

MINUTES OF THE ALDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING – September 2022

The Alden City Council met in its regular session, September 20, 2022 at 6:00pm.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by Mayor Reyerson. Roll call was read by clerk Wacholz.

Council members present: Mayor Reyerson, Ms. VanEngelenburg, Mr. Reindal, Mr. Wichmann, Mr. Duncan. City Staff Present: Fire Chief Thunstedt, Public Works Director Jerome Wuerflein, and City Clerk Spencer Wacholz. Others present: Keeley Anderson, Mark and Amy Wallin, and Craig Poppenhagen.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion was made by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the minutes of the August Council meeting. Carried.

Motion was made by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to approve the Treasurer's report as presented. Carried.

Transfers for August was moving the money from the Checking account to Fire Department Savings account.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Duncan to approve the Hours Report. Carried.

Fire report was presented by Chief Thunstedt. The department had 2 medical calls and 1 service call in August. The county meeting was held in Hollandale, where plans for the 70th anniversary of the Freeborn County Fire Association were discussed. Reimbursement from the MN Board of Firefighter Training and Education should be received soon. County wide study will be done to address weak tower coverage. An emergency preparedness meeting was held at the school. An updated plan is being worked on. Freeborn Mower Operation roundup donation was applied for rescue tools. New handheld radios are in and waiting for some additional equipment to be set up. Received quotes from 3 vendors for new turnout gear. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to accept the quote from Clarey's Fire Equipment for \$71,346 for new gear plus boots and order the gear. Carried. Motion by Duncan and seconded by Wichmann to approve the Fire Report as presented. Carried.

Chief Thunstedt thanked the council and mayor for looking out for the safety of the Fire Department and making sure they have the equipment needed to do their job. Council thanked the Fire Department for all they do.

Public Works report was presented by Public Works Superintendent Wuerflein. Jerome talked to Bernie (Schultz) about removing 2 trees along Mason. Motion made by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to remove the 2 trees. Carried. Fuel Pump needs repair in the plow truck. It was reported that there will need to be some treatment of sludge in the ponds. 3 Picnic Tables around the lake and 1 at Northpark are not in good shape. Wuerflein will look into options for replacing them. Jerome would like to take a week of vacation in the next month or so, but no specific date was given. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve the Public Works report. Carried.

Discussion was had on the updated Chicken Ordinance. Keeley Anderson proposed that the ordinance be updated to include no more than 10 hens, no roosters, and not free range. Motion by Duncan and seconded by Reindal to change the Chicken Ordinance to maximum of 10 chickens. Carried. Motion made by Reindal and seconded by VanEngelenburg to set coop size to 2 square feet per bird indoors, and 10 square feet outdoors. Carried.

Mark Wallin addressed the council regarding 225 Powers Ave. He would like to see the house condemned due to the water damage that occurred previously. He is concerned that it will be sold on Sheriff's auction, and there may be health issues in the house that may not be disclosed due to the nature of the sale. They would like to see the city take action before it is sold. The city will call the building inspector to check into our options.

Craig Poppenhagen, from Clifton, Larson, Allen presented the finalized audit for 2021. Overall, the city had a good year financially. Mr. Poppenhagen answered questions of the council. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the audit as presented. Carried.

Discussion was had about putting together a policy regarding memorials around the lake. There may be a need to limit the number allowed, and the type of memorial. The council will take it into consideration, and will discuss at a future date.

Resolution 2022.03 Resolution to dissolve the Police Department. The sheriff's department would like us to dissolve the Police Department to suspend our ORI number. If the city would like to have a police department in the future, we would simply need to re-activate our ORI number. No motion was made to adopt the resolution, as the Police Department is still a topic of conversation.

Clerk Wacholz presented information regarding a solution to Bulk Water billing. He recommended installing a system to automate the purchasing and billing system. The cost of the software would be around \$15,000. The council directed clerk Wacholz to investigate further.

Clerk Wacholz presented the council with 2 Cemetery Records Management Software solutions. Much discussion was had about the pros and cons of automating the records. The council feels it may be cost prohibitive, but may consider if there is a donation available to offset the expense.

After much discussion, motion was made by Reindal and seconded by Duncan to raise the preliminary Levy 2.5%, and set it at \$194,000. Carried.

Clerk Wacholz reported that Mr. St. Clair called the city office today, and stated that he spoke with our attorney regarding an ordinance enforcement issue. Our attorney sent a letter stating that the process we used was legal, and that the issue is closed. It was determined that there should be a second person involved in all conversations.

A letter is ready to go regarding other ordinance enforcements. We are just waiting for pictures needed for warrants to be enforced. There will also be letters sent out to 2 residents regarding shared services, and we will be doing an investigation dig to determine if that is the case.

After clarification on a few of the bills, a motion made by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the bills as presented. Carried.

Motion made by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to adjourn at 8:25. Carried