

MINUTES TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall Council Chambers Monday, January 10, 2022

The Agenda for this Meeting was posted Wednesday, January 5, 2022 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, Shawn Nealley, Geri Aanonsen, Brian Berg, Sandra Berg, Becky Caneday, Molly Irish, Diane Nelson, Julie Samuelsen, Kevin Schumann, Brandon Weiberg, Denise Martin (Chisago County Press), and possibly other visitors who didn't sign in.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mayor Buchite explained that first the Council would conduct the Organizational part of the meeting. He then explained some amendments to the agenda, saying: And Council will note that we have four items that actually have been moved around a little bit here. We have the vacation request has been moved to Consent Agenda. There's no need for Council to discuss that. Request for volunteers- the personnel liaison (Vice-Mayor) Ross (Rivard) had told me they want that removed until they can review that and determine exactly what that encompasses.

Mayor Buchite explained: The Midco agreement- that's not ready yet. I know that we're still waiting for some information for contracting purposes. I'm not sure why we don't have it yet but it does give us an opportunity with Midco. Because I've had more than one resident say it would be really nice if we broadcast these Council Meetings, and so I do know that people who have cable TV already don't pay anything for that channel because it's either channel 10 or 20. But what we don't know and we're going to have to get answers to is: What's the cost of the equipment, because they have to put cameras in here. So is there a charge for the cameras? Is there a charge for them to broadcast it? I'm not sure, and so what I'm going to do is have (Zoning Administrator) Steve Heth look into that whole process to find out what's the cost of having put on television. And I've said for quite some time, and I've said for quite some time I'm in favor of that, really for people who are shut ins. So I don't care, I just tune out cameras. So that item is not ready to go. The other item is the hosting that we've been doing downstairs for the Chicago Lakes Community Education. It's computer lab, and it's nicely set up in an office downstairs, so that is Consent Agenda.

Mayor Buchite said: Now for myself, I have one item to add. It will be listed as item #5 under New Business. We can list it as: Amendment to the purchase agreement for the downtown commercial property. I've got all the information from the purchaser and I also have a response from our city attorney Chad Lemmons on this property so when we get to that point we'll discuss it. Whatever decide, we decide to do is what will happen.

Councilmember Julik-Heine said: One request for the Consent Agenda, the first item, approval of minutes from previous meetings. Ross and I would like to have that removed so that we can review it. We haven't had a chance to review it. Mayor Buchite: Okay, and so those minutes that were included in our packet are from November and December, so you're saying we're just going to remove them until you've had a chance to review them, then they'll come back for approval. Clerk-Treasurer Nealley clarified: I'm sorry, the ones from November were already approved. All it was, was updating the amount. If you notice on #4 for New Business, all it is, is updating minutes for that resolution. Mayor Buchite: And so you're saying that the minutes from the December 12th meeting have been approved? CT Nealley: No, November. Councilmember Julik-Heine: I thought we had pulled both of those at the last Council Meeting. (Only the 12/13/21 minutes were pulled off the agenda at the 12/27/21 Council Meeting, as can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UwxbJc91lc>, timestamp 0:24) CT Nealley explained again that the November 8th, 2021 minutes were previously approved by the City Council (see City Council Meeting of 12/13/21 for that approval. It is also referred to at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td67epjPXmM>, timestamp 55:07.) Mayor Buchite: Okay, well let's check into that. Let the liaisons check that and determine if they've already been approved and there's no problems. Right if there's problems, then they'll make sure they resolve that, so.

Councilmember Rivard asked for item #6 to be added New Business: I've got a little announcement here for the, about the investigation and the date and everything. The presentation of that, so we could add that to New Business.

