

**City of Menahga  
Regular City Council Minutes  
October 10, 2023**

**1. Call to Order**

The Menahga City Council held their Regular Monthly Meeting on Tuesday October 10, 2023.

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

**2. Roll Call**

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

Mayor Elizabeth Olson                      Mike Netland                      Dan Warmbold  
Jody Bjornson                      Durwin Tomperi

City Office Staff present: Interim City Clerk/Treasurer Jensine Kurtti

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Additions:

- Add: Under New Business 10. p. Jason Korvela-Mobile Home Court Issue; under Unfinished Business - 11.a. Set Budget Meeting time and date and 11. b. City Clerk Discussion; and under Consideration of Bills, 12. d. IRS payment.

**Main Motion: To approve the agenda as amended.**

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

**5. Communication Appearance Request - None**

## 6. Public Forum and Correspondence

### a. Theo Komulainen – Compost Pile

Theo Komulainen came before the Council asking that the City consider selling or bartering the compost piles out at the City Compost/Brush site. Komulainen works for Randy Becker of Becker Transport, and he said Becker had an interest in working out a deal with the City for compost. The Council directed Komulainen to contact City Clerk Jensine Kurtti on the matter.

### b. Tim Ellingson – Pickleball vs. Tennis

Tim Ellingson stated that he would prefer that the tennis courts remain as they are and if there was a need for pickleball courts, maybe they could be located somewhere else such as the City Campground.

### c. Eric Myhre – Preliminary Levy of 41% Concerns

Eric Myhre came before the Council expressing his concern over the proposed 41% preliminary levy that was reported in the newspapers. Several other Menahga businessowners and residents were in attendance but did not speak. Myhre said that the taxpayers cannot afford these tax increases and thought the City needed to hire a financial planner. Myhre stated that the Council should be able to use the money that is in other City funds to offset a levy increase. The Council explained that all the funds of the City are not for general fund purposes but would try to come up with ways to lower the levy using funds that would be available to them to pay the costs of the City. The Council said that it was a preliminary levy and would be much lower than that before the final levy is certified in December. Other future budget meetings will be scheduled.

## 7. Consent Agenda

### Minutes to Approve:

- a. **September 11, 2023 – Regular Council Meeting Minutes**
- b. **September 14, 2023 – Budget Meeting Minutes**
- c. **September 25, 2023 – Special Meeting/Work Session Minutes**

**Main Motion: To approve the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2023, the September 14, 2023, Budget Meeting Minutes, and September 25, 2023, Special Meeting/Work Session Minutes as presented.**

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

**8. Public Hearings – Portable Recording Systems (Body Cams)**

Mayor Olson opened the Public Hearing at 6:29 p.m., announcing the purpose of the hearing was according to Minnesota Statutes 626.8473, whereby the City must hold a Public Hearing prior to the implementation of body cameras by the Menahga Police Department. Olson asked for any public comment; hearing none she closed the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m.

**9. Acknowledgment/Motion of receipt of Board/Commission Minutes.**

**a. Greenwood Connections Board Minutes and Report.**

Administrator Laura Ahlf presented her monthly report to the Council. She stated the resident census was 52 as of October 10, 2023. The month of September showed a positive bottom line of \$395,949.14, with a year-to-date net income/profit of \$1,094,981.34.

Ahlf stated that the board has approved the final draft of the proposed City Ordinance change, which governs the operations of the facility. The Council directed that the Ordinance be forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Committee for comment and to schedule a Public Hearing if needed.

Ahlf had received a quote from Graham Refrigeration for an air conditioner for the kitchen for 2024. The GWC Board asked that Ahlf seek a second proposal. The board had approved working with Blue Cross and Blue Shield for the Health Insurance Plan for 2024. The GWC Board will also be exploring long-term planning for Greenwood Connections.

**Main Motion: To approve the GWC Administrator Report and Financial Report, as presented excluding the Ordinance approval.**

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

**b. Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes – Informational Only**

**10. New Business**

**a. Joint Powers Agreement Termination – Wadena & Hubbard County SWAT**

Notice was received from the Wadena County Sheriff Dept. regarding the termination of a 2005 Joint Powers Agreement for the Wadena/Hubbard County

Emergency Response Unit (SWAT Team). The group is not disbanding, but due to insurance issues is reorganizing. No action was taken at this meeting.

