

City of Menahga
Special/Work Session City Council Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2023

A. Call to Order

The Menahga City Council held their Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday January 30, 2023.

Mayor Elizabeth Olson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

B. Roll Call

Comprising a quorum of the council, the following members were present:

Mayor Elizabeth Olson	Durwin Tomperi	Mike Netland
Dan Warmbold	Jody Bjornson	

City Office Staff present: Temporary City Administrator Laura Ahlf
Deputy Clerk Lacey Erickson

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Since this was the first Special Meeting/Work Session of 2023 for the two new Council Members, Bjornson and Netland, Mayor Olson explained the purpose of this meeting. She reported that it is scheduled two weeks in advance of the Regular Council Meeting (which Regular Council Meeting is held on the second Monday of each month). This meeting is scheduled to provide for all Department Heads to report on their activities, concerns and needs. If any of the items in their reports need action by the Council, this matter is then brought forward at the next Regular Council Meeting by the Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer, thus eliminating the need for the Department Heads to attend the Regular City Council Meetings.

D. Departmental Reports

- **Police Department**

1. **POST** - Acting CLEO Chief Deputy Schoon was unable to attend the meeting. He presented a Report at the January 9, 2023 meeting. Temporary

City Administrator Laura Ahlf reported on his behalf that there were certain policies that may need to be updated and approved. It was reported that the mandated policies were provided to current Officer Huotari. Completion of the policy updates shall be determined by the new Chief of Police when hired and thereafter, approval by the City Council. The Police Department is in need of a new Evidence Computer with certain programs, to be determined by the new Chief of Police, when hired.

- **Public Works – Ron Yliniemi –**

- 1. Monthly Report** – Yliniemi explained a need for a skeleton bucket for the payloader to assist with clean-up of the burn pile and other various uses. Yliniemi contacted Titan for a quote to bring to Council. He also explained they are working on scraping the City streets down with the belly scraper. Yliniemi presented an update on the Hwy 87 Watermain Project, stating that Engineer Brian Hiles had sent out the project for bids. Authorization to send out for bids was discussed as Council was unaware of this project moving forward at this time, nor were Yliniemi and Ahlf. Yliniemi gave an update on the ice dam at City Hall. He has ordered heat tape to place on the gutters to assist in removing the ice.

- 2. Seal Coating Bids** - Yliniemi spoke on the seal coating of the streets. This project had been approved to send out for bids. There are funds currently set aside for this project with another \$15,000.00 set in the budget for 2023.

- 3. Water Tower Update** - Yliniemi gave an update on the completion percentage of the new water tower. Ahlf spoke on the financials to date on the project. Mayor Olson asked for clarification on the size of the tower. Olson stated that it was her understanding that the new water tower would hold 100,000 gallons of water versus the old one which held 75,000 gallons, which larger amount would assist in water pressure in the outlying areas of the City of Menahga. Yliniemi verified that this was true as well as a higher psi.

Mayor Olson also requested an updated inventory list for insurance purposes, noting that one item, the Road Grader would be removed since it was sold in 2022.

- **Liquor Store – Heather Shepersky –**

- 1. Monthly Report** – Lacey to provide a Profit & Loss Report.

- 2. Craig Mullen DJ Services for Feb 11 and Mar 11, 2023** - Heather requested approval of DJ services each for \$400, for February 11, 2023 and March 11, 2023 for Customer Appreciation Day and St. Urho Day respectively.

It was decided that approval was not needed for those items since they were budgeted for, but communication is appreciated.

3. Ronald McDonald Ride Donation/2023 Passport - There is also a Fun Run that Heather would like to use funds from advertising in the amount of \$25 to be on the Fun Run Map.

4. Excess Equipment Disposal - Shepersky reported on excess equipment at the liquor store she would like to dispose of. Some of it is junk that Schaefer's would take and others, would need to be listed and posted as excess property for auction.

5. Update on New Furnace – Shepersky gave an update on the new furnace, stating it should be operational the first week of February.

6. Other – December and End of Year Financials - The end of December and end of year financials were discussed, showing a profit of \$1,948.00 for December, with a total profit of \$124,331.00 for year-end, respectively. The transfer of funds from the liquor store to the general fund was discussed, which occurs with year-end adjusting journal entries provided by the Audit.

- **Fire Department – Dave Kicker** – Kicker brought in one of the four EMT bags received from a Grant and stated that there are still two AEDs coming that are on back-order.
 - 1. Monthly Report** - Kicker reported on one fire call for January.
 - 2. Fire Department Officers and Other Information** - Kicker provided a list of the elected officers for the Fire Department to be approved at the February meeting. Kicker stated there are four individuals going through Fire 1, Fire 2, and HAZMAT Awareness training.
 - 3. Pressure Washer** - Kicker stated that the Department is looking into a pressure washer to wash or sanitize the trucks or equipment after fire calls. Discussion on where the funds would come from, whether it would be the equipment fund or from soliciting donations from the Lions or others. Kicker is estimating a cost of \$3,000-\$5,000 for the pressure washer. Mayor Olson requested an updated inventory list for insurance purposes.

- **Administration – Laura Ahlf**
 - 1. Menahga Energy and Environment 5-Year Plan:** BJ Allen from Region 5 Development Commission reported to the Council on the Menahga Energy and Environment 5-Year Plan. There are monies available through matching grants up to \$10,000. BJ provided a list of nine items and spoke on the priority items that the committee would like

to work on first. May 6th, 2023 was the proposed date for the City-wide Spring Clean-up date for Menahga City residents. The Committee would also like to see an electricity and natural gas energy audits for all City owned buildings scheduled. MN Power will perform this audit service for free, however, MN Energy does not provide the audit free of charge. The remainder of the money would be set aside for energy efficiency upgrades. The Council agreed to make a motion to begin the two projects discussed which would be paid out of the \$10,000 available at this time.

Main Motion: To approve the Committee’s Clean-up Day Project and conduct an electrical and natural gas energy audits on City-owned buildings.

Moved by:	Netland
Seconded	Bjornson
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

2. Monthly Report December 2022 Financial Statement and Balance Sheet:

Ahlf presented the December financials. The General Fund is showing a positive amount. The YTD amounts are prior to the audit. The Council decided that only a Profit and Loss Report would be necessary to be provided for the monthly financial report.

3. Approve City Council Meeting Calendar: Administration has typed up a calendar listing the 2023 dates for City Council Regular and Special/Work Session Meetings, (with the exception of the December 2023 Special/Work Session Meeting), to be approved and posted on the City’s website. The Council shall add Special Budget Meetings as needed.

Main Motion: To approve the 2023 City Council Meeting Calendar to be posted on the City’s website.

Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded	Bjornson
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

4. By-Laws: The City By-Laws should be provided to new Council Members Bjornson and Netland for their review.

5. Real Property Declaration: Ahlf explained that Hiles provided the Real Property Declaration for the land the new Water Tower has been constructed on. The form had been approved prior with the Loan Documents, but needed to be signed, recorded with the County and, sent to the State.

6. Criminal Attorney Update: Ahlf and Erickson gave an update on County Attorney Kyra Ladd agreeing to contract with the City as the City's Criminal Attorney. The County Commission stated that they don't need to approve the services of Ladd in becoming the City's Criminal Attorney but added that the Commissioners do support the decision. It is up to Ladd to agree to the services and provide a Contract for the City.

7. Server Update: Erickson provided an update on the new server. WCTA is scheduled to come February 20-24 to switch emails and change the server over. The City's laptops will need to be onsite for these updates. The Council discussed how the existing laptops are so old and slow and that maybe using an iPad would be an option. It will be discussed further at a later date. Erickson will provide the cost savings at the next meeting.

8. Report of Outstanding Indebtedness: A copy of the Report of Indebtedness that was completed and sent to the State was provided to the Council.

- **Campground – Ralph Cox and Dustyne Hewitt –**

1. Update on Campground: Cox presented a request to run an early bird promotion for prior campers. These reservations would be non-refundable. This promotion would also run in conjunction with the VFW for a discount on food. Cox and Hewitt stated they are planning a fundraiser for the horseshoe pit and disc golf course at the VFW in March or April. They are also looking for volunteers for the disc golf tournament. Cox stated that he will be in contact with a contractor in March for quotes on making 2 sites seasonal, as has been requested in the past. Cox will be continuing to make the campsite pads level. He also stated that there has been request for additional parking for boats or pontoons, but unsure on a location at this time. Hewitt is working with ResNexus on updating the campground map online as it does not accurately reflect where sites are. Hewitt would also like to reach out to update the park and campground flyer as it is outdated. Hewitt and Cox spoke about a 10-day call in process for last minute reservations and have come up with a process to fill the campground as much as possible.

2. Outdoor Recreation Grant (MN DNR): Cox and Hewitt would also like to apply for a matching grant from the DNR that can be used for updates or maintenance to the campground. They will gather more information and present at the next work session meeting.

E. New Business

1. Approve to Hire Chief of Police

Amy Lane was offered the job on January 20th after the City Council and Temporary City Administrator interviewed two applicants at an open meeting session. Lane did accept the Police Chief job at the starting wage of \$41.25/hour (exempt), Step 13. She was offered \$950 towards her health insurance and has requested to receive 40 hours of PTO upfront (in her bank) and to accrue 8 hours per pay period. Start date was anticipated to be February 21, 2023, pending current Court trials.

Main Motion: To approve hiring Amy Lane as the Menahga Chief of Police at the starting wage of \$41.25 per hour, salaried – 40 hours (exempt), Step 13, \$950 towards health insurance and 40 hours of PTO upfront (in her bank) and to accrue 8 hours per pay period following the personnel policy, pending a successful background check and psychological evaluation.

Moved by:	Netland
Seconded	Warmbold
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

2. Approve to Hire City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer

Ahlf recommended the City Council hire Lacey Erickson as the City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer. There was one other applicant for the position, but Ahlf explained that she felt that Erickson had more experience and knowledge of local government.

Main Motion: To approve the hiring of Lacey Erickson as the City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer at step 1 \$33.50/hour (exempt), \$950 towards health insurance per month, 40 hours of PTO upfront, and accrue PTO at 8 hours per pay period effective January 31, 2023.

Moved by:	Bjornson
Seconded	Warmbold
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

3. Approve to Hire Deputy City Clerk

Ahlf recommended to the Council the hiring of Dustyne Hewitt as the Deputy City Clerk with Erickson moving into the Administrator position. Hewitt is willing to move into the position. Hewitt has one year of experience and will be good Admin. support.

Main Motion: To approve the hiring of Dustyne Hewitt as the Deputy Clerk and to authorize the City Administrator to create an offer letter at the rate of \$22.32 per hour following the current Teamsters contract, effective January 31, 2023.

Moved by:	Netland
Seconded	Tomperi
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

4. Approve Betty Thomsen as Consultant

Ahlf has been in contact with Betty Thomsen and she has agreed to contract with the City of Menahga to train the new City Administrator. There is a match-grant with Sourcewell available up to \$10,000 to help cover these costs. Thomsen will provide consulting services for an hourly rate of \$55 per hour, approximately 32 hours per week. Mileage will not be charged, however, drive time will be included in her hours charged to the City. It was the consensus of the Council that Thomsen would not have to carry professional, commercial general liability, error or omission insurance, due to the fact the City Administrator is the responsible individual and currently bonded.

Main Motion: To approve the Consultant Service Contract with Betty Thomsen as a Consultant for \$55 per hour as presented.

Moved by:	Bjornson
Seconded	Netland
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

5. Community Impact Funds for Local Governments (Sourcewell)

Ahlf presented a Community Impact Funds for Local Governments through Sourcewell. These funds can be used to update existing government facilities,

equipment or technology requirements. Funds available are between \$20,000 to \$50,000.

Main Motion: To approve the completion and submission of the Application for the Community Impact Funds for Local Governments through Sourcewell.

Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded	Netland
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

6. Fire Hydrant Clearing – Discussion

Ahlf spoke on fire hydrant cleaning, concerning clearing the snow so there is access to them, if needed. There is no City Ordinance or Fire Department Ordinance on this. According to the National Fire Protection Agency there must be a 3 foot radius around each fire hydrant. Discussion noted it is the responsibility of the City to clear the snow. Public Works is currently working on the snow removal.

F. Unfinished Business

1. Banyon / Neptune 360 Interface

At a previous meeting, Karen Olson from Ferguson Waterworks presented the new software Neptune 360 that they will be switching to in the Fall of 2023. Banyon does not currently interface with Neptune 360. Hewitt received a quote from Banyon to complete the interface. The proposal to complete it was previously tabled due to discussion on switching to Asyst or staying with Banyon. Based on the input Erickson received concerning Asyst, it was decided to stay with Banyon. The proposals are outdated, but Erickson has reached out to obtain new cost proposals.

Main Motion: To approve the upgrade to Neptune 360 and Banyon interface proposals at a total cost of \$6,095.

Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded	Bjornson
Action:	Motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Olson, Bjornson
Opposed:	None.

G. Consideration of Bills

Batch #011823PAY - \$615,465.59

Batch #011923UBPostage - \$211.20 January Utility Billing Postage

Batch #013023PAY - \$52,489.04

The Council discussed the payment for TIF Districts which was a part of the payments. Erickson reported she had a meeting scheduled with Ehlers to go over TIF District information and will present it at that time. Another question was raised on the Eide Bailly invoice concerning the Forensic Audit and the question was when the Report would be completed. Ahlf stated the report will be completed soon.

Main Motion: To approve consideration of bills: Batch #011823PAY-\$615,465.59; Batch #011923UBPostage - \$211.20; and Batch #013023PAY - \$52,489.04, for a total of \$668,165.83.

Moved by:	Netland
Seconded	Warmbold
Action:	Motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Olson, Bjornson
Opposed:	None.

Prior to adjournment, Mayor Olson thanked Laura Ahlf for all her assistance during her term as the Temporary City Administrator/Clerk Treasurer for the City of Menahga, and further stated, that the Council is looking forward to working with Lacey Erickson and Dustyne Hewitt in their new roles.

H. Adjournment

Main Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm.

Moved by:	Warmbold
Seconded by:	Netland
Action:	Motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Tomperi, Warmbold, Netland, Olson, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

Deputy Clerk, Lacey Erickson

Mayor Elizabeth Olson