

City of Vernon Center
3/7/2024
Regular Council Meeting

Council Present: Mayor Dana Ziegler, Wendy Bennett, Emily Edwards Adam Finney, and Lisa Peterson.
Staff Present: Clerk Kara Hansen, Public Works Supervisor Mark Willette
Others Present: Calvin Baarts, Engineer Chris Knutson

Mayor Ziegler opened the regular council meeting at 6:00 PM

Approve Agenda

Under Public Works, item d). was added and it was to be called, "More Items." Under Infrastructure Project, item e). was added, and it was to be called, "Funding for Sewer Lateral Replacement."
Councilor Peterson made a motion to approve the agenda with the updates. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

Councilor Bennett asked if the error found in the Cap Funds of last month's consent agenda had been found and corrected. Clerk Hansen said it was a training error, and she and Clerk Roelofs went over it and corrected it. Councilor Peterson said she looked over this month's Cap Funds and saw it was corrected. Mayor Ziegler asked Clerk Hansen to change the FD Hours to "Total Hours for 2024."
The consent agenda included the 1/8/2024 & 2/6/2024 meeting minutes, Check Reconciliations, January Cash Balance Investment Report, Checks for Month showing in \$104,052.86 deposits and \$34,249.31 in checks, Savings and Loan Balance, City Revenue Guideline, City Savings Balances, March & April calendar of events, BEC Call Log for February, VCFD February Report, and the FD hours for the months of January and February. The League of Minnesota Cities Workman's Comp Audit Adjustment, Resolution 2024-09 License Renewal for D-Bar, and Resolution 2024-10 Transfer Funds.
Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve the consent agenda. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

Additional Bills

a). Add'l Bills

Councilor Peterson asked if everything bought from USA Blue Book is for the Waste Water Treatment Plant. PW Supervisor Willette said it was for both the WWTP and the WTP. The reason it says WWTP is because that's what it says on the account. He said he and Clerk Hansen go over all purchases so they can be coded correctly in Banyon. Councilor Edwards asked about the two different charges for USA Blue Book. PW Supervisor Willette said they were for two different invoices. Councilor Edwards asked about the two separate invoices for Minnesota Paving and Materials. PW Supervisor Willette said he needed a load brought in during January, and another load was brought in in February when the roads started softening up. Councilor Peterson asked if the gravel was for the project. PW Supervisor Willette said they are coded into street repair. Councilor Peterson asked if rescue van supplies were to replace supplies from rescue calls or if the supplies went out of date. Clerk Hansen said it was a combination of replacing out of date supplies and replacing supplies used.
Councilor Edwards made a motion to approve the additional bills. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

b). Fire Department Grass Rig

Mayor Ziegler said at the last joint township meeting with the Vernon Center Fire Department, Chief Jesse Kietzer said the department was looking to purchase a grass rig to replace the one they have. The townships and the city agreed to pay the first \$100,000.00 from the Fire Department City Funds, but if the new rig costs more than \$100,000.00 the rest of the funds would come out of the Fire

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Department/Relief Assn Funds.

Mayor Ziegler made a motion to support the purchase of a grass rig with the two townships and the city splitting the cost of \$100,000 and the Fire Department pays the rest. 2nd by Councilor Peterson. All approved. Motion carried. Councilor Finney Abstained.

Public Comment

None

Infrastructure Project

a). Holtmeier Schedule

Engineer Knutson said Engineer Doug Maeder has been assigned to the 2024 portion of the project as the RPR. He will be present at the Pre-Construction Meeting on 3/13/2024.

Katelyn Kanuit from PFA contacted Engineer Knutson and asked for invoices. He will be reviewing those and sending them to her.

Matt Schneider of Holtmeier is planning on starting construction on March 25th with the intent of moving equipment in. Mayor Ziegler said the schedule they have said Holtmeier wasn't going to start construction until April 8th. Engineer Knutson said it was last year's schedule, and Holtmeier wants to take advantage of the weather. PW Supervisor Willette said work on Oak St N cannot be started until after April 7th as the fire department has their annual pancake feed on April 7th. Mayor Ziegler said we need at least 2 weeks of notice so we can get the fire trucks moved to the new building. This will be cleared up at the pre-construction meeting on March 13, 2024.

Council Peterson asked when Main St E was scheduled to be torn up. Engineer Knutson said he suspected late April.

Engineer Knutson said he was aware there was gravel and construction in the sewer main at the WWTP. Engineer Knutson said the contractor cleaned and televised the main sewer lines last year on their own costs. This work was not in the contract. He can request the sewer mains be cleaned and televised again, and find out what the cost for that would be. PW Supervisor Willette said Holtmeier only televised the mains, they did not televise the right-of-ways. PW Supervisor Willette said Andy from Holtmeier said the gravel and debris in the sewer mains likely came from the lateral services, and the only lateral services that have green pipes are project related. Other laterals completed before the project was all white pipe. Engineer Knutson asked the council if he should get quotes about cleaning and televising the sewer mains and systems? He also asked if he could inquire to make televising and cleaning the whole city sewer after completion of the project as a change order. Any post inspection services are not part of the project. Mayor Ziegler told Engineer Knutson he can get the cost for that, and the council will decide what to do from there, and emphasized he didn't want to submit something that would tie up the bonding at PFA. PW Supervisor Willette asked if it would be up to him to do the laterals as part of the cleanup. Engineer Knutson said any post inspection of services are not part of the contract. The contractor will pressure test everything, and they have not done that yet. Mayor Ziegler asked if the contractor will wait until all the work is done to pressure test. Engineer Knutson said he didn't know why some pressure testing was not done last year, but it was probably due to the accessibility of the manholes.

Engineer Knutson said there was a bid item for D-Bar roof drains. The Vernon Center Lumberyard also requested roof drains. Councilor Peterson asked if these were in the right-of-way. Engineer Knutson said the building itself is not in the right-of-way. Councilor Peterson asked if this would be a change order. Engineer Knutson said it would be additional work.

Mayor Ziegler made a motion to install the roof drains at D-Bar and Vernon Center Lumber. 2nd by Councilor Peterson. All approved. Motion carried.

Engineer Knutson reviewed what Railroad St needed to have drain tile installed on both sides, from County Road 10 to Main St E. The city would need to get permanent easements in order for the work to be done under Holtmeier's current contract. Mayor Ziegler asked if the city could do it themselves. Engineer Knutson said the city could. PW Supervisor Willette said approximately 1100 feet of drain tile needs to be installed on Railroad St, plus the cross over. Mayor Ziegler asked Engineer Knutson when the city had to decide on it. Engineer Knutson said Holtmeier would need to know soon if they needed to add it on. Mayor Ziegler directed Engineer Knutson to get a bid from Holtmeier.

Engineer Knutson said Holtmeier was working on the final paperwork for the DEED Project so Holtmeier could receive the final check for it. Mayor Ziegler said this is an audit issue for the city.

b). Debris in Sewer Mains

Mayor Ziegler asked about the debris in the sewer mains. Some looks like fresh gravel and sand. He asked if Holtmeier is saying they didn't clean the pipes before they put them in, or if they're saying there is there a leak. Engineer Knutson said it is most likely due to shifting of the manholes, as the manholes are currently buried where project work is being done. PW Supervisor Willette said he doesn't know where the debris came from as he discovered it after backflushing. Mayor Ziegler asked where the green tile and clay tile is coming from. Engineer Knutson said a pressure test will show us where the material is going into the service lines or if the city has a leak. Mayor Ziegler said PW Supervisor Willette's inspection of the structures at the WWTP likely prevented resident's basements from backing up with sewer water. If it would have happened it would have been Holtmeier's responsibility. Engineer Knutson agreed. Mayor Ziegler said he doesn't like that Holtmeier is asking for extra money to make sure they are doing an adequate job of cleaning their pipes and not filling them up with dirt. Holtmeier is the one who needs to prove that they are giving us a good product, and doing a good job putting it in. Mayor Ziegler said he wants it brought up in the pre-construction meeting that the city should not have to pay extra money to ensure Holtmeier is doing a good job. PW Supervisor Willette asked why Andy from Holtmeier founds leaves in the manholes when he came down to inspect them. Mayor Ziegler said this is something that needs to be talked about at the pre-construction meeting. He wants assurances from Holtmeier that they are going to do better work. PW Supervisor Willette said he will hold S.E.H. at full responsibility to make sure Holtmeier is doing their job.

Mayor Ziegler asked what the white lines on the sidewalks were for. Engineer Knutson said they are removal limits. Mayor Ziegler asked if Engineer Knutson inspected them, he said no. Mayor Ziegler said he would like Engineer Knutson to drive around and look at them as the current removal limits are leaving five to six inches of old concrete. Engineer Knutson said the plans were explicit that all concrete on the sidewalks was to be removed and replaced. Mayor Ziegler asked if all the sidewalks on Main St were going to be removed to the building. Engineer Knutson said yes, save for the post office steps and the ramp. Mayor Ziegler said there is a line on the next building up where they are leaving two feet of old concrete. He said if it's going to be an extra cost to the city, he would like it brought to the council's attention as the city does not want old concrete left if removing it will be an extra cost. Mayor Ziegler asked Engineer Knutson to look at where the sidewalks were marked, and then send an email saying this is not where the sidewalk is going to be cut. Engineer Knutson said the lines are likely where an easement would be needed. Mayor Ziegler said if the city needs to help get easements from the business owners, the council can do that.

