August 15, 2012

Regular Council Meeting

Pledge:

Mayor Juanita Mitchell and Council Members Alex Weego, Darlene Fah and Alice Melzer, and Jim Opelia were present.

Minutes: The following changes were made to the minutes: Page 1 – Maintenance Report - change do to due; Page 8 – Doug Carter -change he to Doug Carter stated; Page 9 –Hansen Property - add do not have the authority. A motion was made by Alex to accept the minutes with changes, seconded by Darlene, all in favor, motion carried.

Financial Reports: Alex questioned the: Scott Poppinga claim, Barbara stated it is a Fire Department Reimbursement; Softline Data claim, Barbara stated that is the customer support for the water billing through August 2013; Verne’s Auto Electric, Aaron stated that was a motor to repair the air compressor in the water plant. Jim questioned the: Bruce Brown claim, Barbara stated he was the man that did the work on the Memorial. Alice questioned the Prairie Sanitary Service payment for Pickle Fest being paid by the city, Juanita stated that the city has always paid for the Pickle Fest trash removal. Darlene questioned the Wadena County Human Services claim; Barbara stated that it is first year of our Friendly Rider contract. The fee is based on the City’s population.

On the outstanding checks report Alex questioned the: MN Public Facilities Authority check for $8375.00, Barbara stated that is final payment on the water/sewer loan; the League of Minnesota Cities check for $7612.00, Barbara stated that is the insurance payment approved at the last council meeting, Alex asked if that was an annual amount, Barbara stated it is; the two checks to KoA Construction for $8482.00 and $2335.00, Barbara stated that is for completion of the shop and the repair to the office and outside of the building respectively. Alex asked if how this compared to the bids. Barbara stated the shop was for exactly what the bid was for and the office and exterior repair had been approved as time and materials.

Alex commented that in looking at the customer balances for the water/sewer billing that there are only 2 customers over 60 days. One is the bill that we may not be able to collect. Barbara stated that the other bill over 60 days has a contract now also. Alex was pleased with the improvement in the collection process. Darlene stated that people are realizing that collection process is now consistent.

Darlene questioned the negative balance in the Memorial fund. Barbara stated that at the end of the year we would have to cover the credit balance. Alex stated that he had a $100.00 check to donate to the fund from the Lions Club. Barbara is hoping that when the Memorial is dedicated that addition funds would come in. Barbara had called and checked on the boots today and they will not be shipped until August 27th. She feels that doesn’t give enough time to do the dedication on Labor Day as Fitz has been saying he would like to do. Darlene stated she felt it would be better to do it during Barter Fest, all agreed. Barbara is hoping the paper will help with coverage to try to generate some more income. She will need the time of the dedication on the September 21st to let Karin know. Michael suggested 11:00 A.M. on Saturday morning. A final determination on the time will be given to Barbara at least 2 weeks before Barter Fest. Darlene suggested that the Lions and Lioness put out something for people to put money into for donations during their events during Barter Fest also.

Alice made a motion to refer to audit, seconded by Jim, all in favor motion carried.

Maintenance Report: The Hansen property had been taken care off. Aaron rented a brush hog to be able to clean up this property.

More spray needs to be ordered. The cost is approximately $150.00 for 5 gallons.

Aaron has been working on pond maintenance and cutting grass.

Two tires had to be repaired on the tractor. Aaron wasn’t sure if he ran over something at Hansen’s or elsewhere.

Barbara stated that Aaron also had filled two pot holes in the parking lot. Diana Chromey had told her that when she stopped at the City office she had stepped into one with her bad leg and that they needed attention. Barbara told Diana that the parking lot is scheduled to be paved shortly, and Aaron did have them filled the same day to prevent anyone from getting hurt.

Aaron said he needs to purchase the paint for the wall in the shop that still needs painting. Alex said that he just needs to get the paint and get it finished. Jim also commented that he should have just purchased the chemicals for spraying also. Aaron said that once it is painted he would also like to put a couple of sheets of plywood along the bottom of the wall to protect the wall. Juanita stated that the ply wood would also need to be painted. Aaron said he would have the painting completed before the next Council Meeting.

Clerk’s Report: Bills paid prior to the Council Meeting are listed in her report. The MN Public Facilities Authority payment was the final payment on the water/sewer upgrade loan.

Barbara commented that a number of the water/sewer customers currently on the collection report are now paid in full and their contacts completed.