**b. Resolution #2023-37 Grain Bin Safety Kit**

The Menahga Fire Dept. was awarded a Grain Bin Rescue Unit from AgCountry Farm Credit Services. The value of the award is \$4,550 and includes an in-person training session for the firemen on its use.

**Main Motion: To approve and accept Resolution #2023-37, a donation of a Grain Bin Safety Kit from AgCountry, with a value of \$4,550.**

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

**Resolution #2023-38 Fire Grant \$2,500**

The Menahga Fire Dept. has received a Volunteer Fire Assistance Matching Grant (VFA) for 2024, from the Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry. This grant once received will be used for the purchase of a fire hose.

**Main Motion: To accept Resolution #2023-38, a Volunteer Fire Assistance Matching Grant from the MN DNR in the amount of \$2,500.**

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

**c. Designation of Polling Place 2024 – Resolution #2023-35**

Minnesota Statute 204B.16, Subd. 1 requires that the City designate a polling place for the following year. The City of Menahga is designates the Menahga City Hall located at 115 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE, Menahga, MN.

**Main Motion: To approve Resolution #2023-35 which designates the 2024 polling place location as the Menahga City Hall located at 115 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE, Menahga, MN.**

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

**d. Community Concern for Youth Program Sponsorship**

The Todd-Wadena Community Concern for Youth Program (CCY) is asking for the City of Menahga to continue to sponsor its' program. The Menahga School contributes to this on an annual basis with a sponsorship amount of \$4,213. The amount requested from the City for 2024 is \$1,679.

**Main Motion: To adopt Resolution #2023-39 approving the Sponsorship request of the Todd-Wadena CCY program for \$1,679.**

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

**e. MN Small Cities Membership**

The Minnesota Association of Small Cities is asking for the City's continued membership in their organization. The amount of membership dues for July 2023 through June 2024 is \$757.05.

**Main Motion: To approve the request for membership in the Minnesota Association of Small Cities at a cost of \$757.05.**

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

**f. Initiative Foundation Sponsorship 2024 - \$725**

The Initiative Foundation is requesting a contribution of \$725 for the 2024 funding year. The City of Menahga has contributed to the Initiative Foundation for several years and have been the recipient of the many programs that they have to offer.

**Main Motion: To approve the request for funding of \$725 to the Initiative Foundation for 2024.**

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

**g. Menahga Public School Pickleball Discussion**

Mayor Olson would like to be involved with a community group that is working together with the Menahga School to explore the possibility of converting part, or all of the School owned tennis courts, into pickleball courts. The Council, by consensus, agreed that she could be a participant on this committee.

**h. Tree Removal at St. Urho Park**

Ralph Cox, who is responsible for the City parks, had asked that three trees be removed from the St. Urho Park area by the pavilion, as they are rotten and could possibly damage the pavilion. Previously a quote was received from D&N Lawn care for \$1,500 for the removal of trees and cleanup, as well as grinding the stumps. Public Works Director Ron Yliniemi mentioned that there was also a tree that should be removed by the school for an additional \$600. Ralph stated that he had now received a new quote on the tree removal, and it was for \$2,575 from D&N for the removal of all three trees, stump grinding and cleanup. The Council asked Cox to seek out additional quotes.

**i. Body Cams Action/Discussion**

The Menahga Police Dept. received a donation from the Menahga VFW for the purchase of Body Cameras for the Department. A Public Hearing was held earlier in the meeting and there was no comment written or in-person for or against their implementation.

**Main Motion: To approve the implementation of the Portable Recording Systems (Body Cameras) by the Menahga Police Department.**

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

**j. Ulteig Agreement Novation (substitution)**

Ulteig Engineers, Inc. is shifting its' primary U.S. contracting entity to Ulteig Operations, LLC. It is asking for the City to update their information and sign all future contracts with its' new name. This change will be effective January 1, 2024.

**Main Motion: To approve the substitution of the Ulteig Engineers, Inc. Contracting documents to Ulteig Operations, LLC effective January 1, 2024.**

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

**k. MNDOT Contract (Baxter, Detroit Lakes, Bemidji)**

The City of Menahga is in three MNDOT Districts. All three of these districts have separate contracts that must be signed yearly. City Clerk/Treasurer Jensine Kurtti asked for approval to sign all three contracts for the City, so that the contracts can be returned in a timely manner.

**Main Motion: To approve the MNDOT Contracts with the Bemidji District, Baxter District, and Detroit Lakes District for the upcoming Winter season for reimbursement of snow removal from MNDOT.**

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

**l. August 2023 City Financial Information – Information Only**

Jensine Kurtti provided the Council with the August 2023 Budget Year-to-Date Revenue and Expense Report, and check reconciliation reports. No action taken

**m. Maguire Iron Payment Request - \$75,970**

Ulteig Engineers submitted a bill requesting payment to Maguire Iron in the amount of \$75,970. With this payment the Water Tower Project is 99.82% complete. All that is left on the project is the final site grading and seeding to be completed in the Spring at a value of \$5,000.

**Main Motion: To approve the payment to Maguire Iron for \$75,970.**

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

**n. Advertise for Full-Time Police Officer**

The City of Menahga Police Dept. has received a resignation letter from Officer Joe White dated September 28, 2023. Officer White’s last date of employment with the City will be October 20, 2023. Chief Lane would like to advertise for a full-time officer to fill that position.

**Main Motion: To approve advertising immediately for a full-time police officer for the Menahga Police Dept.**

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

**o. Jason Korvela - Mobile Home Park**

Jason Korvela is the current owner of the mobile home park located at the southeast corner of the City of Menahga. This park was developed by Onie Samuelson in the late 1970's and has been in continual operation since that time. When Samuelson came to the City for permission to develop his property, he had a drawing of the entire proposed development. The Council at that time voted to approve his plan. It appears that the plan was not sent to Wadena County to be recorded, and therefore does not show up on County records. Korvela asked the Council to consider ratifying the decision of the past Council and allow him to expand according to the original plan from 1977. (Note: It was suggested that Mr. Korvela record the plan so there would be no further questions in the future regarding this property).

**Main Motion: To approve Jason Korvela's request to continue developing his Mobile Home Park, as approved by the original plan from 1977.**

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

**11. Unfinished Business**

**a. Set Budget Meeting Date and Time**

Jensine Kurtti asked if the Council could set a date and time for their next 2024 Budget Meeting. It was decided that the meeting will be held October 16, 2023 at 5 p.m.

**b. City Clerk Discussion**

Jensine Kurtti informed the Council that the water bills are being reviewed and corrections are being made. Kurtti stated that late fees on water bills had only been charged once since January 2022.

Kurtti asked the Council for guidance as to how to handle the computer server room

which is in a locked room located in the north kitchen area (since early 2023). In the past this area has been used by the Fire Relief Assn. as a pass-through from the kitchen to the fire hall during their annual pancake feed. By consensus it was decided that for security purposes, this area should not be used for access, as it would expose the servers to unauthorized personnel and patrons of the pancake feed. Kurtti will notify Chief Kicker to use the main hallway for their access needs. Kurtti asked the Council what process that they wanted to use to review the applications for the City Clerk/Treasurer position. The Council by consensus decided that they would only consider applicants that have municipal experience in their job history. Kurtti will contact the applicants to inform them of the Council’s decision.

## 12. Consideration of Bills

The Council members were provided with the actual invoices for the following batches:

- a. Batch #092823PAY - \$53,115.24
- b. Batch #093023EFT - \$61,991.91
- c. Batch #101023PAY - \$87,478.61
- d. IRS \$2,739.36

**Main Motion: To approve the payment of the following:**

**Batch #092823PAY – \$53,115.24; Batch #093023EFT- \$61,991.91; Batch #101023PAY - \$87,478.61; and Batch #IRS - \$2,739.36 for a total amount of \$205,325.12.**

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

## 13. Adjournment

**Main Motion: To adjourn at 7:28 pm.**

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

Interim City Clerk/Treasurer, Jensine Kurtti

Mayor, Elizabeth Olson