

**City of Menahga**  
**Special Meeting/Work Session City Council Minutes**  
**Monday, October 31, 2022 at 6:00 pm**

**A. Call to Order**

The Menahga City Council held a Special Meeting/Work Session Meeting Monday, October 31, 2022.

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	Dan Warmbold
Robyn Keranen (arrived at 6:37 pm)	Jody Bjornson	

Staff present: Temporary City Administrator Laura Ahlf  
Temporary Administrative Assistant Jensine Kurtti

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

**D. Departmental Reports**

• **Police Department – Adam Gunderson**

Chief Gunderson presented the department’s monthly report. The department had a total of 175 calls from 9/26/22 to 10/27/22. Gunderson was asked about the status of the Vandalism/Hate Crime incidents, he stated that he had interviewed several students and their parents, which resulted in having zero suspects. The video tapes that he had, did not show any clear faces as they were wearing hoodies. The council asked Gunderson if he had asked the Sheriff’s Department for help, he replied that he had not. The council then discussed the possibility of offering a reward, which will be discussed at a later meeting. Tomperi asked if Chief Gunderson had written any citations in the past month, whereupon Gunderson stated he had not written any citations.

Tomperi asked about enforcement of the "Jake Brake" ordinance, wondering if any citations had been written, Gunderson replied that he had not written any. Council Members remarked that even with the signs, many truckers are still using "Jake Brakes" within the City during the day and evening.

- **Public Works/Streets – Ron Yliniemi**

- 1. Monthly Report**

- Ron Yliniemi presented the Council with his monthly report. Yliniemi reported that the Campground, Beach and St. Urho had all been winterized. All Public Works vehicles had been DOT Certified, Payloader was serviced. The Public Works Dept. will be implementing a snow removal log and will be informing the public of the Snow Removal Policy. The Water Meter Reader will have to be updated, The Neptune system that the City currently uses, will soon be replaced with Neptune 360. A presentation will be made on the new system at the November Council Meeting.

- Yliniemi then reported that the Clear Well #1 and #2 had been inspected by Thein Well. Well # 1 was operating within normal limits, but Well #2 pitless discharge unit is leaking and they recommended that it be replaced next Spring or Summer.

- 2. MN Dept. of Health – Manganese Sampling Summary – Informational Only**

- 3. Happy Hour Lift Station**

- Repair on the Happy Hour Lift Station was discussed last month, and the Council felt that Yliniemi should get at least two quotes on all repairs. The quote from Minnesota Pump was \$10,815.50 and Electric Pump (EP) was \$9,775.00.

**Main Motion: To approve the quote from EP Electric Pump in the amount of \$9,775.00 for repair to the Happy Hour Lift Station.**

Moved by:	Bjornson
Seconded by:	Warmbold
Action:	Motion carried by a 4-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

- 4. Storm Water Pond Bid (behind City Hall).**

- Yliniemi stated that the Storm Water Pond to the north of City Hall needed maintenance. Sand had washed down in the pond and trees had grown in

there. He had obtained a quote from J&S Handyman (Jeff Schindeldecker) for the removal of sand and trees for \$2,500. No other quotes were given as most of the contractors were all booked up until next Spring.

**Main Motion: To approve the quote from J&S Handyman for the removal of sand and trees from the Storm Water Pond at a cost of \$2,500.**

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

- **Campground – Ralph Cox**

1. Campground Manager Ralph Cox was not in attendance, but he had provided the council with a Banyon Expenditure Work Sheet and an Excel Work Sheet of Revenue for the year-to-date 2022 season in the amount of \$26,689.84. Jensine Kurtti explained that in 2023 the Banyon City Park Department will have a more accurate reflection in the financial statement since Alvina Kytta had reassigned some revenue codes that were now in the General Fund, to the City Park revenues.

- **Northbound Spirits – Rachael Pietila**

- 1. Monthly Report –**

Assistant Manager Rachael Pietila reported that the Halloween Party was a success and had over \$3,700 in sales. There have been two applications for Manager and interviews are planned with council action to be taken at the November 14, 2022 Council Meeting. Maintenance issues at the Liquor Store were discussed. Ralph Cox had been making a list of maintenance needs for the Liquor Store with one issue being the need for a new bar sink. The Council thanked Rachael for making sure the Liquor Store operations have been taken care of in the absence of a Manager.

