

Osakis City Council – Regular Meeting
Community Center
April 12, 2021
7:00 PM

Present: Dan Wessel, Alan Larson, Laura Backes, Randy Anderson

Absent: Tim Thornbloom

Others Present: Angela Jacobson, Jason Schultz, Chad Gulbranson, Greg Gottwald, Brenda Majerus, Mark Pomerleau, Eric Jacobson, Sheila Krohse, Reenie Goodwin, Jarod (Echo Press), Calvin Uhl Preston Oetterer, and five family members of Oetterer

The April 12th, 2021 meeting was called to order by Mayor Dan Wessel.

Pledge of Allegiance was spoken.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Backes, to approve the agenda as presented with additions of Visitor's Center, 2021 Budget, Audit Report & Discussion, Hall & Associates Bill & Capital Improvement Discussion. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Larson, to approve the general consent items, including the April city bills in the amount of \$236,168.67, meeting minutes from March 4, 2021, March 8, 2021, March 16, 2021, Overtime Report and EDA meeting minutes from March 22, 2021. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Project #22: Clerk

Clerk Angela Jacobson was in attendance.

Jacobson informed the council that Ila Anderson has decided to accept the offer to work at city hall and the Liquor Store for 30 to 35 hours per week. Anderson will start these hours when the clerks move into the offices.

Jacobson presented the 1st Quarter of 2021 to the council. Noted that in the 1st quarter the revenues are \$33,831 and expenditures are \$256,093.

Jacobson explained that this is typical, funds received for the general fund are mostly received from taxes and LGA in June and December. The city uses reserves to be able to pay the expenditures until them.

Also noted on the final 2020 Budget/Revenue section – after putting capital outlay in the funds, we were around \$95,000 extra over budget. When budget time comes, the council can discuss these extra funds.

Project #24: Liquor Store

Reenie Goodwin was in attendance.

Council received the following reports:

- Statement of Revenue & Expense

- Statement of Revenue and Expense (70% to 30% split in labor and utilities)
- Liquor Store 2 year Expenditures & Revenues
- Liquor Store Expenditures/Revenues for On/Off Sale
- Liquor Store Sales
- Bullet Points
- Inventory
- YTD Long/Short
- Off-Sale Loss of -\$5,182
- On-Sale Profit of \$3,235.00
- Total Loss for March is -\$1,947.00
- Yearend Profit of \$27,093

Council received 3 quotes for upgrading the A/C and furnace at the Liquor Store.

- Central Heating – total \$11,938
- Randy Karl – total \$7,401
- True Service – total \$8,950

Goowin asked the council how they want to see the report. How it represents the liquor operations, the 70% to 30% for the next month.

The city and Liquor Store is 50% to 50% for on and off for wages, benefits and power now.

Backes felt Goodwin should make it reflect the use of hours at the bar that best represents it.

Goodwin discussed the following:

- More in inventory because the vendors run out of products which takes 2 to 3 weeks to get in because of Covid.
- Bids are in for the A/C and furnace – Council wants Goodwin to check into rebates for the unit.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Anderson, to approve to get new bids for the A/C and furnace so that equipment sold to the city is alike and the bids can be compared. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Project #73: First Responders

Jason Schultz was in attendance.

Council received the March report:

- 16 calls for the month. 11 were in city limits.
- Working on National Night Out.
 - Fire Department will do food.
 - First Responders will do entertainment.
 - Police Department will do donations.
- Ashley Nathe has resigned.
- Mike Haburn did not meet the 20% minimum and will be leaving if he can't increase calls.

Larson asked why the run sheet shows the payment for some are blacked out.

Schultz responded – New First Responders have 6 months of probation to respond to calls before a stipend is paid out. The city pays for their training.

The First Responders currently have 11 members. Schultz will put out some information to get new members.

Project #74: Fire Department

Craig Dropik was in attendance.

Dropik informed the council of the following:

- Fire Department had 4 calls for March.
- 9 Applications for new members have been received and are in the process of interviews with the officers who will follow up with a hiring committee interview and agility test in the next few weeks.
- The department plans to bring on 2 new firefighters on May 24 and 1 more on June 30.
- Finished EMR refresher – 4 nights of 4 hours each.

Project #76: Police

Chad Gulbranson was in attendance.

Council received the March Police Report.

Preston Oetterer was hired as a full-time police officer at the last council meeting.

Gulbranson swore in Offer Oetterer.

Backes asked about why Calvin Uhl has all the call outs.

Gulbranson is on duty during the week and there are not as many call outs during the week. Usually, are weekend call-outs for the night shift officers. Also, had a drug burn at the incinerator which requires 2 people to do the burn because of liability.