Mayor Ziegler said he wants to talk about the water on the roads and the sump pumps running from Main St E and East St, down to the Lutheran Church at the pre-construction meeting. A road should not be put down until they find out the reason it is wet, and it should be pressure tested before the road is

put in.

c). Resolution 2024-11 PFA Bonding

Councilor Finney made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-11 PFA Bonding. 2nd by Councilor Edwards. All approved. Motion carried.

d). Loan Due June 1st

Councilor Peterson said this is for the loan they took out to pay the million dollars of engineers. The final payment is due June 1st for \$875,00.00. The council can submit the engineering costs and this will give us the funds to pay this loan. This is not part of the RD funding.

e). City Loan Property Sewer Laterals

Mayor Ziegler asked if they had money set aside for it. Councilor Peterson said, as of January, there was \$96,000.00 in the Sewer Savings I&I. Mayor Ziegler asked where the spreadsheet was for those who asked the city to have them done. Clerk Hansen said Clerk Roelofs knows. Mayor Ziegler asked Clerk Hansen to get that together for the April meeting, and show where the money has gone.

Public Works

a). PW Supervisor Notes

PW Supervisor Willette said Peterson Motor Grader is getting prices to do the drain tile on the west side of Railroad. Mayor Ziegler told PW Supervisor Willette to talk to Dennis Peterson about a price to do all of Railroad St and compare the price against Holtmeier's bid.

PW Supervisor Willette said the water meter at 102 West St N has been installed correctly, and the sewer has been capped on the inside of the building right next to the foundation. The owner contacted S.E.H about installing the sump pump pipe properly, and put it where the S.E.H wants it. The sump pump will be hooked up when the project goes down Poplar St.

PW Supervisor Willette said when they start televising the sewer laterals after the project is done from the cleanouts to the main in both directions, does the council want to send a form out to all residents. Mayor Ziegler said everyone should be documented, and have the homeowners sign off on it. PW Supervisor Willette will need USB drives for each street that is televised.

Councilor Peterson asked PW Supervisor Willette to explain the phosphorus calculation with the ponds. She asked if MPCA's calculations meant our phosphorus is lower than his. PW Supervisor Willette said he contacted the phosphorus department at the MPCA, and they verified the number he used was valid. Councilor Peterson asked if we were making our yearly phosphorus goals, and PW Supervisor Willette said we were.

Mayor Ziegler said he and PW Supervisor Willette had a meeting with MPCA over our permit, and the city will receive a couple of Notice of Violations because the waste water plant was supposed to be finished in a certain time, but when the bonding bill fell through it pushed the project back and now the times they set for the permit are incorrect. Mayor Ziegler said just because the city is getting a couple Notice of Violations doesn't mean that the city will be fined. PW Supervisor Willette said he's wondering if the gravel on the roads is affecting his phosphorus levels and PH at the WWTP.

City Cleanup Days

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve June 22nd for LJP city clean-up day. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

PFA Compliance Packet

Councilor Peterson asked if this was something Clerk Hansen prepared to be submitted. Clerk Hansen

said it is a document that PFA sends her, and she has to answer a questionnaire. The council should look over both and make a motion to submit it.

Councilor Finney made a motion to approve the PFA Compliance Packet. 2nd by Councilor Peterson. All approved. Motion carried.

Fire Truck Storage Lease

Clerk Hansen said Todd Schwarz already looked this over and approved it.

Councilor Bennett made a motion to approve the lease agreement with Todd Schwarz for the storage of the fire trucks. 2nd by Councilor Peterson. All approved. Motion carried.

Miscellaneous

a). MPCA Phosphorus Free Fertilizer Poster

Clerk Hansen said this was something Mayor Ziegler asked her to put together.

b). Zoning Violation

Clerk Hansen said the zoning permit was approved on the contingency that the dirt pile was removed, and to date it has not been removed.

c). Ordinance Violation

Clerk Hansen was directed to contact Elijah Blakesley with Blue Earth County Sheriff to handle the matter.

d). Request for Information

Clerk Hansen said she received an email from someone who was requesting information on two properties in town. She was directed by Councilor Peterson to respond to the message. Mayor Ziegler directed Clerk Hansen to reach out to the attorney for advice.

e). Invoice for September Fire

Clerk Hansen said she reached out to the insurance company who told her they didn't handle payouts. They gave her the claim number and directed her to contact Progressive. She said she called and emailed several people, but she was bounced around departments and couldn't get through to someone who would help her. Mayor Ziegler instructed Clerk Hansen to send an invoice to Progressive Insurance and keep following up.

f). Point-of-Sale 203 Park Ave N

Councilor Peterson asked about an update on the Point-of-Sale documents for 203 Park Ave N. Clerk Hansen said she received the Point-of-Sale water form, but not the sewer form. Councilor Peterson said it is the current homeowner's responsibility to provide them the Point-of-Sale Sewer form.

Next Meeting Scheduled for 4/2/2024

Adjourn

Councilor Peterson made a motion to adjourn. 2nd by Councilor Finney. All approved. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM.