

JASPER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Regular Meeting – January 11, 2021;

The Jasper City Council of the City of Jasper met in-person in said city on Tuesday, January 11, 2022. Council members present: Mayor Mike Baustian, Kim Lape and Jeff Leslie; Attending via electronic means: Dee Arp; Employees present: Clerk-Treasurer Cortney Kounkel, Assistant Clerk-Treasurer Maggie Erickson; Public Works Superintendent Brian Thode; Attending via electronic means: Pipestone Star's Kyle Kuphal; Community Members: NA

Mayor Baustian called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance;

Motion by Leslie, seconded by Lape to approve Resolution 22-11 Declaring a Council Vacancy effective immediately, all ayes, carried. The vacancy is to avoid any conflict regarding Council Member Trinidad Garcia's husband, Angel Garcia, receiving the Public Works Assistant Position with the City of Jasper. It was noted at this time that Trinidad abstained from all applicant review and interviews once Angel's application was received by city staff. Angel's application was the first of three received by city staff;

Community Concerns:

The Public Participation and Comment at City Council Meeting sheet was provided. No community members were in attendance;

Motion by Arp, second by Lape to approve the minutes from the TNT Public Hearing on December 14, 2021, all ayes, carried;

Motion by Lape, second by Arp to approve the minutes from the December 21, 2021 Council Meeting, all ayes, carried;

Review and approve the December claims to date: Midwest Alarm, Annual Fire Alarm Inspection-QCC, \$637.35; Double D Gravel, Water Leak/Screened Gravel, \$1,270.24; Jasper EDA, 2021 Property/Casualty Dividend, \$1,830.86; Double D Gravel, Water Leak, \$1,467.28;; Motion by Arp, second Leslie to approve the December claims to date, all ayes, carried;

Receipts noted in December: Pipestone Co. Treasurer, 11/21 Distribution, \$64,192.42; Rock Co. Treasurer, 11/21 Distribution, \$33,846.06; State of MN-MMB, LGA/Small City Assist/MV Credit-Ag, \$124,237.81; Peoples Bank, Pay it Forward-Park Updates, \$1,550.00; League of MN Cities, P/C Dividend, \$9,264.00;

DELINQUENT SEWER/WATER/GARBAGE:

A brief discussion regarding the delinquent Sewer/Water/Garbage accounts occurred. Five properties were on the list;

Wellness Center/QCC: A. Garcia will be completing all of the required maintenance and cleaning at the Wellness Center. Kounkel will work with Garcia and provide pricing at the February Council Meeting;

NEW BUSINESS:

The aforementioned minutes have been drafted for approval.

Motion by Lape, second by Arp to appoint Leslie as Acting Mayor when Baustian is unavailable, all ayes, carried;

Council Committees remained the same as last year. When a new council member is appointed to fill T. Garcia's seat, the committees will be revisited to ensure there is not a conflict of interest presented. Motion by Lape, second by Arp to approve the committees as presented; subject to change once a new council member is appointed, all ayes, carried;

Motion by Lape, second by Arp to appoint Pipestone County Star as our official newspaper, all ayes, carried;

Motion by Arp, second by Leslie to designate Peoples Bank as the official depositor, all ayes, carried;

Motion by Lape, second by Arp to approve the 2022 IRS rate for mileage reimbursement at \$0.585/mile, up 2.5 cents from 2021 rate, all ayes, carried;

A calendar of the 2022 Council Meetings was presented to Council as follows:

Tuesday, January 11

Tuesday, February 8

Tuesday, March 8

Tuesday, April 12

Tuesday, May 10

Tuesday, June 14

Tuesday, July 12

***Wednesday, August 10 (Date change due to Primary Election)

Tuesday, September 13

Tuesday, October 11

***Wednesday, November 9 (Date change due to General Election)

Tuesday, December 13

Notice will be posted on the front door of the City Office regarding the 2022 Council Meeting dates;

Resolution 21-11A Increasing the Wage for City Council Meetings was presented to the Council. At the budget meeting, it was mentioned that the Council has not seen an increase in wages since 2008. Resolution 21-11A increases the Council's current wage of \$75/meeting to \$125/meeting. Motion by Lape, second by Arp to approve Resolution 21-11A Increasing the Wage for City Council Meetings from \$75/meeting to \$125/meeting, effective immediately, all ayes, carried;

The aforementioned minutes have been drafted for approval.

Kounkel provided the Council with different seating options for the Council Room Chairs. After a brief discussion, motion by Lape, seconded by Arp to purchase the Boss Modern Executive Chairs #B696C-BK from Quill Corporation for \$\$195.99 each, all ayes, carried;

OLD BUSINESS:

The Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water increase notification letter was presented to Council. LPRW has approved an increase in water rates from \$2.82 per thousand gallons to \$2.89 per thousand gallons effective July 1, 2022. The city typically increases our rate when LPRW does. The City of Jasper currently charges \$4.75 per thousand gallons of water. Thode explained that the city will always lose water due to leaks, etc. Erickson will provide a comparison of water billed versus usage at the February Council Meeting. The increase has been tabled until then;

As discussed at the November Council Meeting Benjamin Denton, Jasper City Attorney, proposed changes in his compensation structure beginning January 1, 2022. Denton is requesting an annual payment in the amount of \$5,101.00. This will make him eligible for PERA benefits. Denton has not contacted the PERA administration to determine if he is even eligible for PERA benefits. If the city was to not accept this new contract and needed Denton in the future, \$5,101 would be payable up front plus the hourly rate of \$120.00 taken from the \$5,101 and any unearned part of the \$5,101 is non-refundable. Denton understands if the city would choose to contract with another law firm. Eisma & Eisma out of Luverne, MN currently has a couple municipal clients. They are willing to take on the city of Jasper if requested. Eisma & Eisma charges \$225.00 per hour where Denton previously charged \$120.00. Eisma & Eisma does not charge a retainer fee. After a brief discussion, Arp stated it makes more sense to pay for the services only when we need them. Motion by Arp, second by Lape to appoint Eisma & Eisma out of Luverne, MN as the new city attorney for the City of Jasper, all ayes, carried;

The American Tower Lease Contract was again presented. Kounkel provided wireless tower rental rates from other communities around Minnesota. Some communities have also signed leases with increases over a certain amount of years. It should be noted the FCC determines \$1,000.00 to be a fair and reasonable amount. Kounkel will contact American Tower on behalf of the City of Jasper and request an increase in monthly rent from \$550.00 to \$1,000.00 with a 5% increase every year for the next five years;

Peoples Bank Pay-it-Forward donation of \$1,550.00 was received by the City Office. The original playground equipment, a 2-person ride on dinosaur, was no longer available for purchase. Kounkel was able to find a similar piece of playground equipment that was significantly cheaper. Therefore, two pieces of equipment were able to be purchased. However, the shipping caused an overage of approximately \$280.44. Kounkel and Erickson have approached local organizations for contributions to help offset the cost of shipping. \$100.00 has been pledged thus far. Kounkel requested that the remaining amount, after donations, be taken from the park fund;

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

No land use permits issued in the month of December;

The aforementioned minutes have been drafted for approval.

Thode informed the Council that the Case 580 Super K Tractor is near completion on cleanup so the city can sell it on sealed bids. Thode mentioned that Titan Machinery may be interested in purchasing the tractor. The tractor is equipped with a 3 point hitch and PTO shaft; currently broken but the replacement part will be included with the tractor. Sealed bids will be opened at the February 8, 2022 Council Meeting;

Kounkel has not received any word on the property located in Rock County that had gone for tax forfeiture;

ITEMS ANYONE WANTS TO ADD TO THE AGENDA:

Employee sit-down evaluations will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. Angel Garcia will also be invited to attend;

FYI: Angel Garcia beginning employment on Monday, January 24, 2022;

Upcoming Meetings:

Council Meeting: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.;

Lape motioned to adjourn, Arp seconded. All ayes, regular meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.;

Cortney Kounkel, Clerk-Treasurer

Mike Baustian, Mayor