Gulbranson informed the council of the following:

- Letters will be sent out this week for nuisance properties. Council will get a list of these properties.
- School Resource Officer – The school met with the city and discussed how to use up the money. We will not know until the fall if we can carry over the funds. The program ends December 31st, 2021. Full-time officers usually cover the hours and then a part-time officer will work the week day shift for more coverage.
- Looking at extra shifts this summer to cover using Covid funds.

Larson will work with Gulbranson to have more shifts covered in the summer.

The DARE program is paid through the SRO program and will work under it until it is done. Gulbranson asked to do the SRO.

Backes asked if they are 2 separate programs – the grant was able to pay for DARE.

Wessel thought it was for DARE and DARE only – not the SRO for Grinstead to cover.

Larson made a motion to do part-time until DARE was done but no amended motion to change from the original motion.

Wessel – school likes Grinstead and thought it was only DARE. Wessel thought that was what was voted on.

Anderson thought it was just DARE as did Backes.

Larson – Roberts Rules – motion but was not amended and changed. Split hairs on what to do. Larson feels it was different and more communications and answers to work through the departments. Will not mess with other departments, and will go through their liaison.

Wessel said that Grinstead did not come to the SRO meeting.

Larson said the resignation said he was stepping to a part-time officer – double standard to only include one of them. The DARE class is 1 class a week for 5 more weeks then it is over.

Officer Oetterer was sworn in. Read the Oath of Position.

Project #205: Public Works/City Crew

Greg Gottwald was in attendance.

Council received the Public Works report for March. Gottwald read over the report.

Gottwald is working on a possible pilot study for wastewater in the fall. Will do some bench testing this summer.

Larson – Looked at what the city building – Seriously need to look at upgrading so no one is hurt or any damage to the equipment is done.

Project #249: Planning & Zoning

Council received the March 18th, 2021 Planning & Zoning minutes.

Council also received Ordinance #128 for land and sea containers. The discussion was tabled at the last meeting because there were some questions that Backes was going to clarify with the Planning & Zoning.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Larson, to approve Ordinance #128 for land and sea containers for Zoning Sections 17, 18, 24, & 32. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Backes, to approve the Planning & Zoning minutes from March 18th, 2021. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Project #80: Garbage Rates

The council has approved a 3% rate increase for 2021. The rate increase will go into effect for April 2021.

Jeff Bertram – Longer term relationship with the city. When we started, dumping was at \$60 a ton, now it is at \$86 a ton. 4% increase each year.

Discussion was held to increase 3% every other year – so the increase would be 1 ½ % annually.

The 2021 increase will be 3% beginning in April.

Bertram is asking for 2022 and the 3% that was missed in 2019.

Backes requested to put Garbage Rates on the October agenda.

Project #79: Audit

Council received the 2020 Audit to review.

Dean from CarlsonSV – The audit went well and had good numbers.

The opinion from the auditors is an unmodified opinion. The opinion is the best that can be given to a city.

Unmodified opinion regulator basis means a full accrual. The city is under 2,500 so it does not need to do.

The audit was reviewed:

- Page 5 – net change in checking – all funds of the city increased.
- Page 7 – enterprise funds need to make is on their own – should not use levy or other funds.
- Page 39 – internal control – it is ideal to segregate at least 2 people to look at everything – the city has very good control but there are areas where they do not have segregation. 95% of the audits we do are 2 to 3 staff members in similar size towns.
- Page 40 – preparation of the financial statement – the auditor is required to report but the city is not big enough to do. A letter is required for communication – no difficulty in performing the audit of management.
- Adjustment audit – done by the auditors to correct and match city funds. Jacobson receives a draft report, reviews it and approves the report to the council when it is final.
- Enterprise funds report – actual statements of funds.
- Financial analysis report – this is information so the city can have multiple years for comparison.
- Liquor fund saw an increase in 2020. It was a good year for the liquor industry.
- Good summary of funds and graphs.
- Increase of Covid funds – good funds to balance.
- Financial setting is in a good strong position. Stay close to budget and the city will maintain that good position. The city is consistent and does a good job in watching funds.

Project #373: Policies

Council received a final draft for the Code of Conduct, Harassment, Respectful Workplace and General Personnel policy to review. If the council has no changes, it should be sent to the attorney for review and comment.

Larson commented that it has been over a month or so since we met to discuss this policy. We can add to these policies. The city has not kept up with policy and changes.

Benefits the employees and those in the city to have these in place.

A workshop was suggested after the attorney reviews and then can direct to the attorney to answer questions on the legal side. We need to have a general policy in place.

