

**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 and Ron Wilcox
Absent: JoAnn Kellner
Others present: City Administrator Sherril Gautreaux, Deputy Clerk Tara Mai, 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, Mike Heibel, Lonnie Johnson, Paul and Marilyn Jones, Tricia Heibel, June Fulton

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- To approve tonight's agenda.

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

BUDGET/ADMINISTRATION

- Recommend approval of the minutes of the previous Council Meeting (07/21/2020).

Recommendation by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the previous Regular Council Meeting of 07/21/2020.

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

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

\$59,751.71 for General Fund
\$28,181.73 for Liquor Fund
\$21,402.14 for Water/Sewer Fund

- Review the Account Balances, Disbursement Ledgers and Financial Statements as of 07/31/2020.

Noted that the city received more than half of its current property tax payments, LGA, forfeited tax apportionments (\$1,225 more than budgeted), GNTL (\$15,800 more than budgeted) and the CARES Act funds in the amount of \$44,225.

A recommendation was made 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.

- COVID-19 and CARES Act update.

Noted that cumulative cases of COVID-19 in Koochiching County are 83 compared to last month's committee of the whole meeting of 24 cumulative positive tests. Minnesota as a whole stands at around 62,000 positive cases. Approximately 1.2 million tests have been administered to date in Minnesota. As of 07/30/2020, Testing rates are at a 4.2% cumulative positive rate for Koochiching County and the Statewide positive rate is 5.7%.

The Koochiching County Small Business Relief Fund Program is underway. To date, 15 applications have been received with one Ranier business applying. The committee meets again on August 18 at 1:00 pm.

- To recommend approval of Resolution 2020-07 CARES Act expenditures

Resolution 2020-07 asks the Council to approve \$23,666.06 of expenditures from the CARES Act funds.

A recommendation was made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously to approve Resolution 2020-07 CARES Act expenditures.

- CSAH 20 Non-Participating Costs Update

Koochiching County Engineer, Dave Reimer, was supposed to address the council about CSAH 20 and costs that the state will not cover, however, he was not in attendance.

Mayor Wagner spoke about the County also adding overlay to CSAH 20 beginning at TH 11. Tammy Toratti asked if the council could address the speeding on CSAH 20 again, including CN and Customs staff? Mayor Wagner suggested sending a letter to the county board about excessive speed on CSAH 20. Mike Heibel offered that maybe we could borrow the remote radar from International Falls.

- To recommend approval or denial of Resolution 2020-08 Authorizing the Sale of Tax Forfeited Properties.

Koochiching County Land and Forestry Division is considering offering two parcels located in Ranier for sale: Parcel #98-056-01120 Plat of Jameson's Second Addition to I 'Falls Lots 12 and 13, Parcel #98-054-01040 Plat of American Suburbs Company's Third East Side Addition Lots 4,5,6,7 and lots 24, 25,26.

A recommendation was made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to approve Resolution 2020-08 Authorizing the Sale of Forfeited Tax Parcels.

LIQUOR STORE

- Liquor Manager's Report

The Council reviewed the Liquor Store Operating Statement for the month of July, 2020 with a net profit of \$1,553.80. The year-to-date net profit is \$14,761.59 compared to July 2019 with a net profit of \$8,009.32 and a 2019 year-to-date net profit of \$28,852.06. The Liquor Store went back to outside service-only on July 11. Opened for inside serving on 08/12. Councilmember Coulombe commented that the sales were good for outside service only. Wagner stressed that it is up to staff to make sure the COVID regulations are followed.

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

BUILDINGS, STREETS AND GROUNDS

- Maintenance Report

Public Works Supervisor Nick Sears reported that he has been catching up on culverts and ditching. Two new water service lines have been bored and are ready to connect to the main. Wagner advised Sears to make sure the company/property owners restore the right of way. Sears has put a little more black dirt and grass seed on CR 130 along with some shouldering at the top of hill. John Bruggeman commented that Sears mowed the wild parsnip on his niece's property and would be willing to pay the city for the mowing.