Councilmember Aanonsen said: I have a request that Staff Request #2: Request from Clerk-Treasurer to allow volunteers to work in clerical office be put back on the agenda. We've moved that tonight. We also had it on the agenda, December 27th, we scratched it. We've had residents asking about office help and know that there's available funding for that. We've also had residents ask about their water bills, concerned about the website and I just don't, I don't see, volunteer by definition shouldn't cost the city a dime. Because I don't see why there's any reason why we keep pushing that up. Mayor Buchite: Okay I do know that one reason the liaisons we want to look into it is that for privacy stuff, what can they do what aren't they allowed to do for privacy purposes. But I'll be fair. Ross, you want it on the agenda for discussion, or do you still want it removed? Councilmember Rivard: I guess we can discuss it, it doesn't matter but the issue just you know is, is silly, just seems even water bills you know, whether people are late or not it still falls into privacy. Clerk-Treasurer Nealley reminded the Council that she is aware of the privacy laws. (For more information, see <https://www.lmc.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/Data-Practices.pdf>, pages 59-60, which includes links to state statutes and Minnesota Department of Administration advisory opinions.)

Motion by Aanonsen / (none) to put Staff Request #2: Request from Clerk-Treasurer to allow volunteers to work on clerical office tasks back on the agenda for consideration. No one seconded the motion.

Motion by Murphy / Julik-Heine to approve the amended Agenda for the Taylors Falls City Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Election of Vice Mayor

Councilmember Julik-Heine nominated Councilmember Rivard. Councilmember Aanonsen nominated Councilmember Julik-Heine. Councilmember Julik-Heine declined the nomination.

Motion by Murphy / Julik-Heine to close the nominations for Vice Mayor. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Murphy / Julik-Heine to elect Ross Rivard as Vice Mayor. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Resolution 22-01-01: 2022 Organization

The City Council discussed City designations for 2022. Everything remained mostly the same as for 2021, with the following items discussed: JoAnn Kuntemeier had joined the HPC in 2021 and was added to the resolution. The city's attorney firm who was inadvertently left off the resolution will be Kelly and Lemmons. Councilmember Aanonsen questioned if there were other options, and Mayor Buchite explained that the city could always go out for bids at any time. The former building official, Jack Kramer, had agreed to help until a possible contract with Chisago County for building inspection services is finalized.

Motion by Murphy / Rivard to approve Resolution 22-01-01: 2022 Organization with the above listed changes. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Resolution 22-01-02: 2022 Fee Schedule

The following changes were made to the 2022 fee schedule: It was updated by the Clerk-Treasurer to include any missing fees that she could find documentation for, including the hotel license fee and lodging tax. These had not been previously put on the schedule by former employees, but had been approved by the Council.

Motion by Rivard / Aanonsen to approve Resolution 22-01-02: 2022 Fee Schedule. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Resolution 22-01-03: 2022 Employee Compensation and Benefits

Councilmember Aanonsen doublechecked the amounts for the overtime bank, which was the same as the previous year, and Mayor Buchite confirmed that they were correct.

Motion by Julik-Heine / Aanonsen to approve Resolution 22-01-03: 2022 Employee Compensation and Benefits. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Resolution 22-01-04: 2022 Reimbursement Rates

Motion by Murphy / Rivard to approve Resolution 22-01-04: 2022 Reimbursement Rates. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Resolution 22-01-05: 2022 Quarterly Transfers

Councilmember Aanonsen asked about the percentages, and brought out that the auditors had mentioned that the general fund was higher than normal at their April presentation. Discussion followed.

Motion by Rivard / Julik-Heine to approve Resolution 22-01-05: 2022 Quarterly Transfers. Motion carried unanimously.

Review of Goals and Directives for 2022

Other than mentioning railings on First Street, there was no discussion about this.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Buchite: Larry has already said that he wanted to remove the portion of the minutes for review. They'll have to come back for the Council to approve. Any other additions to the Consent Agenda or anything that anybody needs removed for discussion. Councilmember Aanonsen: Just one clarification, did we decide if we were moving just December, or November and December minutes? Mayor Buchite: (Clerk-Treasurer) Elizabeth says November has already been approved. If that's true, no problem. If it's not, well we'll take care of, it but we'll have the liaisons look into that, okay. Clerk-Treasurer Nealley: It was approved. (See City Council Meeting of 12/13/21 for that approval. It is also referred to at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td67epjPXmM>, timestamp 55:07.)

