City of Hewitt

509 East Third Ave

Hewitt, Minnesota 56453

City Council Minutes August 13th, 2013

Regular Meeting City Hall, 7:00 p.m.

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**CALL TO ORDER**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Hewitt City Council met in regular session. Mayor Juanita Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The City Council and all present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**FINANCIAL REPORT** Council present: Juanita Mitchell, Mayor

Jim Opelia, Council Member

Donald Fitzgerald, Council Member

Alice Melzer, Council Member

Alex Weego, Council Member

Staff present: Luke Mitchell Maintenance

Michael Dagen, Clerk/Treasurer

Guests: Diana Chromey, Jerry Chromey, Holly Knutson, Al Knutson, Deanna Hall, Steve Peterson &

Amber Fletschock

Jim Opelia pointed out that on page 5 the word “park-time” should be “part-time”. Alex made a motion to **except the July 9th Council meeting minutes with the change made**, Donald Fitzgerald 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Alex Weego asked about the attorney bill for $934 and Clerk Michael Dagen stated that it was for the purchase of land

**MAINTENANCE REPORT:**

**CLERK’S REPORT:**

from the Hewitt Nazarene church. Alex questioned the Softline Data bill for $414 and Clerk Dagen informed that it was for annual support for the billing program along with a box of water bill cards. Alex Weego made a motion to **refer to audit and pay checks number 13521 to 13537**, Donald Fitzgerald 2nd, all in favor motion carried.

There was a discussion about the sander options listed in the Maintenance report. Alex Weego made a motion **to authorize the purchase of a $1500 salt spreader for the back of the white truck**, Donald Fitzgerald 2nd, Alex, Fitz, Alice & Juanita in favor, Jim no, motion carried.

Juanita Mitchell brought up that she spoke with Roxanne Zutter about the rusty water complaint that Mrs. Zutter had filed. There was a discussion about the chemicals that Roxanne has been adding to her water. Don Fitzgerald pointed out that he lives just up the road from Mrs. Zutter and his water is fine. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to deny Roxanne Zutter’s request for a credit on her water bill**, Alice Melzer 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

It was mentioned that the old lawn mower has quite working. Alex Weego asked if the new mower has been working and Luke said that no it will need to be returned for repair again. It was stated that maybe the old mower could be bartered or sold at Barter Fest.

Luke mentioned that Braaten Aggregate has requested to ad gravel to the road between the City and dump.

Clerk Michael Dagen mentioned that the Council will need to set a date for a budget workshop meeting. The Council decided to set an open budget workshop meeting for 5 pm on Aug. 27th.

**RICK UTECH PRESENTATION**

**OAK VALLEY REQUEST TO HEWITT FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**REQUEST FOR BARTER FEST DONATION**

There was a discussion about the term options presented in the Clerks notes in regards to the City’s CD. Alex requested that Michael find out what the penalties are for changing the length of the CD term.

Rick Utech from Todd County Development gave a presentation on behalf of the Wi-Fi “Hot Spot” program. Rick explained that the grant program would cover the cost of a wireless router and half the cost of internet service for one year. There were questions about how far the Wi-Fi service would cover and Rick pointed out that Arvig would be able to answer this question. There was a discussion about what spot in town would make the best “hot-spot”. Alex Weego asked how long the City would have to decide. Rick stated that he would need to have a signed agreement by the end of the year. Alex Weego made a motion **to sign the Wi-Fi agreement**, Juanita Mitchell 2nd, Alex, Jim, Juanita, Alice in favor, Fitz no, motion carried.

Chief Steve Peterson shared that the Hewitt Fire Department has been asked to take over two more sections of the Oak Valley Township. Steve explained that there are currently no houses located on these two sections, but it would be added revenue for the department. Chief Peterson stated that the Hewitt Fire Department has voted to provide support to these two new sections. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **for the Hewitt Fire Department to provide service to two more sections of the Oak Valley Township**, Alice Melzer 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Amber Fletschock and Holly & Al Knutson were present on behalf of Barter Fest. Amber stated that Barter Fest would like to once again block off Front Street from 4th to 5th Ave. on September 21st for the event. Ms. Fletschock asked for a donation from the City to help

**BARTER FEST DONATION REQUEST CONTI…**

**NUISANCE COMPLAINT 224 FRONT STREET NORTH**

**SHEILA & MICK STOKES SEWER**

cover the costs of portable toilets and advertisement for the free event. Alex Weego asked how much a portable toilet costs and Clerk Dagen stated $50 per toilet. Amber said that there would be an open mic stage where people from the community could showcase their talents. Alex asked about the State Statute 471.941 attached to the request for donation. Clerk Dagen stated that he came across this statute that allows City’s to donate out of their general fund for artistic activities that provide opportunities for persons to participate in performance. Mayor Juanita Mitchell asked if there was an effort to make this a Hewitt event. Ms. Fletschock stated that is one reason there will be an open mic this year, so more people from the community will have an opportunity to participate in the event. Amber stated that the event was created to bring people to Hewitt, to have fun and to get people to talk to each other. Juanita questioned if Pickle Fest were to add art and dance if they would be able to ask for a donation from the general fund. It was stated that yes; the art portion could be covered out of the general fund by this statute. Alex Weego made a motion **to donate $500 from the general fund to Barter Fest**, Donald Fitzgerald 2nd, Alex, Fitz, Jim, Alice in favor, Juanita nay, motion carried.

**\*Unfinished Business\***

Don Fitzgerald pointed out that the trash has been removed from the property at 224 Front Street North and the lawn has been mowed. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the certified letter from the City was refused. Clerk Dagen stated that the bank had sent the property owner a letter as well.

Juanita Mitchell shared that the City had received an email from Mick today saying that the Stokes still haven’t received a quote for repairing their sewer problem. Don Fitzgerald explained that the sewer repair project has expanded from what was presented to the Council last month.

**STOKES SEWER COMPLAINT CONT…**

**MILL REMOVAL**

**CHARITABLE GAMBLING PAYMENT OPTION**

Alice Melzer informed that she spoke with someone who was involved with the installation of the City’s sewer system. Mrs. Melzer explained that she was told that a private contractor dug a trench from the street to the house and the homeowner was responsible for hooking up to the City sewer. Alice stated that she spoke with an attorney privately and what Ms. Melzer was told was that because the Stokes paid their monthly water & sewer bills without an objection, they would have no recourse to go back for prior sewer charges. Alex said that the other argument would be that the Stokes didn’t know that their upstairs bathroom drain wasn’t connected to the City sewer. Mr. Weego stated that if you divided their past monthly sewer charges by the number of drains in the house, it probably wouldn’t come out to that much. Fitz stated that the City should not pay anymore than $500. Jim Opelia shared that the reason the Stokes didn’t want to go with the simple fix of connecting the existing drain to the City sewer; was a concern for the stability of the cast iron pipe and because they wanted to continue to use their floor drains. Juanita suggested that the item be tabled until the next meeting.

Alex Weego stated that nothing has changed with the mill removal. Mr. Weego said because the larger communications training for the Fire Department has fallen through, the project would cost too much to have the power line moved to the other side of the street during a controlled burn.

**\*New Business\***

Clerk Dagen explained that the City has the option of changing their scheduled payment from Wolf Lake

Wolf Pack Baseball for charitable gambling from quarterly to monthly. Michael referenced the second quarter gambling receipts and expenses and pointed out that the City didn’t receive a payment because the quarter’s net profit was

**COUNTY PROSECUTION CONTRACT**

**INDEPENDENT NEWS HERALD ADS**

**COUNTY 44 & MAIN STREET CONSTRUCTION**

negative, but if they would have been receiving a monthly payment; the City would have received a payment of $294 in April. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **that the City change their payment agreement with Wolf Lake Wolf Pack Baseball from quarterly to monthly**, Jim Opelia 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Juanita Mitchell stated that the City does this contract every year. Jim Opelia made a motion **to approve the payment of $600 for County prosecution services**, Don Fitzgerald 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Jim Opelia made a motion **to approve placing the calendar and photo page ads in the Independent News Herald**, Alex Weego 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Jim Opelia explained that County 44 (Front Street) from highway 71 to 210 will be redone next summer by Todd County. Mr. Opelia shared that the City of Hewitt will be responsible for some of the costs of the project. Council member Opelia added that the City could add repairing Main Street from 210 to the gravel to the project. Alex Weego referenced the contract, pointing out what aspects of the County 44 project the City would be responsible for. Mr. Weego pointed out that the City would be responsible for the entire Main Street project, but would receive the same price as the County for the materials. Alex shared that a rough estimate for both projects could be $40-$60,000, but the City will receive a more accurate cost estimate from the County by September. Mr. Weego explained the City would want to set their funding options in October and the contract with the County needs to be signed at the November Council Meeting. Council member Weego shared that the City’s funding options for the road construction projects are: assessments, using enterprise funds and securing a bond; with the possibility of combining all three options.

**COUNTY 44 & MAIN STREET CONSTRUCTION CONT….**

**BERTHA REQUESTING TO RENT HEWITT’S TRACTOR**

**ADAM TEMPLIN REQUEST FOR HEWITT TO PAY FOR CLASS C LICENSE**

Alex projected that by July 2014 there would be $67,000 total in the water & sewer enterprise funds. Weego explained that with Hewitt’s current market value of $6.4 million the City could bond up to $192,000. Clerk Michael Dagen explained that if the City wanted to consider using bonding to fund the project, there are a few steps the Council would need to take before signing the County contract in November; including passing a resolution tonight. Clerk Dagen stated that an open meeting would then be scheduled before the next City Council meeting which is required before a City can secure a bond. Michael shared that if the City would choose not to bond for the project, Hewitt’s only expense would be the legal notice for the public meeting. Alex shared that it was learned from the engineer that after next summer the County wouldn’t have any road construction projects near Hewitt for 10 years. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to pass resolution #13-007**, Jim Opelia 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

There was a discussion about what Bertha would use the tractor for and if Hewitt’s tractor would work with Bertha’s mower deck. It was brought up that Hewitt should have an equipment rental contract. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to deny the City of Bertha using Hewitt’s tractor**, Jim Opelia 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Juanita Mitchell explained that Adam Templin has asked if Hewitt would pay for his expenses to attend training for a Class C water licensing in St. Cloud in October. The Council requested that this item be tabled until the next meeting, so Mr. Templin can attend and explain his request.

**WIDSETH, SMITH AND NOLTING AUG. 20th**

**LEAGUE OF MN CITIES COMMON COVERAGE DECLARATIONS**

**VOLLEYBALL NET & BALL**

**HITCHING POSTS FOR HORSES**

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

Alex Weego explained that a free informational meeting has been set up with the engineering firm: Widseth, Smith and Nolting for Aug. 20th. Mr. Weego stated that the meeting will discuss what it would take for the City to develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and what grants might be available for Hewitt once a CIP has been completed.

Juanita Mitchell stated that the League of MN Cities Common Coverage Declarations was included in the Council pack for informational purposes only.

Juanita Mitchell shared that she picked up a new volleyball net and ball for the park, because she has received complaints about the existing park net. Mayor Mitchell explained that it’s up to the Council to decide to keep the net & ball, otherwise she will return them. Juanita suggested that the volleyball be checked out from the City office. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to keep the volleyball net & ball and reimburse Mayor Mitchell for the purchase**, Alice Melzer 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

**\*Requests or Complaints\***

Donald Fitzgerald explained that there have been a lot of folks riding horse into town to visit the café and bar. Fitz asked that the Council approve building two more hitching posts for citizens to use for tying their horses. Alex Weego made a motion **to allow up to $200 to build two more hitching posts**, Jim Opelia 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Deanna Hall thanked the Council for allowing the Girl Scouts to use the Senior Center for their meetings.

Jim Opelia requested permission to remove the sidewalk pavers along County 44 before the road construction project next summer.

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to close the meeting**, Alex Weego 2nd, Alex, Fitz, Juanita, Alice in favor, Jim no, motion carried.