

Holdingford City Council Minutes

Monday, December 9th, 2024

Council Members in attendance: Eric Berscheid, Jayme Opatz, Seth Young, Tim Winter.

Others in attendance: Nicky Lahr, Keith Hommerding, Travis Harlander, Amy Opatz, Herman Lensing, Gordy Sjaaheim, Greg Breth, Eric Kohorst, Alicia Nierenhausen, Melvin Breth.

Eric opened the meeting at 7:00 and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Eric opened the public hearing at 7:01 for adding a Cannabis Ordinance. He explained that if the city did not pass its own ordinance, then they would fall under the County's guidelines. There were no public comments, and the hearing was closed at 7:02.

Eric opened the public hearing for the Municipal Liquor Store. Eric explained that the Muni operated at a loss 2 of the last 3 years, therefore a public hearing must be held per MN statute. There were no public comments, and the hearing was closed at 7:03.

Eric opened the public hearing for Truth in Taxation at 7:03. He explained that the Council had set the preliminary levy for 2025 at \$270,000, and they cannot set the final levy any higher than that amount but they could reduce it. There were no public comments and the hearing was closed at 7:04.

Eric opened the regular meeting at 7:04. Jayme made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Tim seconded it and it passed with all in favor.

Keith gave a fire department report. He stated that they are at 144 calls for the year. He also stated that the annual fire department payroll was below budget. Jayme made a motion to approve the 2024 payroll. Seth seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Amy gave the Muni report. She stated that there will be some price increases coming soon to keep up with vendor prices. There are 2 bands scheduled for December 13th, and December 31st. She also offered a part time fill in bartender position to Jordan Hagburg. Tim made a motion to hire Jordan Hagburg. Jayme seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. Amy stated that the annual inventory will take place on January first, however the auditors will not be present this year. Amy asked Jayme and Seth if they would be available again to assist with the counts, and they both said they would be available at 9:00 a.m.

Steve Horvath had his annual review. Seth made a motion to approve his step increase from K3 to K4. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

The Land Use Committee had one land use permit for a new garage build at 700 Rivercrest Road. Seth made a motion to approve permit 29-24-12-3. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Nicky gave the Clerk's report. She stated that the City's new website is now up and running. Additional features such as online campground and facility rentals will be coming soon. Also, the email address will be switching to .GOV soon. Nicky said that the new IT support, Shift Technologies, was in place and solved many ongoing issues, such as moving Banyon to the server, getting Amy's computer to run without crashing, and making it possible to send emails to yahoo accounts again. Nicky put up the Christmas decorations in City Hall and will be asking for volunteer help next year. She mentioned that thank you letters were received from the elementary school students and were put on the tree. She stated that the last TIF payment to Everything Signs was made, and tax abatement payments to Berkon and Wm. D. Scepaniak have been sent out.

As there was no opposition in the public hearing, Jayme made a motion to approve Ordinance 24-12-9-2 amending the City code pertaining to Cannabis and Hemp business. Tim seconded the motion and it passed

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with all in favor. Jayme also made a motion to approve Resolution 24-12-9-3 approving a summary publication of the new Ordinance as the full ordinance would be too large. Tim seconded that motion and it passed with all in favor.

Eric presented the new union contract that was negotiated, that included a 3-year term, with a 4% wage increase each of the 3 years, along with several other changes. Seth made a motion to approve the 2025-2027 AFSME local 65 Union contract. Jayme seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Jayme made a motion to decertify TIF district 4 effective December 31st. Eric recommended looking into spending funds instead of returning the \$87,541 to the Stearns County. Nicky said she would look into it and if it wasn't possible the check would be mailed out. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

The council members discussed setting the 2025 tax levy. Eric suggested keeping the levy at the same amount as 2023 and 2024, and instead raising the Sewer utility fees. Jayme made a motion to approve resolution 24-12-9-4 setting the 2025 tax levy at \$250,000. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Jayme made a motion to approve resolution 24-12-9-5 approving the 2025 budget with the levy changed to \$250,00 and the sewer fees raised. Seth seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. A budget summary will be published in the Star Tribune.

Tim made a motion to approve resolution 24-12-9-1 for the Knights of Columbus gambling permit. Seth seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Seth made a motion to approve a 2025 Non-Union employee COLA increase of 4%. Jayme seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Seth made a motion to approve resolution 24-12-9-6 approving the polling place for 2025. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Jayme made a motion to approve resolution 24-12-9-7 approving the 2025 fee schedule. The approved changes include an increase to the sewer utility charges, an increase to the community Center rental fees, the addition of a fee for non-sufficient funds re-deposited check, a fee of \$250 for calling a special meeting, and the increase of the late fee per month for outstanding utility payments. Seth seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Seth made a motion to approve resolution 24-12-9-8 approving the 2025 council meeting schedule. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Jayme made a motion to approve adding Travis Harlander to the Versa Bank accounts effective January 13th, 2025. Seth seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. Eric will be removed from the account at this time as well.

Looking forward, the next Council meeting will be on January 13th at 7:00 p.m. City Hall will be closed December 24th-January 1st. Voicemail, email and utility drop box will be checked periodically during that time.

Jayme made a motion to adjourn at 7:28 p.m. and Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Signed:

Nicky Lahr *Nicky Lahr*

City Clerk-Treasurer, Holdingford

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