

Owatonna City Council Minutes

March 6, 2024

On Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., Council President Schultz called the regular session of the Owatonna City Council to order in the Chambers of the Charles S. Crandall Center. Present were Council Members Raney, Svenby, Voss, Dotson, Burbank, Boeke, and Schultz; Mayor Kuntz; Public Works Director Murphy; IT Director Brown; Community Development Manager Kruschke; Communications Manager Sheely; Airport Manager Beaver; IT System Administrator Sticken; City Attorney Walbran and Administrative Coordinator Clawson.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Council President Schultz welcomed everyone. Council Member Boeke made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Council Member Svenby seconded the motion; all members voted aye in approval.

Council President Schultz advised there would be a public hearing and explained the procedure followed. Public Works Director Murphy commented that this public hearing is to consider the making of the 2024 Street and Utility Project. The proposed project involves reconstruction of McKinley Street SW from Linn Avenue SW to Lilac Avenue SW and Anderson Place SW. The estimated cost of the proposed improvement is \$1,855,930.97 of which \$90,516.40 will be proposed for assessment with 24 property owners affected. At 7:03 p.m. a public hearing was opened, with no comments heard, at 7:04 p.m. Council Member Raney made a motion to close the public hearing, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion and all members voted aye in approval.

Resolution 18-24: Receive Report and Order 2024 Improvements

Council Member Svenby made a motion to approve Resolution 18-24 to receive the report and order the 2024 Street and Utility Project. Council Member Dotson seconded the motion and all members voted aye in approval.

Recommend Charter Commission Member Reappointments

Mayor Kuntz commented terms of five Charter Commission Members have expired, all have agreed to serve another term. Mayor recommended reappointment of these Charter Commission Members:

Walter Hansen – First Ward
Brian Whited – Second Ward
Vern Wilker – Third Ward
Dan Overlie – Fourth Ward
Roland Truelson – Fifth Ward

Council Member Voss made a motion for approval, Council Member Boeke seconded the motion and all members voted aye in approval. Recommendation will be sent to City Attorney Walbran with request to prepare an Order for Appointment for approval by the Chief Judge of the Third Judicial District Court.

Proclamation - Women of Achievement Month - Owatonna Business Women

Mayor Kuntz proclaimed March as the Owatonna Business Women's Woman of Achievement Month in recognition and celebration of the important role of women in the community. The Owatonna Business Women will host an annual Woman of Achievement event on March 16th. Tess Brown has been selected as the Young Careerist and Linda Breyer will receive a Lifetime Achievement award. Nominated for Woman of Achievement are Beth Fink, Deb Gillard, Ryan Gillespie, Karen Hale, and Vanessa Jensen.

Consent Agenda Items

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 – February 20, 2024
- Minutes – OPU Commission Meeting - December 20, 2023 (Revised)
- Minutes - OPU Commission Meeting - January 23, 2024
- Minutes – EDA Minutes - January 17, 2024
- Minutes – Airport Commission Meeting - February 8, 2024
- Minutes – Planning Commission Minutes - February 13, 2024
- Minutes – Human Rights Commission Meeting - February 13, 2024
- Building Inspections Monthly Report – February 2024
- Excluded Bingo - Purse Bingo - Early Edition Rotary-Owatonna - April 13, 2024
- Temporary Liquor Permit - Corky's Early Bird Softball Tournament - May 3-5, 2024 - Knights of Columbus
- Event Permit - TraLo Driver Appreciation - August 10, 2024 - includes Exception to the City's Noise Ordinance
- Event Permit - Bike Ride - Girl Scout Troop #47951 - August 24, 2024
- Jones, Haugh & Smith Proposal - Bathymetric Survey Lot 13, Block 1, North Bluff Estates – this is a \$3,900 proposal to collect data and prepare a topographic survey of the current conditions. Assuming dredging or grading is needed, JHS would make a 2nd trip to collect data and update the previous topographic survey.
- Farmland Lease Agreements for Crop Year 2024 at rate of \$255.00/acre
 - Bob Cole 50-acre, 15-acre, and 20-acre parcels
 - Dan Morgan 23-acre parcel
 - Allison Jaster 16-acre parcel
 - Duane Schroeder 20.5-acre parcel
 - Andy Michaletz 8-acre parcel
- Pierringer Release and Settlement Agreement Between City of Owatonna and Brandon Fandel. Establish a VEBA trust fund with a deposit of \$16,666.67 and issue a payment of \$8,333.33 to the Law Firm of Meuser, Yackley & Rowland, P.A.

Council Member Boeke made a motion to approve these Consent Agenda items, Council Member Voss seconded the motion, all members voted aye for approval.

Finance Report

Council Member Raney recapped payments made for amounts greater than \$20,000 during this period. The total amount of bills presented was \$907,767.92, Council Member Svenby made a motion to approve payment of all bills presented, Council Member Dotson seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

Second/Final Reading Proposed Ordinance 24-01 VACA-24-1 Vacating a Portion of a Drainage & Utility Easement - 1213 Elm Ave N

Community Development Manager Kruschke requested approval of Proposed Ordinance 24-01 approving a request from Brent Sherwin to vacate a portion of a drainage and utility easement at 1213 Elm Avenue N. The Planning Commission held a public hearing for comments on this request and recommend approval. City Council approved the first reading of this proposed ordinance during their meeting on February 20, 2024, and there have been no changes since. Council Member Raney made a motion for approval, Council Member Boeke seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, those voting aye were Council Members Voss, Dotson, Burbank, Boeke, Raney, Svenby and Schultz. This will be known as Ordinance 1660 to be effective upon publication.

Resolution 19-24 Declare Costs 2023 Street & Utility Project

Public Works Director Murphy presented Resolution 19-24 as declaration of costs for the 2023 Street & Utility Project. Improvements were made to School Street E, Butternut Ave SW and Riverview Place SW. The final cost of the project, which includes Quantity Changes, was \$1,004,224.40 with \$116,365.08 (11.59%) to be proposed as assessments. Council Member Boeke made a motion for approval, Council Member Raney seconded the motion, all members voted aye for approval.

Resolution 20-24 Set Date for Public Hearing - 2023 Street & Utility Project

Public Works Director Murphy requested approval of Resolution 20-24 to set a date for a public hearing to consider proposed assessments for the 2023 Street and Utility Project. The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, April 2, at 7:00 p.m. in Chambers at the Charles S. Crandall Center. Council Member Dotson made a motion for approval, Council Member Svenby seconded the motion, all members voted aye for approval.

Resolution 21-24: Set Date for Public Hearing - Host Approval to Issue Revenue Obligations - City of Bethel for Ecumen Obligated Group

Community Development Manager Kruschke requested approval of Resolution 21-24 calling public hearing on granting host approval for facilities to be financed and refinanced with the proceeds revenue obligations to be issued by the City of Bethel for the benefit of the Ecumen Obligated Group. A public hearing will be held on March 19, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Chambers of the Charles S. Crandall Center. The purpose of the hearing is to grant host approval to the issuance of the Bonds by the Issuer and consent

to the redemption and prepayment of the Series 2003A Bonds and the Series 2014B Bonds. Council Member Raney made a motion for approval, Council Member Voss seconded the motion, all members voted aye for approval.

Resolution 22-24: Request to Defer Special Assessment

Community Development Manager Kruschke presented Resolution 22-24 to defer a \$4,680.00 assessment previously approved for the 2022 Street and Utility Project on parcel with Property Identification Number 17-148-0303. Staff confirm the application with qualifying income requirement was received, Council Member Voss made a motion to approve Resolution 22-24, Council Member Boeke seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

Master Agreement – Airport Architectural and Engineering Services – Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc.

Airport Manager Beaver explained the FAA recommends a competitive qualifications-based selection process every five years for consulting services. These services are limited to those projects that have been identified in the airport CIP for approximately a five-year term. A selection review panel consisting of city staff and Airport Commission members completed evaluations on the Statements of Qualifications for professional services received from two firms. After careful review of the written SOQ's and interviews, they recommend Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. be named consultant for architectural and engineering services at the airport. Council Member Boeke made a motion to approve a Master Agreement with SHE for services, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

STAFF COMMENTS

IT Director Brown commented redesign of the city's website is in process. Hope to share demo from Civic Plus next month with plans to go live on June 20th. The city is participating in a Data & Security Grant Program from FEMA for managed protection and response systems. After six months, we will evaluate to consider extension of the program, they would advise if any violation occurred. He has been working with HR to add to staff, a conditional offer was just made.

Community Development Manager Kruschke commented that staff are continuing to work on the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed plan will be presented during the Planning Commission on April 9th, the Council Study Session on May 7th and during a public hearing on May 16th. Staff are monitoring several bills introduced in this legislative session regarding zoning. Will be adding to our Community Development staff, an offer was accepted for a Planning Specialist to begin next Monday.

Airport Manager Beaver commented that the airport has been busy. The company offering aviation training is growing; they currently employ 20 which includes a full-time office manager and mechanic. The demand for pilots is strong so he anticipates this

company will continue to thrive. Staff are keeping up on maintenance projects, the new fence and gate project will be completed this spring.

Public Works Director Murphy commented that the Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion project continues to move forward and is on track. Staff have been doing a lot of tree work and cold patching on the streets. Hopefully the weather remains warm and hot patching will be an option. An offer was just made to fill the open position of Sr Maintenance Worker to begin soon. Staff met with OPU Engineering staff to discuss collaboration of strengths to be better stewards for their customers and our residents.

Deanna Sheely, Communications Manager commented communication on social media continues to grow and displayed social media results. Information is presented and shared by all departments; a recent post prepared by the fire department about rescuing a deer from pond waters received coverage on the NBC Nightly News. The second annual All-Hands Meeting was held last month with 130 staff members attending and a survey result shows 94% feel they are much more informed. She has been busy with the rebranding of the city and community. She encouraged everyone to sign-up for notifications on the city's website for city newsletters, city videos and news releases; when issued, you would receive a message advising of the new publication.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Roger Wacek, 646 E Vine Street commented there is a need for energy science education and extended invitation to a ZOOM meeting on Friday morning at 9 o'clock. The Southcentral Minnesota Clean Energy will host a forum which will include information about Rochester's plans to develop a downtown District Energy system. Many years ago, Owatonna, had a Combined Heat & Power Plant (CHP), which was a downtown District Energy system. He encouraged City Administration to schedule a Community Education tour of the St Paul Regional Energy Facility; this CHP waste wood burning facility generates electricity & heats, in winter & cools in summer for St Paul and some additional residential districts.

Tyrel Alastair Hunter, 2595 Mossy Creek Drive requested a moment of silence for an elderly gentleman recovering from injuries incurred when hit last Friday when crossing at the intersection of Cedar Avenue and 18th Street. The speed limit on these streets is lower than what is being proposed on 29th Street as the east side corridor. We want to avoid this type of accident in our neighborhood and ask you to consider 34th Street for this project.

Matt Sennett, 2519 Stoney Creek Drive commented he represents himself, his family, his neighbors, and several hundred Owatonna residents who have signed the petition in opposition of using 29th Street as the proposed east side corridor. Placing a road with 4-50 mph close to current homes will be dangerous. Children will not be able to play in their backyards as loud highway noise can cause cognitive damage. He

requested 29th Street not be used for this project which could damage the development of their kids and their safety.

Melissa Zimmerman, 225 Stoney Creek Drive commented that when the 26th Street project was proposed there were no residential developments within a mile. A study completed in 1993 shows a right-of-way of 800 feet was recommended along the proposed east side corridor; that amount of right-of-way should have been preserved but it has not been.

Gary Jones, 995 Ridge Road commented he has lived in Owatonna for 26 years and has never seen a deer on his property. Many residents are not impacted by the deer unless they want to use the parks during the archery deer management program. Also, deer/vehicle collisions are reported and documented, the city should create an e-mail account for messages from homeowners whose property is damaged by deer. This would document damages for data to review when considering if deer management is truly needed.

COUNCIL & STAFF COMMENTS:

Council Member Voss commented on Friday afternoon he received a News Release about the pedestrian accident shortly after it happened. He likes the notification process and encouraged everyone to sign up for Notify-Me on the city's website.

Administrative Coordinator Clawson commented that the PNP Election went very well yesterday and expressed thanks to the local churches used as Polling Sites. Voter participation was low, about 15% of registered voters, but it was a good opportunity for the Election Judges to work at the polls in preparation for the August Primary and November General Elections which will be much busier.

At 7:48 p.m., Council Member Boeke made a motion to adjourn, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion and with no objection heard, the meeting ended.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Coordinator