- To recommend Request for Bids for Snowplowing Services

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to recommend issuing RFB for Snowplowing Services.

- To recommend Noxious Weed Control

Gautreaux has been working with Koochiching County Soil and Water Conservation District on controlling wild parsnip, particularly on the vacant property east of Big Vic along the highway. The property owner has been cited and given a period of time to eradicate the noxious weeds. KSWCD has contracted with a weed control company to eradicate the noxious weeds with 25% of the costs being borne by the property owner. In addition, City staff has mowed the property four times this year. The intent is to move forward with the eradication and assess the cost to the property owner and assess the cost of the mowing.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to move forward with the noxious weed control.

- To review request for variance application and Planning and Zoning Committee Recommendation

Gretchen and Todd Coulombe filed an application for a variance from the rear yard set-back requirement of the Ranier Town Center zoning requirement. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approving the variance from the rear yard set-back.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Dunbar and carried unanimously to approve the variance.

- Planning and Zoning Commission Update

The Planning and Zoning Commission discussed open fire pits, food trucks and fire work. Planning and Zoning Commissioner Berta Wilcox spoke on behalf of the Commission stating in regards to open pit fires, there are DNR regulations that govern fires. The Commission did not believe that an ordinance should be written to cover it and questioned how it would be enforced. As to fireworks, most fireworks are illegal in Minnesota. Therefore, if someone is setting off fireworks, it is a law enforcement issue. Wilcox stated that as a small community, if someone has a problem with a fire pit or fireworks, they should go to their neighbor first and if they can't resolve it, then go to the sheriff department. The Commission had a lengthy discussion about food trucks and offered amendments to the draft ordinance #156. Wilcox also stated that in recommending the variance on the Coulombe property, they didn't want to set precedence. The fact that the property is a corner lot weighed into the decision.

- To review proposed Ordinance #156 Mobile Food Unit Permits.

A draft Ordinance #156 Mobile Food Unit Permits is for the regulation of food trucks in the city. A fee needs to be decided upon.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Coulombe; seconded by Councilmember Wilcox and carried unanimously to table the decision upon further review by the council.

- To set a date for an Open House on the Boat Launch/Parking Lot Project

The Council set a date for an Open House on the Boat Launch/Parking Lot Project for September 1 at 5:30. The open house must be advertised in the newspaper at least 10 days in advance. John Bruggeman inquired whether the project complies with the zoning ordinance. Sue Swendsen asked that plans be put on the Ranier website.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Mike Heibel – American Flag Proposal for Rink Property

Mike Heibel has a proposal to put an oversized American flag located on hill between rink and the liquor store. He would raise the funds so as not to cost the city a dime. The flag pole would be 70-75 tall with cables on the interior of the pole. He has folks that have already offered to donate. The pole would cost around \$8,300; flags cost \$2,000 or less. The flag pole is rated for 95 mile an hour winds. The foundation would be anchored to bedrock with a stepped foundation with a plaque in honor of Ranier residents that have served the country. He stated that there shouldn't be much maintenance except for a new flag every year and he would take care of that. Need to look into the zoning ordinance as to what the height could be. 20x30 or 15x25.

Recommendation made by Councilmember Wilcox; seconded by Councilmember Coulombe and carried unanimously allow Mike Heibel to move forward with the flag project.

OPEN FORUM

John Bruggeman commented on the condition of the sidewalks in front of Community Hall. Sears is addressing the situation with a contractor.

International Falls Area Chamber of Commerce Director, Tricia Heibel, thanked the Council for their efforts in positive promotion of our area, stated that it is very exciting to see. The Chamber will be holding a candidate forum and will be reaching out to the candidates to schedule the forum. Wagner noted that there are 5 people running for the open offices and that he appreciates folks wanting to participate.

Lonnie Johnson asked whether decks are included in the 25 front setback from the road.

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 @7:33 p.m.