

MINUTES OF THE ALDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING – July 10, 2024

The public hearing for input regarding ordinance 2024-00 Ordinance Adopting Moratorium on Cannabis sales was called to order by Mayor Reyerson at 6:00pm. Roll call was read. Members present were Ms. VanEngelenburg, Mr. Reindal, Mr. Wichmann, Ms. Pederson, and Mayor Reyerson. City Staff present were Public Works Superintendent Wuerflein, Fire Chief Thunstedt, and City Clerk-Treasurer Knutson. Others present were Sterling Shatek from Clifton Larson Allen, Candis Hitchcock, County Commissioner Nicole Eckstrom, Troy Newman, and Mark Newman

Mayor Reyerson read a summary of the Ordinance, and County Commissioner further explained, that the reason for the moratorium is to allow the city time to gather information as the new cannabis law is rolled out, helping to determine how to regulate cannabis businesses in town. There was some discussion regarding the proposed Ordinance, and the mayor called for questions 3 times. Motion by VanEngelenburg to close the public hearing at 6:11pm.

The regular meeting of the Alden City Council was called to order at 6:11pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2024, meeting as presented. Carried.

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

Discussion was had on Alex's overtime. The comp hours over 40 banked through last month have been paid to him, but he has since accumulated more hours that still needs to be paid out with council approval. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to pay out the additional comp time hours. Carried. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Reindal to approve the hours report. Carried.

Fire Chief Thunstedt reported that there was 1 vehicle fire call, 1 haz-mat call, 2 assistance calls and 5 medical calls in the month of June. The county meeting was held in Twin Lakes where they were reminded of roster and training invoice deadlines, which Jim has taken care of. He also has applied for the MN DNR grant requesting money for SCBA bottles. Alden Fire Department held a medical training for First Responders, with the topic being pediatric cardiac arrest. Morin Lake Days went well from the department standpoint. They set up and removed parade numbers and no parking signs, 2 members helped with the fun run, and some members were present for the fireworks. The Water Wars on Sunday was a success with 11 teams participating. Thank you to Arnold's for the use of 2 tractors, and to Arcadian Bank for providing money for the trophies. The annual AFD Relief Association Pork Chop Feed will be held August 17. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to allow the alley behind the station to be closed from 8am to 9pm August 17th for the event. Carried. Chief Thunstedt is still working on a statement to submit to OSHA regarding the proposed changes to the fire brigade standard. Motion by Pederson and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve the Fire report as presented.

Public Works Superintendent Wuerflein reported that we are still having issues with storm water due to the rain event in June. We used up our summer storage and are currently discharging pond #2, which is working fine. Jerome had a conversation with Bolton & Menk about building a bypass lift station to help in events like this, and it could be part of the infrastructure project. Our current lift station did its job during the recent event, the water was just coming so fast it couldn't keep up. Jerome scheduled a survey to be done on 308 W. Main Street, and some scrap iron has been removed from that property. Discussion was had on condemning the Creamery building. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by VanEngelenburg to begin the process to condemn the Creamery building. Carried. Olson Excavating sent us bills for services

for 2023 & 2024 that had been previously unbilled. These bills are listed on the report of bills to be approved. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Reindal to approve the public works report. Carried.

County Commissioner Eckstrom reported that the county Emergency Manager Rich Hall has set the dates of the disaster to June 16 – July 4, 2024. We are to keep all receipts and documentation for damages to receive any reimbursements. There is a link on the Freeborn County website for individuals or businesses to claim losses due to the rain event. The Salvation Army and United Methodist Church in Albert Lea are locations that have cleanup kits if anyone needs them, and there are sandbags available at the fairgrounds.

Clerk Knutson checked into possible grants for removal of trees due to the Emerald Ash Borer. There is currently no funding available for that, but the DNR expects there to be some later in the year. The city also received a thank you from the Morin Lake Days Committee for a successful Morin Lake Days.

Candis Hitchcock was present to discuss memorials donated in honor of her brother Greg. After some discussion about benches and/or trees, it was decided that we could use the \$920 donated in memory of Greg to plant some trees around the lake or in NorthPark. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Wichmann for the city to purchase trees using the donated funds and plant them around the City of Alden. Carried.

Mark and Troy Newman were present to discuss the water and lift pump issues on Powers Ave that occurred during the rain event in June. Much discussion was had on the topic. The city is hoping the future infrastructure project will take care of the issue, but the water and sewer committee will do more research, including checking with Bolten & Menk, to see if there is anything that we can do in the meantime.

Sterling Shatek from Clifton, Larson & Allen presented the City's 2023 audit and the findings. Several questions were asked and answered during the presentation. It was determined that the city needs a written Deposit Policy, which Kim will work on. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Pedersen to approve the audit as presented. Carried.

Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to approve Ordinance 2024-00, An Interim Ordinance Authorizing a Study and Imposing a Moratorium on the Operation of Cannabis Businesses within the City of Alden. Carried.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve Resolution 2024-06 to Approve the Summary Publication of Ordinance 2024-00. Carried. The full ordinance will be on file for review in the City Office.

Motion by Pedersen and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve the Job Description of the Chief of Police for the City of Alden. Carried. Further discussion was had on the ad that will be run for the Police Officer position. A few adjustments to the ad were recommended. It will then be sent out to the council for review, and will be posted as soon as possible in the Alden Advance, The Albert Lea Tribune, and the Freeborn County Shopper, as well as on the P.O.S.T website.

A letter was received regarding a fence that encroaches on the alley behind Mason Ave. Much discussion was had on options to handle the situation. Jerome will measure the property to see where the fence would need to be moved to, and Jerry and Jerome will talk to the property owner about moving the fence.

Motion by Pederson and seconded by VanEngelenburg to purchase the Guardian 190G4 Mosquito sprayer as quoted from Herman Manufacturing. Carried.

An authorization to return the money held in escrow for the fire at 356 S. Broadway has been received. This will clear out the Fire Debris Escrow bank account, and the account will be closed.

Discussion was had regarding whether the fire department is interested in doing a practice burn at 308 W. Main Street. Jim will check with the appropriate people to see if we can get approval.

Discussion was had on our agreement for law enforcement with the City of Albert Lea. We have an agreement for calls for service, but we don't pay a fee unless they are called in. It is to the city's benefit to keep that contract in place after we hire a police officer as an additional resource for the calls.

Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to approve Resolution 2024.06 appointing Election Judges for the State Primary being held on August 13. Carried.

The bathrooms at NorthPark are closed due to vandalism. When people reserve the pavilion at NorthPark, we will make sure they are unlocked for that day and will then be locked up again afterwards.

Discussion was had regarding those customers that have 2 meters and receive separate bills, whether they should be charged the minimum rate on the second meter if there is no usage. These situations are mostly for those that have irrigation systems. It was decided that they will only be charged the minimum rate if there is usage on that meter.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Pedersen to approve the bills and Electronic Fund Transfers as presented. Bills presented for payment \$49,497.95, EFT's of \$10,035.64, and Payroll of \$12,081.80. Carried.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Reindal to adjourn at 8:48pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Knutson
Clerk-Treasurer