

**CITY OF RANIER  
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MEETING MINUTES  
RANIER COMMUNITY BUILDING  
TUESDAY APRIL 14, 2020 @ 6:30 pm**

The meeting was held via WebEx.

Council Present: Mayor Dennis Wagner, Councilmembers Todd Coulombe and Ron Wilcox, JoAnn Kellner  
Absent: Councilmember Bob Dunbar  
Others present: City Administrator Sherril Gautreaux, Deputy Clerk Tara Mai, Liquor Store Manager Jenn Seegert, Public Works Manager Nick Sears

Mayor Wagner made an announcement stating that in-person meeting is not prudent because of health pandemic. It is noted that due to technical difficulties, members of the public were unable to phone in to the meeting.

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER** – Mayor Wagner will ask each councilmember individually if they are present. Coulombe – present, Kellner – present, Wilcox – present.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

- To approve tonight's agenda.

Councilmember Coulombe voted aye  
Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
Councilmember Wilcox voted aye

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

**BUDGET/ADMINISTRATION**

- Recommend approval of the minutes of the previous Council Meeting (03/17/2020).

Councilmember Coulombe voted aye  
Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
Councilmember Wilcox voted aye

**Recommendation by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Kellner and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the previous Regular Council Meeting of 03/17/2020.**

- Recommend approval of the minutes of the Special Meeting (03/25/2020).

Councilmember Coulombe voted aye  
Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
Councilmember Wilcox voted aye

**Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the Special Council Meeting of 03/25/2020 for the 2019 Financial Audit Close-out.**

- Review the Lists of Claims for the month of March, 2020.

Councilmember Coulombe voted aye  
Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
Councilmember Wilcox voted aye

**Recommendation by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to approve the March, 2020 lists of claims in the amounts of:**

\$22,708.82 for General Fund  
\$12,076.75 for Liquor Fund  
\$21,433.90 for Water/Sewer Fund  
\$27,540.56 for CR 130 Reconstruction Fund  
\$75.00 for 2012A GO Improvement Bond Fund

- Review the Account Balances, Disbursement Ledgers and Financial Statements as of 03/31/2020.

Councilmember Coulombe voted aye  
Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
Councilmember Wilcox voted aye

**Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Kellner and carried unanimously to table the reports and discuss the account balances, disbursement ledgers and financial statements to date for each fund at the next regular council meeting.**

- COVID-19 Update for City Office and City Employees

City Administrator Gautreaux gave an update on the COVID-19 situation:

1. Municipal Liquor Store employees who have applied are receiving MN unemployment payments. Have clarified that \$600 per week additional stimulus payment will not come from Ranier funds but from the Federal government.

2. Have contacted League of Minnesota Cities in regard to any assistance to the Municipal Liquor Store through DEED or Small Business Administration economic injury loans. LMC has confirmed that a governmental entity is not eligible for any of these funds. Have also reached out to our lobbyist to explore any other relief that may be available.
  3. LMC has confirmed that insurance does not cover loss of business under the COVID-19 situation. Loss of business would only apply if operations are suspended due to direct physical loss or damage to covered property.
  4. The Ranier park is closed and picnic tables have been moved to inhibit gatherings – SIGNS POSTED 03/30/2020
  5. City staff are working split shifts in the office (or taking leave time) and can take phone calls or e-mails. Office door is locked and no visitors are allowed in the office. Are practicing social distancing and wearing masks when go to post office.
  6. Public works staff working to maintain water, sewer, streets and other necessary work to maintain the city. Practicing social distancing and wearing mask.
  7. Water payments can be made on-line which is accessed on the home page of the Ranier website or water payments can be put in the drop box or sent by mail
  8. Ranier restaurants are closed – as of 03/15/2020
  9. On-sale for liquor closed – as of 03/18/2020 until May 4 or further notice.
  10. Loony’s Brew offers curbside off-sale as allowed by law.
  11. We understand the hardship this pandemic has on our residents and small businesses and keep them in our thoughts.
- To consider rebating on-sale liquor license fees on a pro-rated basis for establishments closed during COVID-19.

A local business owner has requested that the council consider rebating on-sale/Sunday liquor license fees on a pro-rated basis for establishments closed during the COVID-19 orders. On-sale/Sunday liquor licenses are \$1200 annually. A pro-ration of \$100 monthly could be considered.

**Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to rebate a pro-rated portion of the on-sale/Sunday liquor licenses to establishments closed due to the COVID-19 situation.**

Councilmember Coulombe voted aye  
 Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
 Councilmember Wilcox voted aye

- 2020 Census Update.

Administrator Gautreaux gave an update on the progress of the 2020 Census. Currently, Ranier has a 40.9% response rate with the state response rate at 57.2%. We understand how important

the Census is to funding. Deputy Clerk Tara Mai has sent 3 letters out to residents regarding the importance of filling out the 2020 Census. The last letter was sent to those residents who have PO Boxes and no street mailbox stating that they do not have to wait until they receive paperwork from US Census Bureau. Anyone can go on-line and enter their street address and fill out the form. We have continued contact with US Census representatives and will continue to monitor the response rates. With the COVID-19 situation until further notice, Census workers will not be going out into the field to extract information from those who have not completed the 2020 Census form. It is expected that the US Census Bureau will extend the due dates due to the COVID-19 situation.

## **LIQUOR STORE**

- Liquor Manager's Report

Liquor Store Manager Jenn Seegert gave her the monthly liquor store report. The Council reviewed the Liquor Store Operating Statement for the month of March, 2020 with a net loss of (\$1,545.23 due to closure of the Liquor Store on 03/17/2020) and a year-to-date net profit of \$10,742.92 compared to March 2019 with a net profit of \$5,180.15 and a year-to-date net profit of \$10,419.52.

Seegert reported that March was on the path to make a decent profit prior to the closure mid-month. Seegert reported that the re-flooring project at the Liquor Store began today. After the flooring project is completed, Seegert is considering opening up for off-sale only and is exploring different ideas of how to make that happen.

**Recommendation made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously to approve the March 2020 Liquor Store Operating Statement.**

Councilmember Coulombe voted aye  
Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
Councilmember Wilcox voted aye

- To recommend approval of cleaning contract for Ranier Municipal Liquor Store

In February a request for bids for cleaning the liquor store was advertised. ServiceMaster of International Falls responded with a rate of \$21.63 an hour for daily cleaning of 2 hours. Councilmember Wilcox noted that ServiceMaster will not have to strip and wax the new flooring that is being installed. ServiceMaster will get the specs on how to properly clean the new flooring and maintain the warranty.

**Recommendation made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Kellner and carried unanimously to approve the cleaning contract with ServiceMaster of International Falls.**

Councilmember Coulombe abstained

Councilmember Kellner voted aye  
Councilmember Wilcox voted aye  
Mayor Wagner voted aye

### **BUILDINGS, STREETS AND GROUNDS**

- **Maintenance Report**

Public Works Supervisor Nick Sears reported that he stripped the old linoleum flooring off at the Municipal Liquor Store prior to the contractor's beginning their work. Sears noted that the subfloor is not in as bad of shape as was thought. Sears reported that Ryan's Rustic Railings removed the wooden bar stools and table to refinish them at no cost. Sears reported that only 2 snowbirds have returned as yet. Sears is in contact with Koochiching County Public Works in order to get streets swept. Sears reported that Quality Flow Systems remodeled the lift station with a new pump and lift railings. Sears will monitor the final reconstruction items on County Road 130.

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

**THE COMMITTEE MEETING ADJOURNED @ 7:02 p.m.**