Motion by Julik-Heine / 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 8098-8131 totaling \$33,075.69; as well as check numbers 32023-32039 totaling \$32,430.71 for the previous month's expenditures

Payment of invoice from Municipal Emergency Services in the amount of \$1,190.04

Payment of invoice for the Fire Department

Time-off request from Clerk-Treasurer

For January 25-28, 2022

Request to continue hosting at City Hall the Chisago Lakes Community Education free computer education

Classes on 2/24, 3/24, 4/24. Labs on 1/13, 1/27, 2/10, 3/10, 4/7, 4/21, 5/5, 5/9.

Motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REQUESTS

~~Time-off request from Clerk-Treasurer (moved to consent agenda)~~

~~Request from Clerk-Treasurer to allow volunteers to work on clerical office tasks (removed)~~

PUBLIC FORUM

1. Geri Aanonsen spoke: Why was the hiring crossed out on 12/27 meeting and why is hiring not on the agenda for this meeting, when I think I'm correct that it is budgeted for 2022 and why were the volunteers crossed out... Last month, Mayor, you pushed into to this month, to January. And then it was not honored. Mayor Buchite: It was removed by the personnel liaisons because they, (Vice-Mayor) Ross (Rivard) told me that he had not had time to meet with (Councilmember) Larry (Julik-Heine) to determine what the role of the volunteers would be. So as soon as that's ready... Geri Aanonsen: No, I wasn't talking about volunteers about hiring. Oh, hiring. This is the same thing. Clerk-Treasurer Nealley clarified that the item removed from the 12/27 meeting was the continued employment of the temporary filing employee at eight or less hours per week. Buchite: So the temporary employee didn't have to be addressed because there was no need for that temporary employee's services. Geri Aanonsen: So we don't need help? Buchite: Not the temporary employee, which was a paid position. Geri Aanonsen: But we are, you are looking at hiring someone? Buchite: and that hasn't been decided yet. Councilmember Julik-Heine: Right, we're still talking about it. we're just, haven't got around to it yet. Geri Aanonsen: You haven't got around to it? Mayor Buchite: Correct. So when we get to the point where we look at hiring an individual it will be on the agenda for discussion. Geri Aanonsen: So, because there's things coming up, like isn't there an audit coming up soon? Isn't there a lot of things going on that you guys maybe should look into? Mayor Buchite: When the personnel liaisons are ready, they'll bring it forward. Okay thank you.

2. Molly Irish spoke: My first question has to do with the investigation meeting that's happening on the 20th. So are we allowed to make any public comments or have questions during that meeting on the 20th? Vice-Mayor Rivard: I've got a statement to read here but, no, it's strictly input from the investigator. She reads her report. So there's no public questions or comments, we're just receiving it, put it that way. Molly Irish: Then after the 20th meeting we'll be able to see a copy of that report. And then we'll be able to... Vice-Mayor Rivard: Yes, then you'll get a redacted report for, you know for third-party people who might be in report, privacy. But yes you can have that okay. Molly Irish: And then in February, then we'll be able to submit any questions or comments at the February City Council Meeting for things that came up in the investigation? Vice-Mayor Rivard: I honestly don't know how that works, I've never gone through it before. All I know is we'll will get the report. You can get the redacted version. I guess if you have questions on it, I don't know how to tell you... how to answer that... Molly Irish: Okay. And then what are the next steps after the meeting on the 20th, what are the next steps on the investigation? Vice-Mayor Rivard: Same thing, until we get the report I can't tell you...

Molly continued, explaining that she was one of several residents that has offered to volunteer, and that Clerk-Treasurer Nealley has indicated she has tasks that could be done that do not involve privacy issues. Mayor Buchite said: Perfect, we like volunteers, that's how the city runs. Can we get this from you too listen to people's names that. He asked for a list of peoples names. Councilmember Julik-Heine asked Molly Irish to provide a list of jobs that Clerk-Treasurer Nealley had suggested.

NEW BUSINESS

~~Renewal of Mideo franchise agreement (removed)~~

Request from Fire Department to apply for a grant from Firehouse Subs for a new side-by-side utility vehicle for
Council Member Aanonsen explained it was a grant from Firehouse Subs to pay for a Polaris rescue vehicle. This would give the Fire Department the ability and versatility to get into difficult areas for rescue or fire whatever they need to do. Mayor Buchite asked if it was a grass rig since the Fire Department already has one. Vice Mayor Rivard mentioned it was a great deal. Councilmember Julik-Heine said if its fully grant money it would be a great addition and the picture looks like it would be really useful. It holds a lot of equipment. Councilmember Murphy said: Same thing. Fire Chief Vodenka-Reed was commended for finding grants.

Motion by Aanonsen / Julik-Heine to approve the request from the Fire Department to apply for a full, non-matching grant from Firehouse Subs in the amount of \$53,159.22 for the purchase of a new side-by-side utility vehicle for fire and rescue. Motion carried unanimously.

~~Request to continue hosting at City Hall the Chisago Lakes Community Education free computer education program for older adults (moved to consent agenda)~~

Amend Resolution 21-11-01 accepting sponsorship from Xcel Energy for the Lighting Festival

Resolution 21-11-01 should say \$300.00 instead of \$500.00.

Motion by Murphy / Aanonsen to approve amended Resolution 21-11-01 accepting sponsorship from Xcel Energy for the Lighting Festival for \$300.00. Motion carried unanimously.

Amendment to the purchase agreement for the downtown commercial property.

Mayor Buchite said: And the next item on here is one that I added which is an amendment to the purchase agreement.the uh I'll explain this... now what happened was I got an email this morning from the.purchaser of the property commercial property downtown. they at our meeting in December had asked for an extension. the reason for it was not able to get the contractor out to do the soil borings. you might have noticed that there was a lot of activity on that property last week and that was them attempting to do the soil borings but what happened was the weather was so bitter cold that they were not able to complete it. I've been told that they will complete those borings this week for sure. they said that once the borings are done, they will take about eight to ten days for them to receive the information so what they're asking for is... they're changing the inspection period... they're amending it to extend the inspection period to February 14 of 2022, so they're asking for another 30 days. Again that came in today. I emailed that to our city attorney Chad Lemmons and I said take a look at this, is this legitimate, should we be doing this, what do you think? He did say you know, go ahead, extend it 30 days, and I said I'll put it on the agenda. I'll see what the Councilmembers say. Councilmember Murphy: You can't bore in because the equipment is frozen, the soil is frozen... Mayor Buchite: The biggest problem was the cold weather for their hands and their faces and their feet and keeping themselves warm not as much the equipment from what I'm told. Vice-Mayor Rivard and Councilmember Julik-Heine agreed. Mayor Buchite said: It does not affect the closing date on the property.

Motion by Murphy / Julik-Heine to approve the second amendment to the purchase agreement which extends the inspection period to February 14, 2022. Motion carried 4 to 0, with Councilmember Aanonsen abstaining.

Update of date and time for investigation report by Michelle Soldo

Vice-Mayor Rivard said he had a statement to read from investigator and attorney: This is to notify the public that a meeting will be held at City Hall on January 20th at 6:00, a little earlier than normal. At the meeting, the City Council will receive the report from Michelle Soldo, investigator, special investigator that was retained by the city. Ms. Soldo will be making a presentation to the Council regarding her report. At this time, it is the intention of the City Council to conduct this, to conduct this as an open meeting. So like I said, open to everybody, 6:00, not seven. and at seven. And I'm not sure how long the report takes, but it's just a verbal report to, you know, on the investigation, so... I've never been through one, I don't know what else to tell you. so the date is January 20th, 2022, 6:00 pm, located here in the Council Chambers, and it is open to the public. Councilmember Aanonsen clarified: At this point. Mayor Buchite: Yeah and I hope nothing changes from that, I want it open to the public.

Motion by Julik-Heine / Rivard to approve the meeting on 1/20/22 at 6:00 pm to receive investigator Michelle Soldo's report of her investigation of the 7/26/21 complaint regarding an employee and elected official. Motion carried unanimously, with no one abstaining.

LIAISON OR COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

The Mayor did not hold this portion of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Julik-Heine / Murphy to adjourn the meeting of the Taylors Falls City Council held this Monday, January 10, 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Ross Rivard, Vice Mayor

Elizabeth Nealley, Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED

Monday, February 14, 2022