

## **MINUTES OF THE ALDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING – April 12, 2023**

The Alden City Council met in its regular session, April 12, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Reyerson at 6:04pm, and he read roll call. Council members present were Mayor Reyerson, Ms. VanEngelenburg, Mr. Wichmann, and Ms. Pedersen. Members absent: Mr. Reindal. City staff present were Fire Chief Thunstedt, Public Works Superintendent Wuerflein, and Clerk-Treasurer Knutson. Others present were County Commissioner Nicole Eckstrom, Tito from Tito's Lawn service, and Ben Rosal from Bolton-Menk.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the minutes from the March 8, 2023 meeting. Carried.

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

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Pedersen to approve the Hours report as presented. Carried.

Fire Chief Thunstedt reported that the Fire Department had 0 fire calls, and 4 medical calls in March. The county meeting was in Albert Lea at the ALFD. The program was on CO calls and what to do. The new turnout gear is received and put into service. He has ordered 8 new carbon fiber SCBA tanks for the DNR Grant from 2022. This is 50/50 grant and invoices need to be submitted by June. CPR refresher was held at Alden City Hall on April 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm. 21 of 23 firefighters took the class. Alden will be hosting the county meeting this month on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The DNR grant for 2023-24 is now open, and the deadline is July 1<sup>st</sup>. He was not sure of what project the grant will be used for, but they will discuss it at the next meeting to decide. Jim will submit a letter for funds from the LeVerne Carlson Foundation. Bills of \$55,282.10 were submitted to the clerk. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the Fire Report. Carried.

Public Works Superintendent Wuerflein reported that he has been working on the lead/copper service line inventory, which is due in October 2024. He has started the spring pond discharge. We will be treating the pond for algae this year at a cost of \$5000 -\$8000. Then will dye the pond to hopefully prevent new growth. The pond sludge survey should happen in the next few weeks. Will decide what to do next once we get the results back. The pH meter and the oxygen meters need to be upgraded. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to purchase the new meters. Carried. Alex has been repairing the sweeper, and the other equipment should be good for the year. The broom for the CASE tractor is at Arnold's. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve the Public Works Report. Carried.

Kim presented an email that was received regarding grants available to low-income residents. Will post on bulletin board and in the paper for those who may be interested and qualify.

Jerry met with an Unemployment judge regarding the claim, and it is under review.

Pedersen motioned and Wichmann seconded to adopt the Data Request Policy, as presented. Carried.

Alex has a total of 90.63 hours of comp time built up, and according to our policy we need to pay him out for comp hours over 40. It was determined that Alex will be paid for the 50.63 hours of comp time, and discussion was had about possible future changes to the policy, but no changes will be made at this

time. Our attorney is reviewing the Personnel policy, and we will wait to hear from her before we update.

A Credit Card Policy was presented to the council. There was some discussion on which employees are allowed to have a credit card, limits, and uses for the card. There are to be absolutely no personal charges on the credit cards, even if they are reimbursed to the city. We will add Alex (Maintenance Worker) to the policy. For the line about the \$500 limit, add "unless approved by a council member".

Minnesota Basic Code has been updated and is available for purchase. We don't have to adopt the update, but it is recommended by the League of MN Cities. The council would like to see that actual updates before we adopt the updated code. Kim will ask for more specific information and will send it to the council.

3 bids were received for mowing the Cemetery and were reviewed by the council. Motion was made by Wichmann and seconded by Pedersen to accept the lowest bid from Schrader Enterprises. Carried.

Steve Newman was in attendance to address the Liquor License renewal for the American Legion, which expires on May 17. He asked the council if they would consider lowering the cost of the On Sale license. The council will take this into consideration, and will come back with a decision at next month's meeting. There was also discussion regarding gambling proceeds, and that there was a percentage that was to be donated back to the city to be used for community projects, not for the General Fund. This information will be presented to the Council at the next meeting as well.

There was discussion regarding a property that will be going into tax foreclosure. Jerry has spoken to the County Auditor, and the city has the first right to purchase the property. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to pursue the purchase of the property if it becomes available. Carried.

There was a fender bender with the city work truck. Discussion was had on the repairs and filing the claim. We will go ahead and file the claim and possibly make repairs ourselves if possible.

Commissioner Eckstrom stated that if any citizens have questions on their property tax, to have them call County Assessor Ryan Rasmusson's office for an explanation. She also reported that the Federal Government is putting money into renewable energy. There are grants available for putting in electric vehicle charging stations, and Alden may be a good spot since we are on the interstate. Budgets are being worked on for 2024, and discussion was had on the Sheriff's department being short staffed and hopefully getting more coverage for the in our area.

Ben Rosal from Bolton-Menk presented information on a possible infrastructure project for the city. He spoke about some funding sources for the project. USDA Rural Development requires the city to do a Request for Qualifications in the newspaper to allow other engineering firms to put together a proposal for the project as well. We will run that RFQ one time each in the Alden Advance and the Albert Lea Tribune in the next available papers. He also had packets that we can hand out to any engineering firms that would like to bid. He also spoke about a long-term timeline for putting the project together. We would like to get things together by October to send to Rural Development, before the Census Data is changed. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Wichmann to move forward with the Request for Qualifications advertising. Carried.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the bills totaling \$90,648.60. Carried.

Jerry informed the council that we have decided not to use a Signature Stamp. It is not against the rules, just choose not to for now for checks and balances.

Discussion was had on complaints filed with the city, and the processes. We have a few that we are working on right now with the attorney, but need to keep the council better informed where we are in the process.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to Adjourn at 8:06. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Knutson  
Clerk-Treasurer