Limit liability to the city because we don't have a policy. Need these now to stop animosity and allows the council to do what they need to do.

Backes – volunteers don't follow these and they don't feel they apply to them. Volunteers feel they should not have to follow those items that don't apply to them.

Larson – This is a general policy and should be in place.

Backes feels the council should listen to the departments and be respectful of the opinion they have.

Mark Pomerleau – concerns were raised on nursing mothers and how to accommodate them. No room at the fire hall and if on a call, how do they do it. They have to be given the time and/or space to be able to nurse. Pomerleau is also concerned about at will employment and terms of terminated with or without notice. Concerns that they can be terminated because of it.

At will employees do not have an agreement so the employee or employer can leave or separate employment with or without notice is what it means.

Jason Schultz – concerned about nursing mothers that will not come on a call if they are nursing. After review with the First Responders, if put in place, will have those resign if they have to sign it the way it is.

Brenda Majerus asked if the council looked if other cities had separate policies for volunteers.

Larson stated this is a basic policy for all to follow.

Schultz said they are getting input on policy changes to send to his department. They did not have time to review before the meeting tonight. Schultz will get comments by May 30th for the First Responders response to the policy.

Comments can be gathered and given to Larson. Larson will change the response back.

Attorney will review and have time to respond and attend a meeting.

Project #482: Covid-19

The Governors Executive Order 21-11 includes relaxes on requirements. The items below are some of the changes to the requirements the council discussed.

Per the executive order:

- Allows bars and restaurants up to 75% capacity for a maximum of 250 people.
- Reception areas like the Community Center are allowed 50% capacity or up to 250 people. This would allow the Community Center to be used and allow up to 150 people. Social distancing and masks must be used. 6 people per table. Those renting must sign an agreement and pay a deposit. Signs will be posted on the door.
- This order highly recommends those that can work from home to continue. Work at city hall when the construction is done.

- There is a second round of Covid funds that have not been released yet. The information is very vague on what the funds can be used for. They are hoping some guidance will come out the beginning of May. Jacobson would like to request a council member to work on this information before it comes out.
- FFCRA funds – the funds also include additional paid time off for employees that have to take leave for Covid for themselves or a family member. This goes in effect April 1st to September 30th – not a lot of requirements that have any direction on how they work. The city has to decide to enroll in the program. If enrolled, the city must follow all the rules of the program. New requirement for tax credits on payroll. Leave is required for Covid-19 diagnoses, testing, vaccinated, injury disability or those subject to quarantine.
- Council received the city preparedness plan from August 2020.

Larson will work with Jacobson unless someone else does.

Project #263: Police Union

Council received the 2021-2022 LELS Police Union contract with deletions indicated, strict-outs and additions in blue and yellow.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Backes, to approve the LELS Police Union contract for 2021-2022 as presented. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Project #42: Clean Up Day

Council received the Clean Up Day flyer for 2021 and the hazardous waste information.

After the March meeting, we were informed that Pope Douglas has a cleanup day grant. The grant is for items that can be recycled. Council received the grant application.

Items included in the grant:

- Appliances - free
- Box spring/mattresses - \$5 each
- Couches/recliners - \$8 each
- E-waste at 50%

Clean up day is scheduled for the week of May 10th to May 15th.

If the council moves forward with the grant, there will be a separate supplier for the e-waste, appliances and hazardous waste.

The grant may change the amount of funds the city collects for the fireworks because of the reduced prices. Per Nathan at Pope Douglas – the grant savings is to help save money for the city and residents.

Jeff Bertram and Mayor Wessel will discuss how we want to move forward with the cleanup day and grant.

Suggested:

- Sign to ENTER HERE for the cleanup on the east side entrance of the parking lot.
- Police will be bringing items as needed.

- Charge \$5 for appliances for fireworks – grant fund will help with the costs. Not as much collected, promote for fireworks.

Project #197: Water Plant Improvements – Rural Development

The City of Osakis received a notice in March from Rural Development that we have been approved for funding for the water plant improvements and water tower maintenance project that we had requested funding for.

The loan was approved for \$800,000 at 1.25% interest for 40 years.

The grant was approved for \$771,000

Total project is \$1,571,000.

The council had a special meeting on March 16th to approve the funds to be allocated to the City of Osakis at 1.25%.

The council received a resolution to pass is they want to proceed with the project for the water plant improvements and water tower maintenance. The council has a choice not to accept the grant and loan.

The council discussed giving authorization to the engineer to start working on the project plans. Eric Mester from Nero Engineering has been working with the city and prepared the pilot study and plans to be submitted to Rural Development for funding approval.

Motion by Backes, seconded by Larson, to approve Eric Mester from Nero Engineering to move forward in the project plans and design for the water plant and water tower improvements and maintenance. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

A resolution was presented by Anderson, seconded by Backes, to approve Resolution 2021-04 for a Rural Development Loan in the amount of \$800,000 at 1.25% interest and a grant in the amount of \$771,000. When put to a vote the resolution passed unanimously. Absent: Thornbloom

Project #227: City Administrator

Backes wanted to discuss a City Administrator.

This is food for thoughts, something we can talk about and think about for the future.

Project #56: Insurance

Council received the Liability Coverage – Waiver form.

The general liability insurance for the city renews July 1st each year.

The form asks if the city would like to waive the limits as stated in state statute of \$500,000. If it is waived, a claimant could recover up to \$2,000,000. This does not change the cost of insurance but allows a greater amount to recover in the event that claims exceed \$500,000 then insurance would cover more.

In the past, the council has approved this waiver.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Larson, to approve to waive the monetary limits on Municipal Tort Liability for 2021 and 2022 renewals. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Project #16: Pay Equity

Council received a notice form the State of Minnesota regarding that our Pay Equity is in compliance.

Project #247: Central Lakes Trail

Council received a letter from Central Lakes Trail requesting the City of Osakis to be a member. Membership amount is \$750. The letter included information on the traffic increase to their website and for visitors using the trail.

Motion by Backes, seconded by Larson, to approve the Central Lakes Trail membership for 2021 in the amount of \$750.00. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Project #110: Gambling

The Immaculate Conception Church requested a gambling license for the St. Agens School raffle on November 7th, 2021. Drawing is to be held at the Immaculation Conception Church.

A resolution was presented by Anderson, seconded by Backes, to approve Resolution 2021-05 for the St. Agnes School raffle on November 7th, 2021. When put to a vote the resolution passed unanimously. Absent: Thornbloom

Project #143: Cable TV

Council received a notice from Charter Communications regarding a channel selection change.

Charter Communications has a franchise agreement with the City of Osakis to allow them to operate cable TV in the City of Osakis. They will give channel change updates on a regular basis like the one the council received.

The past council did not want Jacobson to include channel changes in the packet every time we received them, but anything else this is communicated per the franchise agreement would be included.

Council does not need to see changes/updates unless they are regarding any changes/updates to the franchise agreement.

Project #468: Special Event

Council received a Special Event application for the VFW for May 8th, 2021. The event is a Thank You from Ethan.

Jacobson discussed with Nicol Neumann – if they can be allowed to have the events without a lot of hoops to go through.

Council would want to allow all establishments to be allowed to have outside seating if they need it.

Jacobson will look into if the council would need to pass anything for this matter.

Motion by Backes, seconded by Anderson, to approve the Special Event application for the VFW from May 8th, 2021 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Project #484: Logo – City of Osakis

Backes discussed the new City of Osakis logo.

The coloring of the new logo will be looked at. Molly will give us some samples to review.

Project #376: Capital Improvement and Planning

Larson requested to discuss future planning of the city buildings for future council meetings.

Open Floor

Council discussed having the city attorney present at the workshop for input regarding the policy review.

Council discussed having a mission statement. Discuss at future meetings.

Visitor’s Center – Nikki Nessman will not be back. Council discussed looking for someone to fill this position or move someone to fill hours.

Rental Ordinance – review at a workshop.

Project #444: Waste Water Project

Council received bills from Hall & Associates for the MPCA lawsuit in the amounts of \$6,255 and \$13,745.

Motion by Backes, seconded by Larson, to approve the bills from Hall & Associates in the amounts of \$6,255 and \$13,745. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Closed Meeting

Project #444: MPCA Lawsuit

Council received an email for the closed meeting. All information is confidential.

Council received totals for the funds in our wastewater/sewer funds:

- Checking \$17,538
- Savings \$150,476
- Storm Water Runoff \$181,430

Daniel Mark was on a conference call with the council for the closed meeting.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Backes, to close the regular meeting and open a closed meeting at 10:45 p.m. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Backes, to hire Barr Engineer to work as directed with Flaherty & Hood and the City of Osakis regarding the MPCA lawsuit. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Backes, to open a closed session for personnel discussion at 10:45 p.m. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Motion by Backes, seconded by Anderson, to close the closed meeting and open the regular meeting at 11:12 p.m. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Motion by Larson, seconded by Anderson, to approve that in light of new items and information the council decided to have Mark Grinstead only work DARE if he so chooses until the class is finished. Motion Carries Absent: Thornbloom

Meeting adjourned at 11:14 p.m.

Mayor – Daniel J. Wessel

City Clerk/Treasurer – Angela A. Jacobson