

**City of Menahga
Special Meeting/Work Session City Council Minutes
Monday, August 29, 2022**

NOTE: The City Council conducted a walk-through of the City-Owned buildings prior to the meeting at 4:30 pm.

A. Call to Order

The Menahga City Council held a Special Meeting/Work Session Meeting Monday, August 29, 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 Absent: Art Huebner

Staff present: Betty Thomsen and Jensine Kurtti

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Departmental Reports

• **Police Department – Adam Gunderson**

Chief Gunderson failed to provide the required the monthly report for the council. Gunderson was asked about the status of the remaining two city-owned vehicles that were not declared excess property or sold on sealed bids that are parked on the east side of City Hall. Gunderson stated that one of the cars will be sold back to the owner and the other will be picked up by Kenny Phillips.

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

Ron Yliniemi presented the Council with his monthly report. He reported that they are in the process of painting the hydrants on the west side of town. Yliniemi has implemented the use of daily work tickets and vehicle maintenance checklist sheets. Beach issues were discussed at length. Yliniemi

reported that there was vandalism at the beach again and that the derogatory remarks (hate speech) had been painted over again. Yliniemi stated that the dock and buoys would be coming out this week.

Yliniemi supplied the council with a street history sheet as to when the tarred streets had been constructed and seal coated. Yliniemi felt that 1st Street South should be done in 2023.

Yliniemi contacted MNDOT regarding the 87/71 intersection about limiting the parking on that corner for safety concerns. MNDOT replied that 30 ft. from the intersection could be painted as no parking without additional signage. MNDOT also reported that a 4-way stop was not warranted at this time based on traffic.

Yliniemi will contact Wadena County regarding the Caterpillar Road Grader that the City has decided to sell. Yliniemi reported the value is between \$195,000 and \$210,000 when he used the equipment value program from Ziegler's. The Council agreed that the grader could be offered to Wadena County for \$200,000.

Yliniemi had also received a quote from Pro Contractors for new roofs on the City Hall (\$60,691.15) and Shop Building (\$32,163.18), which was for informational purposes for future budgeting.

The council thanked Yliniemi for his report and getting them the information that they had asked for earlier.

Main Motion: To adopt Resolution # 2022-034 to offer the Sale of Road Grader to Wadena County for \$200,000.00.

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

CITY OF MENAHGA, MINNESOTA Resolution No. 2022-034

Sale of Road Grader

WHEREAS the City Council of the City of Menahga MN owns a 2011 Caterpillar, 140M Motor Grader, serial 0B9D02461, stock N4962, 14' moldboard + 2' extension, 12' Cat wing with hydraulic brace, air conditioning and stereo, 14 X 24 tires, has positive traction, with 1,821.4 hours on the unit.

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined to exercise it's rights under MN Statute 471.64, which allows for a city to sell to another political subdivision of the state, equipment without regard to statutory or charter provisions.

LET IT BE RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Menahga MN does hereby authorize the sale of the 2011 Caterpillar Motor Grader to the Wadena County Highway Department, as is, where is, with all faults, another political subdivision of the State, the aforementioned Caterpillar Motor Grader at a cost of \$200,000.00

Adopted by the City Council this 29th day of August, 2022.

Elizabeth Olson, Mayor

Betty J Thomsen, Temporary City Administrator

- **Campground – Ralph Cox**
Campground Manager Ralph Cox provided the council with a revenue and expenditure work sheet for the season. Cox has been working on leveling sites to accommodate larger RV's, as well as limbing trees at beach, cemetery and campground. He has been making improvements to the St. Urho Disc Golf Course and Horseshoe Pits, mentioning that he is working with the VFW on a fundraiser to improve the horseshoe pits.
- **Northbound Spirits - Renata Parks**
Renata Parks was absent but had sent the August month-to-date sales figures for the council to review.
- **Administration – Betty Thomsen**
Betty Thomsen gave the council an updated 2nd draft of the 2023 Expenditures 3-year Budget, which included changes as per the 8-26-22 Budget Meeting. Thomsen provided a spreadsheet with two options for the preliminary levy. One option without the sale of the Motor Grader at an approximate levy of 13.85% over the 2022 levy, and one with the sale of the Motor Grader which result in a 4.65% increase over the 2022 levy. Thomsen also presented a sheet of all the City departments overtime in 2022. It was broken down by department. The Year-to-Date added expense were as follows: Administration was \$3,498.74, Police Department was \$8,075.15 and Public Works was \$5,148.59.
Thomsen stated that she would like to make a couple statements for the record. She stated that Banyon is working fine, and it was not fair to

blame the computer program for the lack of accurate financial information. Thomsen also wanted to let the public know that it has been pretty tough some days, as some of the citizens have been very rude when they come into City Hall.

