

**CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 11, 2023**

- 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, December 11, 2023, at 7:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Luhmann, Schwinghammer, Vazquez and Winkelman. Also present were members of the public, staff, and guests.

- 2. Approval of Agenda**
 - **MOTION** by Luhmann to approve Agenda as presented, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- 3. Wright County Sheriff's Report**
 - Deputy Rudolph gave an overview of the sheriff's report. He noted recent activity on I-94 involving people from outside of the area. Members did not have any questions.

- 4. Public Forum**
 - a. Library Report – Shelly Kuelbs**
 - Ms. Kuelbs was unable to attend the meeting and will give her report in January.
 - b. Other**
 - Administrator Smythe outlined the request from the resident at 152 Cardinal Lane asking to have the October late fee waived. The resident advised staff there was a miscommunication as to where to send the bill. He normally communicated with Ms. Petty but was unaware of her retirement, so the bill was misdirected, resulting in the bill being paid late. Members took this request under advisement.

- 5. Consent Agenda**
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 - b. Claims/Accounts Payable in the Amount of \$ 246,122.29**
 - c. Approval of Minutes from 11-13-2023 Regular City Council Meeting**
 - d. Approval of Minutes from 11-27-2023 City Council Workshop Meeting**
 - e. Ord 2024-01 – Approving 2024 Fee Schedule Ordinance**
 - f. Res 2023-75 – Approving Temporary Gambling Permit**
 - g. Res 2023-76 – Accepting Donation for Fire Department**
 - h. Approving Licensing Agreement with EDA**
 - i. Approving Personnel Policy Revisions**
 - j. Authorize City Council Members to Attend LMC Training Sessions**
 - k. Approve Animal Control Contract Renewal**
 - **MOTION** by Winkelman to approve Consent Agenda, seconded by Vazquez, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- 6. Old Business**
 - a. Consider Civic Plus Agreement**
 - Members discussed the per page rates and the number of ordinance updates over the last few years. Members believe the per page rate makes more sense and will revisit in the future if it changes.

- **MOTION** by Lawrence to accept the per-page rate from CivicPlus, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

b. Consider Telephone/Internet Quotes

- Members reconsidered the quotes based on the updated information. Member Winkelman asked if Granite and TBS use lines from the other local providers. Smythe stated that it is her understanding that they do use local lines.
- Members considered the service issues with the current internet carrier and the age of the telephone system at city hall, which has a tendency to drop calls, and whose equipment is no longer supported. Members also noted that all of the quotes are less expensive than the current provider.
- **MOTION** by Winkelman to accept the quote and authorize staff to proceed with the proposal from TBS, seconded by Vazquez, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

7. New Business

a. Public Hearing – Ord 2023-07 – Extending Cannabis Moratorium

- Mayor Lawrence opened the public hearing at 7:24 p.m.
- Smythe gave an overview of the proposed extension of the cannabis moratorium to January 1, 2025 as the city waits for regulations from the state. She explained that the city attorney has advised the city to wait to adopt its own regulations until guidance is received from the state. This will avoid any conflicts between the state and local ordinances which would require an amendment by the city. She explained that this extension does not prevent the city council from implementing local cannabis regulations sooner if the state issues regulations sooner than January 1, 2025.
- There were no questions from Members or from the public.
- Public hearing was closed at 7:28 p.m.

b. Ord 2023-07 – Extending Cannabis Moratorium

- **MOTION** to approve Ordinance 2023-07 by Winkelman, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

c. Truth-in-Taxation Public Meeting

- Smythe presented information on the city's proposed budget and levy. The levy increase is an estimated 0.56% overall. There were no questions from the public.

d. Res 2023-77 – Approving 2024 Final Budget and Levy

- **MOTION** to approve Resolution 2023-77 by Lawrence, seconded by Vazquez, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

e. Res 2023-78 – Approving 2024 Step Compensation Scale

- Smythe explained how the step compensation plan works and noted the proposed 2024 scale includes a 3% COLA, which was included in the budget.
- **MOTION** to approve Resolution 2023-78 by Lawrence, seconded by Luhmann, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

f. Res 2023-79 – Approving Staff Promotion

- Smythe outlined the recommendation of the Public Works Supervisor for the promotion of Nick Schmidt.
- **MOTION** to approve Resolution 2023-79 by Lawrence, seconded by Vazquez, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

g. Res 2023-80 – Approving Hire for Fire Department

- Fire Chief Keller outlined his recommendation to hire Trenton Scott for the Fire Department. The city currently has 24 members, with authorization for 30 total.

