

**CITY OF RANIER
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING MINUTES
RANIER COMMUNITY BUILDING
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13, 2018 @ 6:30 pm**

Mayor Dennis Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

Council Present: Mayor Dennis Wagner, Councilmembers Bob Dunbar, Todd Coulombe, JoAnn Kellner, Ron Wilcox
Absent: None
Others present: Liquor Store Manager Jenn Seegert, Public Works Manager Nick Sears, Bud Lessard, Mark Lessard, Tom Dougherty, Marty Goulet

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- To approve tonight's agenda.

A motion to approve tonight's agenda was made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Kellner and carried unanimously.

BUDGET/ADMINISTRATION

- Recommend approval of the minutes of the previous Council Meeting (01/18/2018).

Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the previous Regular Council Meeting of 01/18/2018.

- Review the Lists of Claims for the month of January, 2018.

Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Kellner and carried unanimously to approve the January, 2018 lists of bills in the amounts of:

\$56,838.40 for General
\$22,697.71 for Liquor Store
\$115,161.10 for Water

- Review the Financial Statements for all three funds as of 01/31/2018.

Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously to table the reports and discuss the Profit and Loss statements to date for each fund at the next regular council meeting.

- Review the account balances for all three funds as of 01/31/2018.

Recommendation by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to table the reports and discuss the account balances for each fund at the next regular council meeting.

- 2017 Railroad Property Tax Abatement.

Wisconsin Central/CN appealed the MN Commission of Revenue's valuation of its railroad property for assessment years 2016 and 2017. Because of the revaluation, Ranier will have to abate \$7,157.87 which the County will deduct out of delinquent taxes owed. There will be no adjustments to the taxes payable in 2018.

- Heart of the Continent Partnership.

HOCP which partners with National Geographic brings awareness to the lakes, forests, communities on the Ontario/Minnesota border through a "Geo-Tourism" initiative. In the past, the City of Ranier paid dues of \$100 as an "Associate Partner". The dues would be paid out of our budgeted economic development funds.

Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to pay dues to HOCP in the amount of \$100.

LIQUOR STORE

- Liquor Manager's Report

Liquor Store Manager Jenn Seegert gave her the monthly liquor store report. The Council reviewed the Operating Statement for the month of January, 2018 with a net profit of \$3,725.62 or 11.64% compared to 2017 with a net profit of \$690.96. Ice Box Days was a success. Because of the good trail condition, there have been a lot of snowmobilers. Mayor Wagner stated that we should have an event at least every couple of months to help the bottom line. Seegert has a DJ booked for Friday March 13 for St. Patty's Day which is the same weekend as the Old Timer's hockey tournament.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to approve the January 2018 Liquor Store Operating Statement.

- 2018 Liquor Liability Insurance Policy

The liquor liability insurance policy issued through Illinois Casualty is up for renewal at an annual rate of \$3920 reduced from \$4267 in 2017.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Kellner and carried unanimously to approve the renewal of the liquor liability insurance policy.

- Bar Floor Reconstruction

Two qualified firms were asked to give an estimate on repairing the liquor store bar floor behind the bar. One firm gave a price estimate but does not have the time to do the job. Mayor Wagner is seeking other quotes. We would like to get the job completed soon to minimize business interruption as the bar will need to be closed for 3 days.

BUILDINGS, STREETS AND GROUNDS

- Maintenance Report

Maintenance Manager Nick Sears presented the monthly maintenance report and first addressed the ice rink which is in good shape and running smoothly. The Ranier Rec Club skating party was held last Sunday and was a success. The rink has been opening up early on Wednesday afternoons for “early-out” Wednesdays and has been busy. There have been no major water breaks only a few minor issues on private lines. Councilmember Coulombe commended the staff on the nice condition of rink and warming house. Mayor Wagner will work with Ranier Rec on new boards for rink.

Mayor Wagner has been researching the state website for skid steers. We will need to figure out how to finance the purchase and fit it into the budget.

WATER AND SEWER

The city of International Falls is increasing the water rates by 4.4% which equates to around \$1.50 a month per resident. In order to balance our finances, we will need to raise Ranier’s base water rate accordingly.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to increase the base water rates by \$1.50 per month.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Resolution 2018-01 in support of Cantilever Bridge Distillery, LLC application to DEED Job Creation Fund Program.

Cantilever Bridge Distillery, LLC is applying for an award and/or rebate from the DEED Job Creation Fund for its manufacturing process. In this process the local government (City of Ranier) works in consultation with DEED, submits the application to DEED and assists the business with yearly reports and payment requests.

Gautreaux spoke with Chris Virta of Fryberger, Buchanan today about a business subsidy policy and assistance with tax abatement.

Goulet presented an update on the Cantilever Distillery project and the 2069 Spruce Street project. They group will work on both phases at once this summer. The distillery building will have 16 lodging units, the distillery and a cocktail tasting room. They are currently getting commitments on tenants.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to approve Resolution 2018-01 in support of Cantilever Bridge Distillery, LLC's application to DEED Job Creation Fund Program.

- Safe Harbor Update

Tom Dougherty updated the council on the Safe Harbor Steering Committee meeting on 1/31/2018. The steering committee had a working session to talk about the location of the boat launch. The committee decided to ask AMI to explore the options of moving the boat launch to Ranier beach or Duluth Street dock. Dougherty is exploring ideas to incorporate an aquatic invasive species boat wash station. Dougherty will attend the County Board meeting next week to ask the County to commit \$5000 for preliminary design and cost estimates for boat ramp and AIS station. AMI is currently working on preliminary designs for the project which may possibly be ready next week. Wagner suggested applying for a KCDA grant for \$5,000 for Phase II of the project. The KCDA grant app will need to be submitted tomorrow to meet the deadline for the next funding opportunity on 2/21/18. Dougherty and Gautreaux will work on the application tomorrow. Dougherty spoke about private donations as a funding opportunity and questioned as to the appropriate mechanism. Dougherty will look into an appropriate mechanism for fund raising.

- Funding of Koochiching Housing Study

The Koochiching County Housing Collaborative is seeking funding to hire a firm to conduct a housing study. A significant portion of the amount has been funded with contributions from various entities. Currently, \$2500 is left to be raised with several entities left who have not yet committed funds. Councilmember Dunbar recommended donating \$1000, no councilmember seconded the vote. Councilmember Coulombe questioned the applicability of the study to Ranier. Mayor Wagner suggested tabling the motion until next week to see how much money has been raised.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Kellner and carried unanimously to table the motion until next week's meeting.

- National Register of Historic Places – Ranier Community Building

In final step of the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, the Ranier Community Building will be considered by the State Review Board. The Board will meet on 3/20/18 in St. Paul. The historic consultant, Greg Gaut, will present on the city's behalf as required by his contract.

REMINDER – PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS ON THURSDAY 2/15 STARTING AT 5:00.

REMINDER - BID LETTING FOR CR 130 ON 2/22 @ 2:00.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Kellner; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

THE COMMITTEE MEETING ADJOURNED @ 8:10 p.m.