rivard explained: I received a phone call from Michelle Soldo about the investigation going on. and just let me read the email here. It says: "Honorable Council Members, This email follows my brief telephone discussion with Vice-Mayor Rivard today. Due to an unexpected family matter, I'm requesting that the Council reschedule my December 29th presentation to Thursday, January 6th or Monday, January 10th of 2022. I recognize that all are anxious to conclude this matter. I apologize for the delay and thank you for your patience." Vice-Mayor Rivard then recommended January 6. Councilmember Aanonsen said: Excuse me... I just want to make a note that I recognize that that's a confidential email. Vice-Mayor Rivard said: Anyway, I just didn't want to deceive the public... I have to let everybody know the date changes... if there's an investigation, it's public knowledge. Vice-Mayor Rivard recommended January 6th again. Mayor Buchite confirmed it would be at 7:00 and then said: Everybody come, promote this. Councilmember Murphy agreed: Yes. Councilmember Aanonsen confirmed that it was going to be an open meeting. Mayor Buchite said: I'm going to call for a motion to approve the report from the investigator and call a special meeting for January 6th of Thursday at 7 pm and it is open to the public.... (However, he can't call for a motion to approve the report before it has been seen by the Council.)

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to .... call a special meeting for January 6th of Thursday at 7:00 pm. Nobody abstained from the vote this time. Motion carried unanimously.

### **LIAISON OR COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

#### **Mayor Mike Buchite**

- said: "Okay we've hit everything on the agenda, the only thing that I have are two things. Number one is that the city attorney has provided an answer to Steve Heth regarding the Springs Inn and what I'll direct Steve to do is make sure they send it to all the Councilmembers and make it available to everybody in the public. It is public information, so if you want to, I'll make sure the Schumanns are the ones who ask the question, so I'll make sure they get that information, but it is open to the public. It is from the city attorney. The other thing I was asked to bring up tonight, is it's winter time, there's snow on the ground watch your parking on the city streets because the plows are finding they have to go around vehicles on the streets. It's tough down on River Street and Hazel Alley because they really don't have a lot of parking down there, so it's just challenging but we do it just for snow removal. The other thing is sidewalks, we want people to shovel their sidewalks whenever it snows. We give them 24 hours downtown. They shovel the snow into the street and we come up afterwards and we clean up the downtown area after people have shoveled the sidewalks into the street so I've been asked to encourage people to watch their parking and shovel the snow.

- Resident Sandra Berg spoke up and said that she had met with Zoning Administrator Steve Heth about the municipal code. Though some of the info had been found, it's kind of a mess, she said.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Murphy / Julik-Heine to adjourn the meeting of the Taylors Falls City Council held this Monday, December 27, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

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Ross Rivard, Vice Mayor

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Elizabeth Nealley, Clerk-Treasurer

### **APPROVED**

Monday, February 14, 2022