

Owatonna City Council Minutes

Council President Schultz called the regular session of the Owatonna City Council to order on Tuesday, August 16, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall. Present were Council Members Burbank, Boeke, Raney, Voss, Svenby and Schultz; Mayor Kuntz; Public Works Director Skov; Human Resources Director Thamert; Communications Manager Sheely; City Attorney Walbran; City Administrator Busse, and Administrative Specialist Clawson. Council Member Dotson was unable to attend

Agenda

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Council President Schultz welcomed everyone to the meeting. Council Member Voss made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, all members present voted aye for approval.

Public Hearing: Proposed Assessments – Truman Avenue Project

Council President Schultz explained the process used for a public hearing held during a Council Meeting. Public Works Director Skov explained this project started last fall and just recently completed. This was a complete reconstruction and addition of sidewalk on the east side. Assessments will be repaid over a 10-year period and recommended an interest rate is 3% which is based on the 2021 bond issue true interest costs. The proposed assessments were calculated using \$52.00/foot to collect \$232,139.44 towards this project expenses.

At 7:02 p.m., Council President Schultz opened a public hearing for comments. Ron Herzog, 715 Truman Avenue commented he disappointed with this project. He thought it was poorly designed, poorly constructed and questions if complete. The project supervisors weren't very observant, and the job was not done well. With the new street, the speed limit is 30 mph but now many seem to think it is 60 mph, there needs to be more speed limit signs placed along the street. Some of the driveways were tore up farther than the 10' approach, if I hadn't been out there to tell them I had rebar in my driveway, I believe they would have tried to rip it out. The water shutoffs are not level with the street so bumpy to drive on. Parking is now available on the street by the church but they have a parking lot so who pays for this? Skov responded there are a few punch list items left including the water shutoffs, staff is working with the contractor to complete soon. All property along the street was billed \$52.00/foot for this improvement, the proposed assessment for the church is \$16,640.00. At 7:12 p.m., Council Member Raney made a motion to close the public hearing, Council Burbank seconded the motion, all members present voted aye in approval.

Resolution 67-22 Adopt Proposed Assessments - 2021 Truman Avenue Project

Council Member Raney made a motion to approve Resolution 67-22 adopting the Proposed Assessments for the Truman Avenue Project with the Term of Repayment set at 10 years at an annual interest rate of 3%. Council Member Boeke seconded the motion, all members present voted aye in approval.

Consent Agenda

Council President Schultz explained council members review the Consent Agenda items prior to the meeting for approval in one motion. Consent Agenda items for this meeting include:

- Minutes – Council Meeting – August 1, 2022

- Minutes - Planning Commission Meeting - July 12, 2022

- Minutes - Human Rights Commission Meeting - July 12, 2022

- Minutes - Library Board Meeting - July 19, 2022

Minutes - EDA Meeting - July 20, 2022
Minutes - HRA Board Minutes - July 25, 2022
Building and Inspection Monthly Reports - July 2022
Compliance-Inspection Report - August 12, 2022
Exempt Permit - Open Arm Suicide Prevention - September 10, 2022
Exempt Permit - Exchange Club of Owatonna - December 15, 2022
Excluded Bingo - Early Morning Rotary - November 11, 2022
Event Permit - Walk to End Alzheimer's Disease - Alzheimer's Association - Sept 10, 2022
Event Permit - Welcome Walk - Owatonna Human Rights Commission - Sept 19, 2022
Agreement - Fire Alarm Panel Upgrade at Fire Hall - Custom Alarm
Resolution 68-22: Authorize Contract for Fame Award Purchase

Council Member Burbank made a motion to approve these Consent Agenda Items; Council Member Svenby seconded the motion. Council Member Voss commented he would recuse vote on Resolution 68-22 as he is owner of Fame Awards. All members present voted aye for approval of these Consent Agenda Items.

Finance Report

Council Member Raney recapped payments made more than \$20,000 for this period. Bills presented for payment total \$1,759,517.39. Council Member Svenby made a motion to approve payment of these bills, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, all members present voted aye for approval.

Resolution 69-22: Request Special Legislative Session for Bonding Bill

City Administrator Busse requested approval of Resolution 69-22 urging Governor Walz to call a Special Legislative Session for a Bonding Bill. During the 2022 Legislative Session, the legislature failed to pass a tax bill and bonding bill before the session adjourned. The City of Owatonna requested \$22 million in bonding funds to help offset the significant costs of expanding the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The construction bid for the expansion was \$55 million. This critical infrastructure is necessary to support community growth. Construction materials and labor shortages caused costs to increase dramatically, putting an undue burden on ratepayers. In addition, state funding for the Public Facility Authority Wastewater Grant Program was not approved in which the City was expected to receive \$8 million grant funds.. Council Member Raney made a motion for approval; Council Member Boeke seconded the motion; all members present voted aye in approval.

Agreement for Functional Pre-Employment Testing for OPD - WorkSTEPS

Human Resources Director Thamert presented an agreement with WorkSTEPS for police officer pre-employment testing. The League of Minnesota Cities partnered with and contributed to the design of a pre-employment, post-offer abilities test for police officer candidates with WorkSTEPS. WorkSTEPS is a leading national provider of medical/functional pre-employment validation services. The test has been validated in accordance with EEOC standards, specifically for Minnesota city law enforcement departments. This testing would be part of the post-offer, pre-employment screening process for Owatonna police officers. Cost for conducting

the comprehensive post-offer functional employment testing with WorkSTEPS is \$185.00 per test. Council Member Burbank made a motion for approval, Council Member Voss seconded the motion; all members present voted aye in approval.

Obstruction Permit at Federated Insurance - Benike Construction

Public Works Director Skov presented request received from Benike Construction and Federated Insurance for a Dumpster Permit to allow a dumpster in the City Right of Way for the duration of the project at Federated Insurance in the downtown area. This project is expected to be completed in 2023. Dumpster Permits are valid for 2 weeks upon issuance with a 2-week extension period, they were granted an extension to the original permit obtained last summer, Council approved an extended permit on September 7, 2021, until this spring. They are now requesting another extended permit at the same location; the location of the dumpster has been identified as the safest and most direct route out of the building. The permit holder acknowledges that the area around the dumpster must be maintained, and that snow removal is their responsibility. Council Member Raney made a motion for approval contingent on two conditions: the fee charged for the first two-week period is \$200 with \$50 for each two-week period until the dumpster is removed and the dumpster be set further to the west so is not as close to the intersection of Broadway Street and Elm Avenue as it was last year. This created a blind spot for traffic so ask the dumpster be placed west of the yellow zone at the corner. Council Member Boeke seconded the motion, all members present voted aye for approval.

Permit - Film Miniseries by Winter State Entertainment: August 24 - Sept 7, 2022

Nick Hagen, Producer with Winter State Entertainment requested approval of the permit received to shoot a mini-series in the wooded area along the N Straight River and Manthey Park. Filming would occur in 4-day increments between August 24 and September 7th with filming for three days and then one day off. If the weather is bad, they will adjust their film dates or extend options for participants through September 9th. They plan to be walking and filming in remote areas which would not obstruct trail use. Council Member Svenby asked if they would cut, trim or other cause damage to these wooded areas. Hagen replied no, they plan to carry equipment in on foot and will not damage the area, no trees will be trimmed or cut. Council Member Raney commented the permit application was just received and should not be considered; City Policy requires applications be submitted 30 days prior to an Event. Administrative Specialist Clawson commented the application received was a Park Permit which Park Board would consider for approval; but the next Park Board Meeting is on September 12th, which is after the event dates requested. This application wasn't received and processed as an Event Permit so requesting an exception for approval from Council for this Park Permit. Council Member Boeke commented he agrees with Council Member Raney, during the last Council Meeting similar situation was discussed. Council Member Voss added it was discussed for information sent to re-occurring event applicants reminding them of this 30-day submission requirement as they plan their 2023 activities. Mr. Hagen explained timing in the filming industry is very tight and he hopes Council would consider granting annual preapproval for city spaces. Council Member Raney commented he would not approve a general approval request as specific detail is needed prior to approval. Council Member Voss made a motion to approve this permit application, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion which was approved by majority vote.

Staff Updates

Public Works Director Skov commented the overlay projects on 20th Street and Third Avenue NW were complete yesterday. Asphalt costs increased 40% this year which will limit the amounts of overlays done this year. The WWTP Project is underway with the site being cleared of debris; this site previously served as a landfill so there is approximately 20 feet of broken glass and junk to be removed. Staff is working on updates for the Stormwater Ordinance and designs for the 2023 projects for street and trail improvements.

Human Resourced Director Thamert welcomed Mitchell Schwering, Engineer Technician III who began his duties last week on August 8th. HR Staff is preparing for the Employee 2023 Insurance Open Enrollment process and are also working with Deanna on an internal communication plan.

Communications Manager Sheely commented the August City Spotlight video posted last week on the City's website with information from most departments. Working on the SeeClickFix app to allow internal and external updates. Working with Human Resources to develop an internal communication plan, we sent a survey to employees asking what information they want included and how they wanted to receive information. Also working with the Human Rights Commission as they prepare for Welcoming Week in mid-September. Postings to Facebook have reached a lot of viewers, Anna's recent post about a street closure reached more than 7,500. We want to encourage residents to sign up for notification on the city's website. Parks and Rec will be showing draft concepts of the proposed Park Master Plan and Stormwater Management is partnering with the Cannon River Watershed at the Steele County Free Fair this week.

Public Comments: no comments heard.

Council/Administration Comments and General Information

Council Member Raney commented the city does a lot of business and makes a lot of decisions, but staff is considered family. An employee's 12-year-old son recently had heart surgery and now faces a long road of recovery. Asking if so inclined, to please say some prayers, fortunately, the last days have been good ones. He thanked HR Director Thamert for inviting Council Members and Mayor Kuntz to assist at the Annual City Employee picnic.

Council Member Svenby commented it looks like it is going to be a great week at the fair and encouraged everyone to go and enjoy.

Council Member Voss thanked Public Works Director Skov for his work, there have been several tough projects to complete, and he believes they have all been done well. Yesterday, he noticed the nicely painted stop lights near Walmart recently completed.

Council Member Burbank commented the Selby Avenue project has been discussed for several years and just started yesterday. Anticipate the new road is going to entice speeders so plans to talk with Chief Mundale about this.

Mayor Kuntz commented everyone should get out and enjoy the fair.

Council President Schultz thanked everyone for attending the meeting and also hopes everyone will get a chance to attend the county fair this week.

Adjournment: At 7:51 p.m., Council Member Raney made a motion to adjourn, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, and all members voted aye in approval.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Specialist