

Holdingford City Council Minutes
And Public Hearing for North High Court Street Improvements
Monday, June 10th, 2024

Councilmembers in attendance: Eric Berscheid, Seth Young, Andy Higgins, and Tim Winter.

Others in attendance: Nicky Lahr, Gordy Sjaaheim, and Herman Lansing, Dave Blommel, Keith Hommerding, Alan Walz, Steve Horvath, Walker and Crystal Nienaber, Robyn Rieland, Lisa and Jeff Stoermann, Jeremiah Skudlarek, Kelly and Raeanna Kobernusz, Amy Opatz.

Eric opened the public hearing for North High Court Improvements at 7:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Dave Blommel gave a presentation of the anticipated improvements. He explained that the pavement is in poor condition, and is no longer repairable. He is recommending full removal of existing surface, and repave and add new curb and gutter. He explained that the total cost for the homeowners would be approximately \$26,565, and the city's share would be \$84,800, with a total project cost projected at \$111,365. Jeff Stoermann asked about the storm and Gutter, and if there would be continuous drainage on the street. Dave said that there was a curb and gutter outlet at the top of the hill but it was not his intention to reinstate it. Jeremiah Skudlarek shared that he and another resident had natural springs in their yards, and their only option is to run their sump pumps into the street causing hazardous ice in the winter and algae in the summer. After further discussion it was decided that Dave would draft a new plan including drain tiles to help alleviate this issue. He said there will be an increased cost due to this. Kelly Kobernusz stated that he was seeing that the division of cost was based on the property owner's frontage, however all residents on North High Court used the cul-de-sac equally. He asked for the option of dividing the cost between all owners equally. The council agreed that it would be a fair equitable assessment as a precedence has not yet been set for cul-de-sacs. Kelly also brought forward an issue of the trail that runs from the cul-de-sac to the pedestrian trail was never re-seeded, so there's gravel instead of grass alongside it. The project was supposed to be completed with the grass. He also stated that he hopes the front yards are returned to good condition at the completion of this project. Jayme made a motion to close the public hearing and open the City Council meeting, with Andy seconding it. Motion passed with all in favor.

Jayme made a motion to approve the consent agenda with Tim seconding it. Motion passed with all in favor. Robyn Rieland from Big Brothers is requesting the rental of the park shelter on July 9th from 5:30-7 p.m. could be waived as they are a nonprofit with little funds. Tim made a motion to waive the rental fees. Andy seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

The Fire Department report was submitted by Keith Hommerding. He reported that Samantha Slivnick has now completed gambling manager classes, and passed the license exam, so she will be taking over that position. The Fire Relief gun raffle profited over \$6000 dollars. They have responded to 68 calls this year. Keith recommended hiring an individual that was interviewed. Tim made a motion to hire Zack Thomas as a probationary Fire Fighter. Andy seconded the motion, and it passed with all in favor. Keith also stated that we are close to finding out about the FEMA grant that was applied for to replace turnout gear. The grant writer might need more information. He also reported that they received 3 quotes for the purchase of a new tanker truck. Jayme made a motion to purchase a chassis from Heiman Fire for \$330,000 pending financing. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Minutes are not official until approved by the City Council and signed by the Clerk.

Walker and Crystal Nienaber were present to discuss a letter that they received in regard to ordinance violations involving items in their yard. Walker asked for a little extra time to clean everything up due to his work schedule. Eric stated that they have noticed progress and as long as it continues to improve no further action will be taken. Walker also mentioned that they are planning to put up a privacy fence.

Amy Opatz gave the HMLS report. She stated that they are -\$2800 however it was expected with 3 payrolls this month and liability and Dram Shop insurance being paid this month. The patio is now set up with tables, and cornhole boards will be coming soon. Amy was able to rent out the bingo tables and chairs for a graduation party and will try to do that on a more regular basis for extra income. The new menus are completed and new items added. Food sales have been increasing. Holdingford Daze prep is nearly complete with temporary servers hired and beverages ordered. She is partnering with Budweiser who will bring in rolling coolers and a bar with tents. An extension cord will be used for lights from the front of the building. Amy also mentioned that she has been gathering data on profitability for Sundays and Mondays, and also between the 11:00 and 1:00 hour on weekdays. She stated that she is considering closing on Mondays during the summer, or possibly opening at noon instead of 11:00 on weekdays. No decisions were made on closures at this time.

The maintenance report was read by Steve. Mixer #2 was recently replaced, and mixer #3 is acting up and will need replacement in the near future as well. Pump #1 was finally repaired and reinstalled by TriState at the lift station. The rooftop A/C units were serviced at City Hall. He said that the Wobegon lift station pump failed and had to be pumped out. He replaced the serpentine belt and battery on the old maintenance truck. They jetted out underground lines at the waste water plant to stop backups. Steve noticed that the City was going through a higher amount of water than usual which typically indicates a main break. A leak was found at the end of the line by the Holding Township building. Water was shut off and Larson's was called to do the repair. Steve put cameras up at the compost sight and has found individuals illegally dumping. Council members recommended a \$500 fine should be filed with Stearns County Sheriff. Steve submitted a quote for a replacement dump box for the plow truck. He was advised to get more quotes. He also submitted a quote for repaving the City Hall parking lot and the Parking lot at Veteran's park. The council agreed that City Hall is a higher priority. They recommended more quotes for this as well. Eric asked Steve to begin removing the light posts and the concrete bump out in preparation for this project and to help save money on the project. They approved the rental of a jackhammer attachment for the skid steer. Eric said that he would also speak with Scepaniaks in regard to repairs to the retaining wall on the property boarder. Steve mentioned that he will have the street sweeper out soon and will begin street crack filling. Steve presented Dan Lahr's annual performance review. Seth made a motion to approve the review and move from step I4 to I5. Tim seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

Nicky gave the Clerk's report. She said the liquor licenses were processed and ready for approval. A QR code is now posted at the campgrounds for credit card payments. This is well received and saving time for city employees. Due to vacations and Deputy Clerk resignation, City Hall will be closed June 14th-19th, July 4th and 5th, and July 19th-24th. The solar grant application was not completed in time for the spring application, but we will submit it this fall. Starting to prep for the 2023 audit, and 2025 budgeting. Election training for the Clerk and judges are coming up in June and July. 12 Letters have been sent out for ordinance violations. Most have made an effort to rectify the issues. Eric made a motion to send a final letter to 220 Cedar Street, stating that if the property is not cleaned by the end of the month, the City will have it cleaned, and send a bill for the costs. Jayme seconded the motion. No discussion, motion passed with all in favor. Eric made a motion to send the same letter to 841 4th Street. Jayme seconded the motion. It passed with all in favor. Nicky also mentioned that Father Gregory came in to discuss the plan with the 2 churches, specifically St. Hedwigs as it is

Minutes are not official until approved by the City Council and signed by the Clerk.

in ill repair. Father had mentioned that they are working on approval to build a new church and should have an answer in December. He stated that the plan for what to do with the remaining churches would also be announced at that time. Eric stated that he did not feel that St. Hedwigs is safe for public use, with Jayme in agreement, and would like to have a State Fire Marshal make that determination. Nicky will draft a letter for council review to send to All Saints.

Unfinished/Old business:

Jayme made a motion to approve the 5-year land lease with Jeremy Wentland. Tim seconded the motion. Passed with all in favor.

Seth made a motion to hire Town Web as the City's web host effective January 1st. Andy seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

New Business:

Jayme made a motion to move forward with the North High Court project. Andy seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

Legislature passed a clarification excluding paid on-call firefighters from the ESST ruling.

Jayme made a motion to accept the resignation from Kelly Abfalter's Deputy Clerk-Treasurer position, and to have the Municipal liquor Store manager fill in at City Hall on a PT basis, and also to move Eric Kohorst into a FT with benefits position at the Muni. Tim seconded the motion. Passed with all in favor. The position change will start immediately. Jayme made a motion to have Kelly train on an as-needed basis at the rate of \$25.99 per hour. Andy seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor. Jayme asked Amy to submit a training plan for Eric, and also a training plan from Nicky to train Amy.

Nicky will respond to the State about the Pay Equity study, and let them know that the Deputy Clerk resigned and we will not be filling it at this time.

Tim made a motion to approve Holdingford Municipal Liquor Store, Always 5 O'clock LLC, Art in Motion on the Lake Wobegon Trail LLC, and American Legion 211 Liquor Licenses. Andy seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. Seth made a motion to approve the temporary liquor license for Holdingford Youth Wrestling for Holdingford Daze. Andy seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Looking forward: City Hall will be closed on June 14th-19th, July 4th- 5th, and July 19th – 24th.

Borgmann's lawn waste pickup is on the First Friday of each Month, with the next one on July 5th. Holdingford Daze is on July 12th-13th.

Jayme made a motion to adjourn at 8:47 p.m. and Andy seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Signed:

Nicky Lahr



City Clerk-Treasurer, Holdingford