- 2. New Year’s Eve Craig Mullen’s DJ - \$400**

Pietila asked the Council if she could hire Craig Mullen’s DJ Service for New Year’s Eve at a cost of \$400.

**Main Motion: To approve the Liquor Store obtaining the services of Craig Mullen DJ Services for 12-31-22 at a cost of \$400.**

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

- **Administration – Laura Ahlf**

**1. Extend Deadline for City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer Position**

Laura Ahlf asked the Council if they felt that the application deadline for the City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer should be extended. Currently the deadline is October 25, 2022, at 4 pm. Ahlf said that two applications were received earlier and three had just come in over the weekend through Indeed, but none of the five applicants have municipal government experience. The Council felt municipal experience was important and by consensus decided to extend until November 23, 2022 at 4 pm.

**2. Approve City Auditor for 2023**

Carlson SV had sent a Letter of Engagement to the City of Menahga for the 2022 Yearly Audit. Laura Ahlf commented that Carlson SV has been the City Auditing Firm for several years, and that Auditor Dean Birkeland was very familiar with the workings of the City of Menahga.

**Main Motion: To approve the Audit Engagement Letter from Carlson SV for the 2022 Audit.**

Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded by:	Warmbold
Action:	Motion carried by a 4-1 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Bjornson
Opposed:	Keranen

**3. RFP City Criminal Attorney**

Ramstad and Skoyles of Detroit Lakes is the current Criminal Attorney for the City of Menahga. Ramstad and Skoyles charges a flat fee of \$800 per month. In August, 2019 the contract was raised from \$600 to \$800 a month due to the number of hours for prosecution services being higher than estimated. An RFP has not been done since the flat fee has been increased. The Council felt that an RFP should be done and see if the City's prosecution services contract could be handled differently.

**Main Motion: To approve going out for RFP'S (Request for Proposals) for the City Criminal Attorney for 2023.**

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

**4. Balance Sheet, Revenue and Expense Report – September 2022**

The Council was given the City of Menahga's Balance Sheet and Year-to-Date Revenue and Expense Reports through September 2022. These reports showed year-to-date activity for all the City Departments and Accounts.

**5. Bank Reconciliation for 2022 – Informational Only**

The Council was given copies of monthly Bank Reconciliations for 2022. Alvina Kytta had made all the necessary adjustments that were needed to reconcile the bank accounts, as these had not been done since mid-2019.

- **Fire Department – Fire Chief Dave Kicker**

**1. Monthly Report**

Dave Kicker presented the council with his monthly report. Kicker said that it has been quiet with only one mutual aid call with Park Rapids in October. Kicker said that the Fire Relief Assn. had raised \$2,700 on their Annual Pancake Breakfast.

Kicker asked the Council if they would consider raising the Fire Relief Assn. Benefit amount from \$1,600 to \$2,000 a year for each year of service. Kicker said that 4 Firemen (Jim Day, Terry Berttunen, Randy Berttunen and Dave Kicker) have enough years to retire, but none are retiring at this time. Kicker said that to be eligible to retire you must be 57 years old. It was noted that once approved by the City, the City would be liable for any shortfall in the benefit amount should the Fire Relief Assn. Funds not cover the amount to be paid out at retirement. Kicker asked the City to approve Anthony Juntunen as a Fireman.

**Main Motion: To approve an increase for the Fire Relief Association benefit amount from \$1600 to \$2000 per year of service.**

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

**Main Motion: To approve hiring Anthony Juntunen as a new Fireman, providing he receives a satisfactory background check.**

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

**2. Annual Fire Committee Meeting with Townships – November 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.**

Dave Kicker felt that before they meet with the townships, he would like to have the City Representatives meet and go over the Fire Department operations.

**E. New Business**

**1. Liquor Store Manager Applications/Hiring –**

Two applications had been received and interviews were going to be held. Council Action is planned for the November 14, 2022 Meeting.

**2. Allocate Funds from Motor Grader Sale –**

The \$200,000 payment for the Motor Grader had been received and deposited into the General Fund Account 101-43100-34956. These funds will be allocated in the future by Council action.

**3. MN Assn of Small Cities Membership –**

**Main Motion: To join the MN Assn of Small Cities Membership for July, 2022 - June, 2023 at a cost of \$753.00.**

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

**4. VFW Annual Renewal Liquor License –**

The Menahga VFW would like to apply for their 2023 Liquor License. The one change that has been made from previous years, is the addition of Sunday Liquor.

**Main Motion: To approve the Menahga VFW Liquor License application for 2023 in the total amount of \$300.00.**

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

**5. Bond Purchase and Loan Agreement – Water Tower PFA**

Laura Ahlf provided the Council with the information on the Bond purchase and Loan Agreement from the Public Finance Authority (PFA). This General Obligation Water Revenue Note will be for \$614,500 and will be used to pay the remainder of the water tower construction expenses. This Note is for 20 years at a rate of 1.524 per annum. Roll call vote was taken with Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Keranen and Bjornson present.

**Main Motion: To approve Resolution 2022-040 accepting the MN PFA \$614,500 General Obligation Water revenue Note 2022A.**

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

**NOTE:** Resolution # 2022-040 will not be embedded because it is 15 pages long. The entire resolution is available on the City’s website on the October 31, 2022 meeting or can be viewed during business hours at the Clerk’s Office at the Menahga City Hall.

**6. Huebner Council Payment**

The motion made on October 11, 2022 for payment to the Estate of Art Huebner was calculated incorrectly. The \$1,550 was the amount that would have been paid for the 19 meetings that the council had held in 2022, from 1-1-22 to 8-26-22. Council Member Huebner had only attended 14 of those meetings for a total payment of \$1,280. At the time of his death Art Huebner had outstanding bills with the City for data request copies and reimbursement of unauthorized legal fees.

**Main Motion: To rescind the motion made on October 11, 2022. "To approve payment to the Estate of Art Huebner for his attendance at the 2022 Council Meetings (less outstanding charges of \$238.75) in the amount of \$1,311.25."**

Moved by:	Bjornson
Seconded by:	Tomperi
Action:	Motion carried by a 4-0 voice vote Abstain: Keranen
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

**Main Motion: To approve payment to the Estate of Art Huebner in the amount of \$1,280 for the Council Meetings that he attended. Huebner's outstanding bill will be sent to the Art Huebner Estate separately.**

Moved by:	Warmbold
Seconded by:	Bjornson
Action:	Motion carried by a 4-0 voice vote Abstain: Keranen
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Warmbold, Bjornson
Opposed:	None

## **F. Unfinished Business**

### **1. Snow Removal Discussion**

This item was discussed briefly earlier in the meeting, Public Works Director Ron Yliniemi wanted to discuss how the sidewalks will be handled for the upcoming winter. The ordinance says that they must be cleaned within 24 hours of the snow ending. In the past many adjoining properties have not removed the snow from their sidewalks, as it is very difficult for some property owners to keep them clean based on the timing of the MNDOT Snowplowing. Yliniemi said that since the City has an agreement with MNDOT to share the cost of removing the snow on Highway 71 and Highway 87, the City will remove more of the accumulated snow from the sides of the highway. One method was for the City to remove the snow and bill the property owner for the removal. Yliniemi said that no cost has ever been put on the Fee Schedule for the service. The Council felt that Yliniemi should come up with a proposed cost and bring it back to the Council for approval. Yliniemi will also place an Ad in the Review Messenger reminding property owners of the 24-Hour requirement.



## 2. Unsold Excess Property Disposal

In May of 2022 the Menahga City Council approved the sale of excess property by Resolution #2022-028. The excess property was advertised and sold by sealed bids, except for one Smart Board. The council discussed the matter and Laura Ahlf stated that one individual had asked about it. By consensus the Council agreed to sell the Smart Board for \$1.00.

## G. Consideration of Bills

- **Batch #10312022PAY - \$30,384.60, Batch #10252022UBPostage - \$258.72 and Batch #10202022PAY - \$22,186.68**
- **2. EFT Batch #093022EFT - \$46,718.04**

**Main Motion: To approve the bills as presented for a total of \$99,548.04.**

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

## H. Adjournment

**Main Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm.**

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

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Jensine Kurtti  
Temporary Administrative Assistant

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Mayor Elizabeth Olson