- **MOTION** to approve Resolution 2023-80 by Luhmann, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- h. Consider Changes to Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) for Fire Department**
 - Smythe explained that the Fire Department has done a lot of work to update their entire SOGs, which are presently being reviewed by the city attorney for the next meeting. However, once change the department wanted to take effect January 1, 2024 relates to their call responses. This SOG is the item included in the current agenda for city council consideration.
 - Chief Keller clarified that they are increasing the required call response rate for department members from 20% up to 25% to qualify for pension credit, which is more in line with what other departments require.
 - **MOTION** by Luhmann to approve SOG page related to call responses, seconded by Winkelman, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- i. Consider Options for Accounting Clerk/Accountant Position**
 - Smythe explained that the new Accountant that was hired last month has resigned. Staff would like permission to contact other interviewed candidates for availability, or alternatively, re-post the position. Members' consensus was to reach out to prior applicants first and post if necessary. Members tentatively scheduled a special meeting for Monday, December 18, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. to consider a hire.

8. Committee Reports

a. Mayor and Council

- Mayor Lawrence reported that she will be late to the January 8, 2023 meeting due to attendance at a funeral.
- Mayor Lawrence stated that the Wright County Mayors' Association (WCMA) will meet December 20, 2023 in St. Michael and invited Members to attend. She needs an RSVP by tomorrow.

b. Boards

- Fire Relief Association Board – Meets December 18, 2023.
- EDA – Discussed the new digital sign and are working with the vendor Viewpoint Consulting for the housing study. EDA is also hosting a business social on December 19, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. at the Lions Park Pavilion. Members were encouraged to attend.
- Sewer Authority – Meets December 14, 2023 at Clear Lake City Hall.
- Planning Commission – Did not meet.
- Park Commission – Discussed the following:
 - Heard presentations from vendors Flagship Recreation and Minnesota-Wisconsin Playground related to the proposed splash pad for El Dorado Park.
 - Appointed members to a splash pad design committee to assist with the splash pad project.
 - Requested staff to send a text alert message to residents when area ice rinks are ready for use.

c. Staff

- Smythe asked if Members would like to consider the late fee waiver requested under public forum. Members discussed and declined to waive the late fee. Members felt that the resident could have communicated with staff earlier about the address issue.
- Smythe reported the following:
 - Mr. Kelly has signed the encroachment agreement, and it has been sent to the recorder.
 - The Elm Street property purchase has been completed and we are waiting for recorded documents.
 - Staffer Stephanie Trottier has been working on updating our forms so that they can be completed online or in digital format.

- Reminder Members of the EDA Social on 12/19/23.
- Noted that the foundation permit has been issued for the cold storage project.
- Explained that a kickoff meeting was held by MnDot for the T.H. 24 Corridor/Bridge project and that public meetings would be happening this spring.
- Recognized staffers Maci Hill and Stephanie Trottier for their efforts assisting to get agendas completed in time given the departure of the new accountant.
- Engineer Kannas reported that the Mississippi Ridge and Clearwater Estates Plat 8 projects have finally been completed by the developer and closed out.
 - Member Luhmann stated that someone is conducting door to door sales without a permit.

9. Other Business

- a. **REMINDER – EDA Social December 19, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. – Lions Park Pavilion**
- b. **Next Regular Meeting – January 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.**
 - Next regular meeting date was confirmed.
 - Special meeting scheduled for December 18, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. if needed to consider staff hire.

10. Adjournment

- **MOTION** to adjourn by Member Luhmann, seconded by Schwinghammer, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

ATTEST



Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

APPROVED



Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor