

**CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2024**

- 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 7:00 p.m. at City Hall**
  - Mayor Lawrence called the Clearwater City Council to order Monday, September 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Luhmann and Schwinghammer. Also present were members of the public, staff, and guests.
  
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
  - **MOTION** by Schwinghammer to approve Agenda as presented, seconded by Luhmann, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
  
- 3. Wright County Sheriff's Report**
  - Deputy Marschel gave the Sheriff's report. He reported there were complaints about a door-to-door pest control salesperson who did not have a solicitor's license. Member Luhmann asked if they had reports about someone looking in windows. Marschel was not aware of any reports. Luhmann noted that it had been posted on Facebook. Marschel suggested people contact the sheriff's office directly with concerns and not rely on Facebook.
  
- 4. Public Forum**
  - None.
  
- 5. Consent Agenda**
  - a. Claims/Accounts Payable in the Amount of \$ 210,959.35
  - b. Approval of Minutes from 08-05-2024 Regular City Council Meeting
  - c. Res 2024-51 – Accepting Donation for Fire Department
  - d. Res 2024-52 – Accepting Donation for Fire Department
  - e. Res 2024-54 – Authorizing TED Grant Application
  - f. Res 2024-56 – Approving Step Increase
  - **MOTION** by Luhmann to approve Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
  
- 6. Old Business**
  - a. **T.H. 24 Corridor Project Presentation - MNDOT**
    - Project managers Jenna Fabish and Terri Odegaard gave an overview of the proposed T.H. 24 Corridor project. They explained that the project includes three phases. Phase 1 includes the I94 bridge interchange. Phase 2 includes the area north of the bridge to County Road 75. Phase 3 includes the area south of the bridge to County Road 7. Right now, only the bridge interchange portion of the project is fully funded. The state, city, and county continue fundraising efforts to fund the other two phases. The construction is expected to cover two seasons. Staging will include building the new bridge first, then making traffic changes to complete construction with a goal of keeping the bridge open during construction. The next step for the project will be an open house on October 1, followed by municipal consent, which will be considered at the October 14 city council meeting, where a public hearing will be held.
    - Member Luhmann asked if the bridge will remain open during construction. Ms. Odegaard explained that they intend to keep the bridge open as much as possible. They will construct part

of the new bridge offline, then switch traffic over to the new bridge portion to remove the old bridge and complete construction.

- Member Schwinghammer asked if there were closures planned. Ms. Odegaard reiterated that they intend to keep the bridge open as much as possible, but stated there could be some temporary closures, especially during year 2 of the project.
- Engineer Kannas asked if municipal consent is needed for the whole project or just Phase 1. Ms. Odegaard stated that they need approval for Phase 1 for the project to begin, but they are asking for consent for the entire corridor.

**b. Res 2024-53 – Approving 2025 Preliminary Levy and Budget**

- Administrator Smythe gave a brief overview of the preliminary levy and budget, which was first presented to the city council in August. The levy includes a projected increase of approximately 8%.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve Resolution 2024-53, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**c. Approve Clean-up Day Pricing**

- Smythe explained that staff are recommending increasing the price for electronics due to the increase in the city's costs from the carrier.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to increase the electronics pricing to \$1.20 per pound and keep other costs the same as 2023, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**7. New Business**

**a. Res 2024-55 – Declaring Vacancy on City Council**

- **MOTION** by Schwinghammer to approve Resolution 2024-55, seconded by Luhmann, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**b. Appointing City Council Member – Winkelman Vacated Seat**

- Smythe explained that there were three applicants for the vacated seat, Kris Crandall, Nancy Senn, and Tyler Kroll, and explained the terms of office.
- Mayor Lawrence stated that she recommends Crandall for the vacated seat, as he is running in the upcoming election, so it would allow him to get up to speed on city business sooner. Member Schwinghammer agreed.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to appoint Crandall to Winkelman's vacated seat, seconded by Luhmann, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**c. Appointing City Council Member – Vazquez Vacated Seat**

- Mayor Lawrence stated that she recommends appointing Senn for the same reason as Crandall. Senn is on the ballot in the upcoming election, and it gives her a chance to get a head start.
- Member Luhmann stated that it might be nice to give someone else the experience for a few months but had no objections to Senn.
- Lawrence stated she is also concerned about Kroll's availability for meeting attendance. Kroll acknowledged that his schedule could create some conflicts.
- Schwinghammer stated he is torn, as both are good options.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to appoint Senn to Vazquez's vacated seat, seconded by Luhmann, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

*Members paused the meeting, and Smythe administered the Oath of Office for Crandall and Senn. Both took their seats with the rest of the city council and joined the meeting in progress.*

**d. Appointing City Council Member to Park Commission**

- **MOTION** by Lawrence to appoint Nancy Senn to Park Commission as the Council Liaison, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- Member Crandall pointed out that there are now three city council members on the EDA Board, which is only allowed to have two. Mayor Lawrence agreed to resign from the EDA and asked staff to post the opening.

## 8. Committee Reports

### a. Mayor and Council

- Mayor Lawrence gave Members a quick reminder about open meeting laws.
- Members were reminded that Clearwater is hosting the Wright County Mayor’s Association (WCMA) meeting on September 18 at the American Legion.
- Members discussed Clean-up Day on September 21. Members Lawrence, Luhmann, Schwinghammer, and Crandall all expect to attend.

### b. Boards

- Fire Relief Association Board – Met to discuss the possibility of moving to the state pension plan.
- Sewer Authority – Met in August to review the 2025 budget and authorized a pump purchase.
- Planning Commission – Did not meet.
- EDA – Met and discussed the staff vacancy. Members plan to seek assistance from an outside consultant for temporary help. Members also discussed the welcome signs status and reviewed goals and plans. The last farmer’s market for the year is coming up this Friday.
- Park Commission
  - Smythe reported that Park Commission had a request from the Clearwater River Cats to lock up the ball field at Sportsman’s Park, citing dog waste, damage to tarps covering the infield areas, along with occasional vandalism/graffiti. Park Commissioners recommend locking up the main field when not in use.
  - Mayor Lawrence stated that she was originally against this idea, but maybe should reconsider if there is damage.
  - Member Luhmann stated she is against it. This is a public amenity and the public should have access.
  - Member Senn noted that even if it is locked up, people wanting to cause damage could still access the field by jumping the fence. Lawrence noted that the fence would keep dogs out.
  - **MOTION** by Lawrence to keep the ballfield unlocked, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**
  - Member Schwinghammer asked if there are signs about dog waste. Smythe stated that there are both signs and dog waste bags available at the park.
  - Smythe also reported that the Park Commission agreed to delay erosion control measures until the city receives further information about the plans for the dam from the two counties, as the erosion control quotes for materials were over \$218,000.

### c. Staff

- Smythe reported on the following:
  - The city’s liquor license holders had a clean compliance report for 2024.
  - Updated on the proposed recruitment schedule for the vacant Community Development position.
  - Reported that the staff continue to work on bugs and data issues with the new accounting system but noted that many procedures are much more efficient.
  - Noted the two public hearings for the October meeting.
  - Reminded Members of the town hall meeting for the Spring Street Improvements on September 16 from 5-6 p.m.

- Updated that there are three items going to Planning Commission that will be on the October agenda for the city council.
- Kannas reported on the following:
  - There was an issue with MnDot’s truck station sewer install, so their work along Main Street was delayed. It should be starting soon.
  - Stated that there was not yet a start date for the Main Street overlay project.
  - Explained that a solution had been worked out for the food shelf’s storm sewer that will eliminate the need for piping and will reduce costs.
  - Reported that the city’s request for funding under the TED grant application is for \$3 million for the T.H. 24 project.
  - Reported that he was discussing with MnDot the possibility of routing storm sewer from the Travel Plaza to the river with piping as part of the T.H. 24 project, which would eliminate the pond behind them that is noted as an area of concern in the Wellhead Protection Plan.

**9. Other Business**

**a. Next Regular Meeting – October 14, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.**

- Next regular meeting date confirmed for October 14, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
  
- Member Luhmann asked about the status of the basketball courts at Spring Street Park. Smythe stated that concrete work was supposed to take place next week and paving shortly after that.


**10. Adjournment**

- **MOTION** to adjourn by Luhmann, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

ATTEST

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

APPROVED

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor