

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 8, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the City Council was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Deiss in the Council Chambers, located in the City Administrative Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor George Deiss, Council Members Deb Wiese, Gillette Kempf, Bruce Uselman .and Don Niles.

OTHERS PRESENT

Brad Swenson, Dave Evans, Naomi Plautz, Dean Uselman, Tim Booth, Eric Robb and Anna Erickson from the Wadena Pioneer Journal

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion was made by Kempf, second by Wiese to approve the following items on the consent calendar:

- A. Minutes of the City Council meeting held February 9, 2016
- B. Claims as Presented for payment:

1. February 05, 2016.....	\$240.37
2. February 05, 2016.....	\$15,273.91
3. February 09, 2016.....	\$80.97
4. February 09, 2016.....	\$2,439.70
5. February 11, 2016.....	\$45,773.86
6. February 11, 2016.....	\$37,373.94
7. February 12, 2016.....	\$161,048.62
8. February 12, 2016.....	\$122.56
9. February12, 2016.....	\$6,807.83
10. February 15. 2016.....	\$18,463.89
11. February 19, 2016.....	\$197.53
12. February 19, 2016.....	\$394,723.57
13. February 19, 2016.....	\$9,137.47
14. February 22, 2016.....	\$38,206.00
15. February 22, 2016.....	\$67,782.22

16. February 22, 2016.....	\$374.94
17. February 25, 2016.....	\$44,903.43
18. February 25, 2016.....	\$207.08
19. February 25, 2016.....	\$1,613.80
20. February 29, 2016.....	\$49,336.44

- C. City Administrator’s Monthly Report for February 2016
- D. WDA Meeting Minutes for January 14, 2016
- E. Police Department Activity Report for February 2016
- F. Fire Department Meeting Minutes for March 2, 2016
- G. Senior Citizens Center Financial Report for February 2016

Upon voting Mayor Deiss declared the motion carried, all members voting aye.

PUBLIC HEARING – COMMUNITY CENTER DRIVE PROJECT

Mayor Deiss opened the public hearing at 5:03 p.m. Phil Martin, city engineer from Bolton & Menk, gave an overview of the preliminary engineering report for the project explaining the two options for the project.

Gillette Kempf asked about grants. Phil Martin said for the size of the project there isn’t much out there.

Lee Westrom, Wadena-Deer Creek School District was present and asked questions of timeline and assessment process.

Matt Lunde and Duff Erhotz of the Wadena Hockey Association were present and asked about the differences in the plans and the cost to the Hockey Association.

There was discussion about adding a walkway or sidewalk to the south side of the roadway for pedestrians to walk back and forth for ball games, Bruce Uselman expressed concerns for pedestrian traffic. Lee Westrom stated that he would like to not have curbs on the school side by the fields so that they could keep parking on the edge for football and baseball games. Phil stated that it would be a 46’ wide paved roadway.

After discussion, Motion was made by Kempf, second by Niles to close the public hearing at 5:30 p.m.

Motion by Niles, second by Wiese to adopt Resolution 03-01-16 ordering the improvement and preparation of plans and that we should bid out both options as discussed in plan and that Phil should be talking to stakeholders about a pedestrian path in conjunction with this project.

Upon voting, Mayor Deiss declared the Resolution adopted. All members voting aye.

HISTORICAL STRUCTURE EVALUATION

Lina Belar, from the Wadena County Historical Society, was present and introduced Don Hoisington, consultant, who is doing a study of downtown historic places. He gave an overview of what he is doing, talked about National Register of Historic Places, how to get on National Register, historic preservation tax credits and state legacy funds eligibility. On the historic preservation tax credits, stated that businesses could get up to 40% tax credits on improvements made. Don Hoisington is working on this study and will keep the council updated on the study as he goes along.

MRES LOAD CONTROL CONTRACT

Dave Evans reviewed with the council the MRES Load Control Contract which is in conjunction with our automated meter reading system and that we would use the MRES System for our Load control. Evans stated that our existing system is on its last leg and will be obsolete soon.

We would pay MRES \$10,000.00, split over four years, and that it should pay for itself over time.

Motion was made by Wiese, second by Uselman to authorize the signing of this Load Control Contract as presented.

Upon voting, Mayor Deiss declared the motion carried. All members voting aye.

MnDOT – LIMITED USE PERMIT FOR MUNICIPAL IDENTIFICATION ENTRANCE SIGN RESOLUTION

Brad Swenson reviewed with the council a limited use permit that MnDOT District 3 out of Detroit Lakes is proposing that we enter into with them for the city entrance sign on the west end of Hwy 10. This is for just one entrance sign. Currently we do not have any agreement with MnDOT. The sign has been in place for 10 years. This new agreement is for 10 years with the right to extend that time length. Swenson recommended that we sign this agreement and get that in place.

Motion by Niles, second by Uselman to adopt Resolution 03-02-16 authorizing the signing of the MnDOT Limited Use Permit for Municipal Identification Entrance Sign.

Upon voting, Mayor Deiss declared the resolution adopted. All members voting aye.

EMPLOYEE STEP INCREASES – DOUG LOWERS & WELDON CRIDER

Brad Swenson reported on Doug Lowers step increase in the absence of Dan Kovar, stating that Doug Lowers is up for a step increase to go from a Step 2 to a Step 3 of the Street Maintenance Position schedule and that would be effective 4-1-2016. Brad Swenson stated that Dan Kovar has completed the evaluation of Lowers and is recommending the step increase.

Motion by Kempf, second by Niles to approve the step increase for Doug Lowers as recommended.

Upon voting, Mayor Deiss declared the motion carried. All member voting aye.

Dave Evans reported on Weldon Crider step increase, stating Weldon Crider is due to go from Step 5 to Step 6 of the Journeyman Lineman position, also to be effective on 4-1-16. Dave Evans has completed the evaluation of Weldon Crider and is recommending the step increase.

Motion by Wiese, second by Niles to approve the step increase for Weldon Crider as recommended.

Upon voting, Mayor Deiss declared the motion carried. All members voting aye.

MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC – 6:30 p.m.

No one present.

ELECTRIC PLANT OFFICE – RFP FOR ARCHITECT/CONSULTANT

Brad Swenson reported that he and Dave Evans had been working with the appraisal company for the appraisal of the electric office on the corner of Hwy. 10/71. Swenson stated that he thought we had time to work on our plans for moving forward with our building but the appraiser stated that they would probably not be able to complete the appraisal until we were able to tell them what our plans were for relocation. Swenson stated that he feels there is probably some money to be had in the appraisal process for relocation costs if we have a plan in place.

Swenson stated that he would like to work on an RFP for an architect/consultant to be hired to help us do a site selection study, a needs study as far as sizing of the building and what will be in the building, and then do preliminary design and cost estimating, either for a new building on a new lot or for an existing building in town to be remodeled.

Swenson stated that his thought would be to do this RFP and get that out and come back to the council, possibly in April, with a recommendation as to who should be hired and then we can get moving forward with this process. Swenson stated that we should have a building completed and be ready to move in by late 2017.

Council thought that this was a good plan and told Swenson and Evans to go ahead and get this moving.

**PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEE – SHELDON BRAITH RESIGNATION –
AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE**

Brad Swenson reviewed with the council a letter of resignation from longtime city employee Sheldon Braith. He has been with the city 43 years as our Heavy Equipment Operator/Maintenance Worker. His intention is to retire from this position effective April 29, 2016.

Swenson asked if we can have authorization to advertise for this position.

Motion by Uselman, second by Kempf to accept Sheldon's resignation with regrets and gratitude and to also give Swenson and Kovar authorization to advertise for the replacement.

Upon voting, Mayor Deiss declared the motion carried. All members voting aye.

APRIL 12, 2016 COUNCIL MEETING – RESCHEDULE?

Brad Swenson stated that he would be on vacation the week of April 12th, and wanted to know if the Council was interested in rescheduling that council meeting or if they wanted to leave it as is and Lloyd Lanz could fill in for Brad Swenson. The Council decided that they would prefer to move the council meeting and decided on Tuesday, April 19th as the April date for the Regular Council Meeting.

Motion by Kempf, second by Niles to reschedule that meeting as stated.

PROCLAMATION NATIONAL SERVICE RECOGNITION DAY

Mayor George Deiss reviewed with the council a resolution for a Proclamation for National Service Recognition Day and asked the council to authorize his signature on that resolution.

Motion was made by Niles, second by Uselman to adopt Resolution 03-03-16 as a Proclamation for National Service Recognition Day.

Upon voting, Mayor Deiss declared the resolution adopted. All members voting aye.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

STREET, SEWER & PARKS DEPARTMENTS

No report due to Dan Kovar not being attendance.

ELECTRIC & WATER DEPARTMENTS

Dave Evans reported that there have been several high bill complaints due to extra days of reading on the bills. Stated that a lot of customers are complaining and a lot of time is being spent on explaining what happened. Swenson stated that there were several things that happened, the cold weather hit and rate increase took effect. Swenson also commented that the office staff has been fielding a lot of calls and visits by customers to ask why the bills were so high and he wanted to express his appreciation for their efforts and hopefully it won't happen again as it has not been a fun process.

LIQUOR STORE

Tim Booth reported that with the extra day in February this year his numbers are up \$5,000.00 over last year. Wine sales and other specialty items sales are good.

WDA/PLANNING & ZONING/FIRE DEPARTMENT

Dean Uselman commented that he appreciated Mr. Hoisington's comments about the downtown historic study but does state the city should be cautious about jumping into this, as when we did the Small Cities Grant that this caused a lot of problems for properties that had this historic designation. That before we designate someone's property as historic property that we should make owners aware of what they are getting into and make sure that everyone understands what is happening.

Uselman stated that there was a person present at the meeting earlier, that person has applied to remove a sidewalk on King Avenue SW where the old basement church is and that this item would be on a future agenda. Uselman stated that he has had several inquiries for permits for fences, decks & etc.

Uselman stated that the WDA will be opening bids on the K-Line project at their meeting this Thursday, March 10th, and hopefully that turns out good. He stated that he is working with BNSF on the land purchase in conjunction with this project and is waiting to close that out.

Uselman stated that the new pumper truck is having some mechanical problems that they are working on. Uselman also stated that he is working with other departments on mental health issues. Uselman does expect a busy spring fire season, as dry as it has been.

Uselman also stated that there was a TIF application turned in and that will be upcoming and that the Fire Department is working on an exercise program and that is going well.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police Chief Naomi Plautz reported that the Special Vehicle Ordinance applications are ready for people to start getting permits and that the applications may be picked up at the Police Dept. or the City Office. She commented that for the recreational use policy of UTV's in city limits that they are waiting for feedback from city residents before the committee meets again.

WELLNESS CENTER MANAGER

Eric Robb reported that this Thursday MN Valley will be renting the gym for their vendor show and if you would like to see the facility in use this would be a good time. He stated that next year is MN Valley's 25th Anniversary and should be a really big event. Eric Robb stated the he is working with Brad Swenson and the architect on ways to resolve the flooring issue in the locker rooms. Dean Kallevig, maintenance at the Wellness Center, has stated that he has installed signage near the doors about video surveillance. This seems to be a real problem with people sneaking in and not paying. The donor sign is up and looks nice. There is one error that has been found and hopefully not any more.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Brad Swenson commented on the donor sign at the Wellness Center and how nice it looks, and thanking his staff on all the work on proofreading, calling people and getting the work done. He also expressed thanks to others, Don Niles and Jeff Brown, for their hard work and it's nice to have it completed.

Brad Swenson reported that the group of department heads has been working on our City Code Ordinance Review. That they have met 3 times and have another meeting coming up and we are getting close to sending our comments to the codifier.

Brad Swenson reiterated what Dave Evans explained of the billing issue. Brad Swenson also wanted to say ditto to what Dean Uselman stated on the Historic Designation. It is nice to have buildings called historic but it does create problems when you want to improve these building.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Gillette Kempf asked Chief Plautz if she is starting on the Nuisance list and stated that the Merickel house may need to be placed on that list.

Deb Wiese had nothing to report but did thank the departments for their reports.

Don Niles stated that he will be attending a Blandin Foundation seminar for broadband tomorrow and is still working on a broadband deployment with the Governor's task force. Don Niles also thanked all the staff for the work on the donor wall.

Bruce Uselman stated that it's nice to see the milder weather and that he has seen trees being trimmed and tables made by the city crews and other work getting done because of the lack of snow.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor George Deiss commented on LGA legislation and that 3 big cities are looking to have state aid eliminated. Mayor Deiss said to watch this and talk to legislators if you get a chance. Mayor Deiss stated that he attended the January Mayor's breakfast and talked about the Harman Killebrew Hospice event for the Twins game and is working with the CVB to sponsor a charter bus for \$6,500.00 dollars and possibly Mason Brother's would split this cost.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Uselman, second by Wiese to adjourn at 6:35 p.m.

Bradley A. Swenson
City Administrator

George Deiss
Mayor