

**CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 14, 2024**

- 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 6:00 p.m. at City Hall**
 - Mayor Lawrence called the Clearwater City Council to order Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 6:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Luhmann, Senn, and Schwinghammer. Member Crandall was absent. Also present were members of the public, staff, and guests.

- 2. Approval of Agenda**
 - Staff requested addition of Easement Agreement to agenda as item 7(e).
 - Member Luhmann requested addition of Parks Discussion to agenda as item 6(a).
 - **MOTION** by Luhmann to approve Agenda with two additions, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

- 3. Wright County Sheriff’s Report**
 - None present.

- 4. Public Forum**
 - a. Food Shelf – Mary Abraham**
 - Mary was not present – deferred item until later in meeting.

- 5. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Claims/Accounts Payable in the Amount of \$ 411,502.72**
 - b. Approval of Minutes from 10-14-2024 Regular City Council Meeting**
 - c. Res 2024-64 – Opting to Join the Statewide Volunteer Firefighter Plan**
 - d. Res 2024-65 – Approving 2025 Liquor Licenses**
 - e. Approving Joint Powers Agreement - Enforcement and Regulation of Cannabis**
 - f. Approving Extension of Library Lease**
 - g. Approving Pay Voucher #1 – Main Street Overlay**
 - h. Approving Contract Renewal for Wright County Assessor**
 - i. Res 2024-68 – Approving New Hire for Fire Department**
 - j. Res 2024-70 – Approving Step Increase**
 - Jim Repke from the Fire Relief Association asked to speak before the Consent Agenda. He explained that the resolution for the Fire Relief included technical corrections to the resolution approved in October.
 - **MOTION** by Senn to approve Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

- 6. Old Business**
 - a. Parks Discussion**
 - Member Luhmann handed out a copy of the city’s parks ordinances. She noted that there have been several issues recently with vandalism at parks, violations of park hours, and camping overnight in the parks. There seems to be a lack of patrols near our parks. There also seems to be an unwillingness by the sheriff’s office to enforce ordinances, even after multiple offenses by the same violators.

- Member Senn also noted issues with people in the parks after hours and vandals causing damage.
- After discussion, Members agreed to send a letter to sheriff outlining concerns and asking for stronger enforcement.
- **MOTION** by Luhmann directing staff to send a letter to Sheriff Deringer asking his office to enforce the city’s park ordinances as written, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

7. New Business

a. Res 2024-66 – Canvassing 2024 Municipal Election Results

- Smythe handed out the canvassing abstract to accompany the resolution.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve Resolution 2024-66, seconded by Luhmann, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

b. Res 2024-67 – Appointing EDA Member

- Smythe explained the only written application was received from April Vasecka. Ms. Vasecka previously served on the city’s Park Commission.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve Resolution 2024-67, appointing April Vasecka to the EDA Board, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

c. Res 2024-69 – Certifying Lien for Unpaid Charges

- **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve Resolution 2024-69, seconded by Luhmann, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

d. Ord 2025-01 – 2025 Fee Schedule Ordinance – DRAFT

- Smythe gave an overview of the proposed changes and asked Members to send her any additional changes or questions. The final version will be brought back for approval in December.
- *Mary Abraham arrived at 6:23 p.m. Mayor Lawrence re-opened Public Forum to hear from Ms. Abraham.*
- Ms. Abraham, representing the Food Shelf, asked for additional funds to cover various expenses. She stated that the costs to add a swale and the curb and gutter costs were beyond what they had anticipated. She also noted that the earlier donated funds from the city went towards building permit costs.
- Mayor Lawrence asked staff to provide a summary of the city’s contributions to-date for the next meeting and took the request under advisement.

e. Easement Agreement

- Smythe explained the requested easement to provide access to a strip of land owned by Thomas Houck abutting I94 that is used for billboard purposes.
- **MOTION** to approve by Lawrence, seconded by Luhmann.
- **DISCUSSION** – Member Schwinghammer asked if Authority Deck and Fence had approved the easement. Staff did not know.
- **VOTE ON THE MOTION** – all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

8. Committee Reports

a. Mayor and Council

- Mayor Lawrence reported that the Wright County Mayor’s Association (WCMA) will meet on December 11,2024.

- Mayor Lawrence reported that she will be speaking to two groups of students at Clearview Elementary School about the “Mayor for a Day” essay contest sponsored by League of Minnesota Cities (LMC).

b. Boards

- Sewer Authority – Meets November 21, 2024.
- Fire Relief Association Board – Did not meet.
- EDA – Meets November 19, 2024.
- Planning Commission – Did not meet.
- Park Commission – Did not meet.

c. Staff

- Administrator Smythe reported that new hire Kimberlie Gramsey started November 4.
- Smythe reported that the election was very busy but went smoothly with no major issues.
- Smythe explained that a resident had issues with an NSF fee. They had input the wrong account number when setting up an ACH payment, so it rejected, resulting in an NSF charge. Members discussed but no action was taken.
- Smythe asked Members for direction on what to do with staff ESSL balances. When the new law was implemented, Members decided to wait for more information and see how it was being used before deciding on whether to pay our balances over the cap or leave them as “use it or lose it”. Fire Department members were paid out. Members asked for the new law text and more information on balances and will reconsider at the next meeting.
- Engineer Kannas explained that he met with MnDOT and Wright County to continue discussion about TH 24 Corridor project. Staff are continuing to seek funding for the south leg (phase 3) of the project. The bridge interchange (phase 1) is moving ahead. We expect to hear about our TED grant application in December. The north leg (phase 2) of the project is on hold. MnDOT has removed it from their layout. They will take this up again upon request of the city. They have amended the old layout to transition the new bridge interchange into the current layout of the north section and have posted it to their website. They have also provided some traffic statistics about the possible closure of the road by T.O. Plastics. They estimate that closure of that access would add below 500 cars to the other side streets and possibly 3 more trucks. Almost no changes to traffic.
- Smythe noted that the EDA will be discussing the traffic flows and frontage roads at their meeting next week.

9. Other Business

a. Next Regular Meeting – December 9, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

- Next regular meeting date confirmed for December 9, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

- **MOTION** to adjourn by Luhmann, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**
- Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

ATTEST



Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

APPROVED



Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor