

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

Council Present: Mayor Dennis Wagner, Councilmembers Todd Coulombe, Bob Dunbar, JoAnn Kellner and Ron Wilcox

Absent: None

Others present: City Administrator Sherril Gautreaux, Liquor Store Manager Jenn Seegert, Public Works Manager Nick Sears, Berta Wilcox Ranier Rec Club, Tammy Toratti Ranier Rec Club, Sue Swendsen, John Bruggeman, Kris Helleloid, Charles Helleloid, Jean Kelly, George Glazier, Jennifer Laymeyer, Paul and Marilyn Jones, Joanne Smith, Ashlee Mettler, Phil Paulbeck, Joy Paulbeck, Robert Ham, Karina Joyce, Linda Joyce, Dan Joyce, Jeff McHarg

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- 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 (06/19/2020).

Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the previous Regular Council Meeting of 06/19/2020.

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

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

\$25,840.22 for General Fund
\$16,282.65 for Liquor Fund
\$20,203.95 for Water/Sewer Fund
\$ 8,118.75 for 2018A GO Street Reconstruction Bond Fund

\$ 2,627.50 for 2012A GO Improvement Bond Fund
\$ 8,097.85 for CR 130 Reconstruction Fund

- Review the Account Balances, Disbursement Ledgers and Financial Statements as of 06/30/2020.

Recommendation by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe 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.

- To reschedule August Committee of the Whole Meeting to 8/13/2020 due to Primary Election.

A recommendation was made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to reschedule August Committee of the Whole Meeting to 8/13/2020 due to the Primary Election.

- Filing Dates for Councilmember and Mayor

The notice of filing period for two councilmember positions and mayor is July 28 through August 11.

- To recommend approval of Resolution 2020-06 Election Judges

A recommendation was made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to approve Resolution 2020-06 Election Judges.

- To recommend approval of letter to MHFA in support of Alexander Baker Building.

Ward Merrill, director of Backus, asked for a letter to Minnesota Housing Finance Agency in support of financing the Alexander Baker housing project.

A recommendation was made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously to send letter of support.

- To recommend approval of Resolution 2020-05 Supporting Reconstruction of CSAH 20 for diagonal parking.

Koochiching County Engineer asked for a resolution in support of the CSAH 20 construction plan to forward to the state. The project is waiting plan review from Minnesota Power and MNDOT. Koochiching County engineer Dave Reimer told Gautreaux that it looks like a 2021 project. Folks with any issues need to speak with County Engineer Reimer.

A recommendation was made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to approve Resolution 2020-05.

- Northeast Koochiching County Transportation Plan Update/ARDC

ARDC and MNDOT are teaming up to complete the transportation plan for the City of International Falls, Ranier and Koochiching County (for those areas east of Ranier). ARDC is creating a committee and will begin meeting sometime in August and is asking for a representative from Ranier. Previously, ARDC had asked the three local governments for some matching dollars towards the process. ARDC notified us that we will not have to they will be providing the matching dollars.

A recommendation was made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to assign Mayor Wagner to the Northeast Koochiching County Transportation Committee.

- COVID-19 Update

As of today, there have been 24 cumulative positive COVID-19 cases for Koochiching County since February. Minnesota as a whole stands at around 43,000 positive cases. Approximately 777,000 tests have been administered to date in Minnesota. In the Minnesota Department of Health website weekly report, statistics are reported for a number of items including testing rates. As of 07/09/2020, 925 COVID-19 tests were administered in Koochiching county with a 2.2% positive test rate.

Federal government through the CARES Act distributed funds to the states for COVID-19 relief. Minnesota distributed funds to each city with over 200 residents and to each county. There are very specific ways that the money can be spent for COVID-19 relief which include purchase of PPE, infrastructure for COVID-19 preparedness, wages for governmental employees directly related to COVID-19 preparedness, relief for small businesses which included unemployment taxes, utilities but not for lost revenue. Koochiching County received \$1.45 million to be used for COVID-19 relief, Ranier received \$44,000 and International Falls received \$44,000. The city of Ranier can tally up the costs it has spent on COVID-19 preparedness such as wages, purchase of PPE, cleaning supplies, items necessary to prepare the Municipal Liquor Store for outdoor seating, unemployment wages and utilities when the store was closed. The remaining amount can be used for small business grants. Koochiching County administration has been working with KEDA and Small Business Development Center to set up a grant application and a centralized method of screening the grant applications. They have asked that the cities and county all work with KEDA and SBDC to centralize the process. SBDC would be the clearing house with a member from each entity to sit on a committee to review the applications. Joanne Smith, SBDC, explained

that 10% from county funds will initially go into the grant program for small businesses and non-profits until they figure out the County expenses for COVID-19. **The Council will need to appoint someone to the committee before the next council meeting.**

There was a healthy discussion about wearing masks. The Council decided to table any further mask requirements until the next council meeting while awaiting guidance from the Governor's office.

Ranier Days was another topic. Berta Wilcox of the Ranier Rec Club informed the Council that the Rec Club voted to not participate in Ranier Days or Labor Day.

A recommendation to cancel 2020 Ranier Days was made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously.

- BIGP Grant and LCCMR Update

Gautreaux reported that the city was not selected for the BIGP grant for the pier project this year but can reapply by 07/31/2020. The LCCMR grants have not yet been funded through the Minnesota Legislature this year. The second special session has started and it remains to be seen as to whether the Legislature will fund the Environmental bill which contains the LCCMR recommendations.

LIQUOR STORE

- Liquor Manager's Report

The Council reviewed the Liquor Store Operating Statement for the month of June, 2020 with a net profit of \$6,966.91 while operating at 50% capacity as required at this time and two weeks of June with only outdoor seating. The year-to-date net profit is \$12,062.84 compared to June 2019 with a net profit of \$6,497.12 and a 2019 year-to-date net profit of \$20,942.74. The Liquor Store opened up for outside service-only on June 1 and indoor service at 50% capacity on June 10. Liquor Store Manager Jenn Seegert does see a decline for July because we cannot have any events and perhaps the recent spike in positive COVID-19 tests. On July 4, a DJ setup outside. On July 17, the Ranier Rec Club raffle will be outside under the tents. Wilcox asked if there was a way to do more promotion for off-sale. Pull tabs sales for June were down between \$2000 and \$2500 from before the shut-down.

There was a healthy discussion of COVID-19 preparedness practices at the Liquor Store.

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

BUILDINGS, STREETS AND GROUNDS

- Maintenance Report

Public Works Supervisor Nick Sears reported that his crew has been working on general upkeep, and mowing. Both mowers were broken down for a week. Sears reported that the County will be out soon to gravel the alleys. Dunbar asked Sears to trim some bushes that hang over Pine street. Coulombe asked Sears to put new sand in the swing area and that the bridges in the park need to be painted.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Koochiching Child Care Initiative

Joann Smith and Ashlee Mettler reported that the Koochiching Child Care Initiative has been working for 2 years on issues with lack of daycare establishments in the County and see it as an economic development issue. KOOTASCA is oversight agency and is looking for commercial space that is not being used that can be used for child care facility. The first site is in the KOOTASCA building licensed with space for 10 children. Ashlee Mettler will run the facility which opens July 21st. The next site is in Littlefork in the old Pineview facility. Grant funding was received to remodel the site which is almost ready; a provider is ready to open the facility. Commercial businesses are sponsors and offer buildings for reduced rent to the providers.

- Boat Landing

Surveying and staking for the boat landing and parking lot will begin soon and then further plans can be produced.

OPEN FORUM

There was a discussion on the city requiring food trucks to have permits. Gautreaux has been working on an ordinance. There were questions about the proposed street lights at the intersection of CSAH 20/TH 11 and CSAH 23/TH 11 which have now been rolled into the highway 53 project and will be forthcoming at an undetermined date.

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

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