

MINUTES OF THE ALDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING – February 12, 2025

The regular meeting of the Alden City Council was called to order at 6:03 pm. Roll call was read. Members present were Mr. Reindal, Mr. Wichmann, Ms. Pederson, and Mayor Reyerson. Members absent: Ms. VanEngelenburg. City staff present were City Clerk-Treasurer Knutson, Chief of Police Strom, and Fire Chief Thunstedt. Superintendent Riedl and Maintenance worker Burris joined the meeting a little later. Others present were Jeremy Waters from Thompson Sanitation and Sarah Nelson from Intego Insurance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Reindal to approve the minutes of January 8, 2025, regular council meeting as presented. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Reindal to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Carried unanimously.

There was some discussion about the hours report. Alex will be paid out for his comp time over 40 hours, and the new accrual system is not reflected in the hours report at this time. We need the assistance of the accounting software company to get that accrual working in the system, and they have not been able to schedule that yet. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Reindal to approve the Hours report as presented. Carried unanimously.

Fire Chief Thunstedt reported that they had 2 vehicle fire calls, 1 mutual aid grass fire call, 1 mutual aid structure fire call and 2 medical calls in the month of January 2025. The county meeting was held in Emmons. There is a new incident reporting system that is out on a trial basis for a couple of departments in the state, and they hope to roll it out to everyone by January 2026. Received donation from Freeborn Mower Operation Round up of \$2500 for water movement equipment, and a donation of \$10,000 from the Taylor Family Farms Foundation for the purchase of a LUCAS CPR device. Thank you to both of these organizations. There is a proposed change to the Alden Fire Department SOPs under article 9 for new members. It currently states, "All members of the department shall complete a fire training class within 3 years of the date of membership". The proposed change would add "and/or EMR class". Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to adopt the proposed change. Carried unanimously. A new member has applied to the department starting as a First Responder. Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to approve Kaden Erkkila as a new member to the department. Carried unanimously. Ron Redman submitted his resignation to the department at this month's meeting. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Reindal to approve Ron Redman's retirement. Carried unanimously. Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to approve the fire report as presented. Carried unanimously.

Public Works Superintendent Riedl reported that he and Alex have fixed 3 water main breaks and fixed the tractor snow blower. The MN Department of Health came and inspected the water plant, and all their concerns were addressed and remedied. They have been doing extra water testing to monitor levels per increased chemicals. Olson Excavating is ready for the demolition of the house at 308 W. Main, but they are waiting for a week of good weather to do the work due to the water that needs to be sprayed during the demolition. There was a discussion about health insurance for the employees. Ray has found individual plans for him and Alex, but Sarah Nelson will also check into policies for us. There was a water line repair at 235 W. Washington Ave. The city shut off the water so the homeowner could make repairs, and there was damage to the incoming line, so Olson excavating was called to dig. There has been an ongoing issue with the settings for the pump at the water plant. The control company came down to adjust that for us, and they will also set us up to be able to monitor the plant from cell phones. We added internet service at the water plant through WCTA to allow for that.

Ray submitted a request for days off this summer. Most of the days are Fridays and maybe half days on Thursday, so no approval is required. If the days off are on weekends that Ray is scheduled to work, he

and Alex will switch weekends to make sure the city is covered. The discussion was held regarding a second city vehicle, but no decision was made at this time. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Wichmann to approve the Public Works report. Carried unanimously.

Chief Strom reported that we received a \$1500 grant from the Alden Area Community Foundation, and one of the purchases was a telescoping ladder for responding to emergencies. There will be other purchases with this grant money as well. Thank you to the Alden Area Community Foundation for this grant. Chief Strom also applied for funding from Nexus and received a scholarship from the MN Chiefs of Police Association to pay for training costs. The South-Central Drug Investigation has reviewed and accepted all fees. All funding is being reviewed by the Federal Government. There were two articles in the Alden Advance about the Police Department. Reported to the MN POST Board regarding all policies being in compliance, there were no complaints filed regarding the department in 2024, and all training is up to date. Motion by Reindal and seconded by Pedersen to approve the Police Report. Carried unanimously.

A thank you card was presented to the Alden City Council and staff from the Monson family.

Jeremey Waters from Thompson Sanitation was in attendance to notify the city that they would like to change the day of residential garbage pickup from Monday to Tuesday, starting April 1st. The last day of Monday pick up will be March 24th, and the first day of Tuesday pick up will be April 1st. The city will be responsible for notifying the residential customers. Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to approve moving the garbage day from Monday to Tuesday. Carried unanimously.

Jerry and Heath will pick a date that will work to schedule a Joint Powers meeting with the school, and we will set that up.

The ordinance committee will meet Wednesday, February 19 at 4:00 to work on setting up the fees and preparing the ordinance for that. The city council did pass a Resolution in 2021 assessing fines for violations, so those should still be in place. We will review the ordinance numbers referenced to see if there is a need to pass an updated Resolution with the new Ordinance numbers from the MN Basic Code.

Pursuant to MN Statute §13D.04, Subd. 3 (a), The Alden City Council held a closed, special meeting on January 29th, to discuss the performance of the employees in the Public Works Department. It was determined that the employees will be given a 90 day improvement plan, and the mayor will discuss with them the areas needing improvement. Motion by Reindal and seconded by Pedersen to approve the findings of the closed special meeting. Carried unanimously.

Audit field work has been completed, and everything went smoothly. There are just a few remaining items that need to be provided to the auditors. It was recommended passing a Resolution retroactively authorizing moving funds from the Fire Debris Fund to the General, Fire, Water, Sewer, and Garbage funds. This accounts for the city charging administrative fees for the fire debris issues, which was deducted from the balances returned to the property owners. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Wichmann to approve Resolution 2025.03 Resolution transferring fund balances between funds. Carried Unanimously.

Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Reindal to approve Resolution 2025.04 Resolution reestablishing a police department. Carried unanimously.

Sarah Nelson presented the insurance policy renewal for the upcoming year. It did go up, but not as much as most. Part of the reason for the increase is the addition of the police department. We are still waiting for final information on the Work Comp policy, but she expects that policy to be a little higher as well.

The council discussed the proposed contract with Jerome for his continued help with the monthly water/wastewater reports and the infrastructure project if that happens. We have spoken with Bill

Guggisberg from the city of Freeborn to see if he is willing to help us with the reports, and he has stated he is willing to do that. The proposed rate will be \$50 per hour plus mileage. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Wichmann to not approve the proposed contract with Jerome Wuerflein. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Wichmann to accept Bill Guggisberg contract proposal for \$50 per hour plus mileage to do wastewater and water reports for a contract period of 3 years. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Reindal to approve the bills and Electronic Fund Transfers with the exception of the invoice for Work Comp Insurance. Bills presented for payment \$76,557.82, EFT's of \$10,070.34, and Payroll of \$24,364.73. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Reindal to adjourn at 7:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Knutson

Clerk-Treasurer