Barbara said that she will now be just using the UBPro and not both water billing systems. It is working well and the aging problem has been eliminated with the amount of time that she has used both systems. Darlene asked how the credit card payments are working. Barbara stated that only one person has used it so far, but it works very well.

Dog licensing has not improved. Barbara had put it onto the water bill again and did have one person come in to license her dogs, but she thought that the fee was only $1.00 to renew a license and when she was told it is $5.00 she didn’t renew the licenses. The tags cost the City almost $5.00 so the fee does need to be at least that much.

Barbara has sent Denim & Diamonds the letter informing them that she has obtained part of the information they requested and the cost for her work and copies. She has not heard back from them and they have not come in to pick up the copies that she has made for them.

Mayor’s Report: Farmer’s Market would like to be able to put the sign out made by Amber Dagen on a permanent basis and they would like to know if there is a space available for them to be able to extend the season indoors once it starts getting colder through October.

Darlene asked if the sign would be permanent or just for during their season. Michael Dagen stated the sign is not really made to hang it is made to stand.

Juanita stated that at the end of the Farmer’s Market season they are also talking about having a chili feed or something for the community if we allow them to extend their season.

Darlene suggested the Senior Center would be a good location for them.

Using the conference room at City Hall was suggested. Aaron said there is not enough room. Michael stated that there are not as many that will come for the extended season.

Alex made a motion that they may use their sign as appropriate and that they may use City Hall for their extended season, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried.

New Business: Patsy Erickson Fence Permit. Alice asked how tall the fence will be. The application did not indicate the height. Jim made a call to verify that it will be 6 Feet high. The fence will be placed 1 Foot from the property line. Darlene asked what the fence will be made of. Jim verified that it will be made of cedar. She is just moving the fence she has on her property from one location to another. Juanita asked that Barbara verify that they have all the pertinent information on the form when she accepts the applications in the future. Darlene made a motion to approve the fence application, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried.

Tom and Jeannette Meszaros Fence Permit. Jim stated that he had not gone to the sight to look at where they are placing the fence. Darlene asked why they would like to put the fence up. Tom stated that they want to plant trees behind the school building. It is partially for appearance. They want to clean it up and plant grass. The other reason is to protect the trees that they are planting to help with the drifting of snow in the winter. They will still have a portion that is agricultural and farmed. People run their snow mobiles, 4 wheelers and drive vehicles onto this property and could destroy the new trees. Alex asked where the vehicles tracks where. Jeannette said behind the community center building. Alex stated that is how the Lions get into their storage area with heavy items. Jeannette stated they could not do that without permission from them as that is their property. Darlene stated that they do have an easement. Tom stated that is true but limited. There is a 3 foot easement around the building. Alex asked how close the fence would be to the school and would the fence impede the Lions from being able to get to the back door. Jeannette said yes it would. Alex then said that he would like to table the permit until the Lions can be in on this discussion. Jeannette said to stop right here. They have already cleared this with their lawyer and this could be a legal fight again and the City does not want to go through that again. They own the property. Alex told Jeannette not to threaten him. Tom stood up and told Alex to watch his mouth. Tom was asked to sit back down. Jeannette said that they own the property and the city has a 3 foot easement. They are allowed to go within 6 inches of the building because that is what the Cities ordinance states. Alex asked what a 3 foot easement means. Jeannette said that the 3 foot easement means that the City has a right to come onto the property to do maintenance. Alex stated that putting a post within 6 inches of the building they are impeding the ability to do that. Jeannette asked if he had read that they are providing a 39 inch gate to give the City access to the easement. Alex apologized for getting out of line, and requested that this permit be tabled until they can ask the Lions what they need to do since they are taking the ability of the Lions to do community service from the back of the building and he doesn’t understand why they are doing that. Jeannette asked what serviced they have to do from the back of the building. Alex said that the Lions use the back door. Jeannette asked which back door. Alex said the back door on the north side. Jeannette said the fence isn’t even close to that door. Alex said that is what he had previously asked. Jeannette said the fence isn’t close to those doors, but they would have to go around on the north side of the building to get access to their doors. Alex said that is how they always do it. Jeannette said that then there would not be any problem. Darlene stated that she feels that this needs to be tabled until more research has been done on this. Juanita stated that they need to review what was done previously. Alice stated that she does not see anything illegal about the fence permit. People need to leave their personal feelings at the door when they enter the Council Meeting Room. They have a gate for access to the whole side of the building. Alex stated that he is not saying it is illegal. Jeannette asked if he thought they were putting a fence alongside the back of the building. Alex said no he can read a map and understands the fence does not run along the backside of the building. Alex asked if the fence would come all the way to the road. Does it come to the shelter? Jeannette said the fence is not that close to the shelter. Juanita stated that a review of what has been done needs to be done and get with the cities attorney to ensure that they are handling this correctly and try to eliminate any hurt feelings from this issue. Jim feels that a couple of the Council Members should walk this area with them. Jeannette said that there were Lions out there looking at what they are doing last Monday when they were there. Darlene stated that she agrees that a couple of the Council Members need to meet with them on this issue on the property. She does not doubt what they are saying but that she does not feel comfortable approving this and that they need to make sure that it is within what was agreed to. Tom asked if that means they have to wait until the next Council Meeting. Juanita stated that she had asked the attorney to be at the meeting for this issue, but he was going to be out of the country and could not attend. Juanita said that they could call a special meeting if they cannot wait another month. Darlene again stated that she does not doubt them, but she needs to understand that this does meet with what was agreed to. She also stated that once they put a gate up the next thing could be that there is a lock on the gate and the city does not have the access that was agreed to. Tom asked if she understands what a 3 foot easement is. Darlene said yes she does but she still is not comfortable approving this until she can review what was agreed upon. Jeannette said that any day or time they would be happy to meet with them. Darlene said she that she and Jim are on that committee and that they do need to do that however she cannot meet until next week due to her schedule constraints. Jim stated that once they go out they also need to review the whole issue. Barbara asked if they were requesting a special meeting for their review, if more than just Jim and Darlene do the review a special meeting is required. Darlene also wants Dan’s opinion prior to making this decision. Alex asked if it could be approved contingent on the committee’s findings and the attorney’s review. Juanita said yes, if he doesn’t want to be involved in the decision. Alex said that he does not feel they should spend money on a special meeting for this issue. If the committee and the attorney agrees that should be sufficient. Darlene agreed that the city should not have to pay for a special meeting for a fence permit. Juanita said that Darlene and Jim would then have to go and meet with Dan to make this determination. Alex said they could do it and Juanita could just advise them. Barbara stated that then there are three members involved and they would be in violation of the open meeting law. Jim asked when the next meeting is. Barbara said September 11th, which is 4 weeks. Darlene asked when Dan would be back. Juanita didn’t know. Jeannette stated that with the gate they are giving extra room with a 39 inch gate. They could have installed a 28 inch gate, plus the 6 inches the fence will be from the building giving 45 inches on a 36 inch easement. Tom stated that he feels the concern is the post only 6 inches from the building if the City would need to do painting or replace siding. Alex stated that he is trying to understand what unfettered means. Alex wants to be sure the post being 6 inches from the building would not be a problem. Tom said that his attorney had looked at the information this morning he feels it is okay. Darlene stated that she feels that this issue needs to be tabled until the City can meet with their attorney to determine what he has to say. Alice stated that even if Dan agrees that the fence is okay as is, a special meeting will need to be called to make the motion to approve the fence permit. Darlene and Jim will meet the Tom and Jeannette Meszaros at the Community Center Monday August 20th at 6:30 to review the fence permit request.

2012 Regional Meetings: Juanita asked to have the list of the current meetings into the packet as there are meetings available in Perham on September 20th this year. The cost is $40.00 to attend. Darlene asked when she needed to decide. Alex said he feels you can usually register within about 2 days of the event. Jim said that he will probably need to be at work. Barbara requested that they let her know by the 12th so that she can get the registrations completed. Alex stated that he will be attending.

Land Owned by the Church of the Nazarene: One of the board members has approached Juanita about the land they own from 210 to the truck parking area as all they are doing with it is maintaining it and paying taxes on the property. This property was given to them. They have told Juanita that it is on the tax rolls at $5,400.00 so they would like $6,000.00 for the property. Juanita feels that $6,000.00 is too high but we could give them an offer. Alex would rather see this property stay on the tax rolls then have the City purchase the property. Darlene asked what advantage it would be to own the land. Alice stated that if the City owns the land that they may be able to dictate what goes on the land. Alex made a motion to offer $2,500.00 for the entire property, seconded by Jim, all in favor motion carried.

Initiative Foundation Request for 2013 Support Request: Jim made a motion to approve their $200.00 request, seconded by Darlene, all in favor, motion carried.

2013 LGA Notice: Funding for 2013 remains the same as 2012, $59776.00.

MN Rural Water Assoc. Membership Renewal: Darlene asked what they do for the City. Aaron stated a lot. Option A gives voting rights which is what the city has always done. Option B gives everything except the voting rights. Aaron stated that he has never voted. Alex made a motion to accept Option B for $225.00, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried.

Community Concern for Youth Program Request: This is by population and the city of Hewitt is only $138.00. Alex made a motion to give the $138.00, seconded by Jim, all in favor, motion carried.

Mid-Central Savings Bank/Bristlin Mortgage Foreclosure: Information only.

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Unfinished Business:

Resolution for a Referendum for Police Service: The Hewitt tax capacity has dropped from $91,400.00 to $68,900.00 due to the tax changes. We are therefore now using 81% of our tax capacity. To contract with the Sheriff their rate is $35.00 per hour. To do a joint venture with Bertha and Eagle Bend the cost would be approximately $23,500.00 for 2.68 hours per day. Alex stated that therefore, he cannot recommend that we pursue either of these options at this time. Juanita agreed that we cannot ask our taxpayers to pay more at this time with the economy being what it is.

Doug Carter – Removal of Mill per Re-Zoning Approval: Barbara has been trying to get a hold of them but have not been able to reach them by phone. Alex said that Doug has told him he is currently on full disability due to heath conditions.

Snow Removal Posting: Jim asked how much these would help. Aaron said he doesn’t know. Adam and Shaun drive the truck. Juanita stated that Adam must feel there is a problem since he wants to put these signs up. The Council still wants to know where these signs will go, how much it will cost, and how much of a problem there is with parking on the streets during snow plowing.

Requests & Complaints: Michael Dagen – Request for donation for Barter Fest and having a festival zone again. Michael is hoping that approximately 1000 people will attend. Alex asked what had been given in the past. Michael stated that last year the City gave $500.00. Alex made a motion to approve a donation of $500.00 for the Barter Fest event, seconded by Jim, all in favor, motion carried.

Gloria Nokes – Horseshoe pits at Community Center: Aaron said he doesn’t even know how to build horseshoe pits. Barbara stated that he could go to Clarissa’s park and look at theirs. Juanita asked who is going to pay for this. Darlene suggested we contact the leagues to see if they have any interest in forming a league in Hewitt. There may be funding available through their organization. Alice asked if there had not been horseshoe pits just west of the lilac bushes. Juanita said that there is not funding for this project at this time, but it can be reviewed again next year.

B-H School Calendar & Photo Page Ads: Juanita stated that we have always done this in the past, we also get a paper. Jim made a motion to do this again, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried.

County Noxious Weed Inspection Report –: 202 S. Hwy. 71: Juanita stated that this complaint has been taken care of.

County Noxious Weed Inspection Report –607 E. Third Avenue: Aaron stated that this property has also been taken care of.

Chris Kludt – Weed Complaint – 308 E. Third Ave.: Juanita stated that this is the same property that we have the tree problem on. She went to look at it and you cannot even tell what is in there as the weeds are taller than she is. Alex stated that this property is owned by Bank of America. Barbara stated that Karin gave her a property management company to contact. Alex stated that Smiley has been cutting the front yard on this property. Juanita commented that there are also other foreclosures coming up that are starting to look pretty bad.

Open Forum: Alex made a request from the Hewitt Lions for the City pay $550.00 on the $1165.00 replacement of kitchen lighting since the City owns the building. Jim commented that it would save money over time. Barbara will get with the Lions and get a copy of the bill and their check for their portion to put with the $550.00 check the City will issue for this maintenance. Darlene made a motion to pay the $550.00 for the lighting in the Community Center from the General Fund, seconded by Jim, Alex and Juanita abstain, Jim, Alice and Darlene aye, motion carried.

Post Office – Handicap Parking: Aaron stated that the Post Office has requested that the City put a handicapped parking spot in front of the Post Office. Darlene asked if we would need a permit to do this. Jim asked if the slope is there now in the curb. Aaron said yes.

Darlene made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Mayor, Juanita Mitchell

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 City Clerk/Treasurer, Barbara Holmes