- **Approve the 2021 Audit as presented to the Council on 8-26-22**
The council felt that what was presented by Dean Birkeland was a satisfactory depiction of the City’s financials for 2021. Betty Thomsen made a statement that usually the administrative costs of a city is 37% and public safety is about 27%. In Menahga it is the opposite, with Public Safety at 37%. Thomsen wanted to point out that at the end of 2020 the cash balances were off by \$328,000 and after reviewing every transaction of the prior staff, Deputy Clerk Alvina Kytta had that amount down to \$17,000, which Kytta is still looking for. Dean Birkeland stated that the \$17,000 was in an acceptable range.

Main Motion: To accept the audit for the year 2021 as presented by Dean Birkeland from the CarlsonSV firm.

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

- **Fire Department – Dave Kicker**
Dave Kicker was absent, and no report was provided.

E. New Business

1. Sand at Beach –

Ron Yliniemi had contacted Black Diamond Concrete for a quote on pushing the beach sand back up by the retaining wall as the footings were showing. The quote came back at \$4,700. Yliniemi also contacted Menahga Concrete for a quote on bringing in new washed sand, which would be \$21 a yard.

Main Motion: To approve the purchase of washed sand from Menahga Concrete at an estimated cost of \$2,100.00 for 100 yards.

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

2. Vandalism – Discussion/Action

Betty Thomsen spoke on behalf of the recent acts of vandalism that have been occurring in Menahga (none of which had resulted in any arrests by law enforcement). There were two instances of Hate Speech that had been spray painted on a private business, as well as the City Beach. The Council was very disturbed that this could be happening and felt that more could be done including more nighttime hours being patrolled. Several people in the large audience voiced their opinions and concerns and felt that if it was not addressed it could become a more serious problem. The Council discussed the possibility of having a reward for information, leading to the arrest of the perpetrators. Chief Gunderson stated he had a couple of leads and would have more information within two weeks. One person asked that if it turns out to be juveniles, what could they do to them. Gunderson said that Hate Crimes are a Felony no matter what the age was of the person.

Main Motion: To adopt Resolution (# 2022-033) by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Menahga Condemning Hate Speech.

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

CITY OF MENAHGA, MINNESOTA

CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2022-033

**A RESOLUTION BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MENAHGA, MINNESOTA
CONDEMNING HATE SPEECH**

WHEREAS, the City of Menahga recognizes and celebrates the diversity of the Menahga community, including people of all nationalities, races, religions, beliefs, and identities;

WHEREAS, the City of Menahga is dedicated to creating a safe and welcoming community for all to live, work, and visit;

WHEREAS, over the past several months, public and private property in the City of Menahga has been vandalized, destroyed, and marked with hateful speech toward members of our community, based on their race, creed, and identity;

WHEREAS, the serious crimes described above are atrocious acts of cowardice, intended to divide and instill fear in the Menahga community;

WHEREAS, the felony crimes described above are yet-unsolved, but there are likely people in or connected to the Menahga community who have information that could lead to the identification of those responsible;

WHEREAS, the City of Menahga wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the well-being and safety of all people, especially the people of the Black, Indigenous, LatinX, Jewish, Muslim, Arab, Asian American, LGBTQI communities, and stand against all hate speech acts that target them.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THAT:

1. The Mayor and City Council of Menahga strongly condemn all acts of hatred, intolerance, and divisiveness, and commit to addressing any such acts committed in the City of Menahga through strong enforcement of all applicable laws and the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community.
2. The Mayor and City Council of Menahga encourage anyone with information that may lead to the identification and apprehension of those responsible for the acts described above to contact the Menahga Police Department or their local law enforcement agency.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Menahga on this 29th day of August, 2022.

ATTEST

City Clerk

Mayor

3. Appoint Responsible Authority

Minnesota Statute 13.02, Sub 16 as amended, requires that the City of Menahga appoint one person as the Responsible Authority to administer the requirements for collection, storage, use and dissemination of data on individuals, within the City. Interim City Administrator Laura Ahlf will fill the position until a permanent City Administrator is hired.

Main Motion: To adopt Resolution #2022-032 appointing Laura Ahlf as the Responsible Authority for the City of Menahga.

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

City of Menahga, Minnesota

Resolution #2022-032

A Resolution Appointing a Responsible Authority

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, section 13.02, Subdivision 16, as amended, requires that the City of Menahga appoint one person as the Responsible Authority to administer the requirements for collection, storage, use and dissemination of data on individuals, within the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of Menahga City Council shares concern expressed by the legislature on the responsible use of all City data and wishes to satisfy this concern by immediately appointing an administratively qualified Responsible Authority as required under the statute.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council of the City of Menahga appoint **Laura Ahlf** as the Responsible Authority for the purposes of meeting all requirements of Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13, as amended, and with rules as lawfully promulgated by the Commissioner of Administration as published in the State Register on January 18, 2014.

Adopted by the City Council the 29th day of August, 2022.

Betty J. Thomsen, Temporary
City Administrator

Elizabeth Olson, Mayor

4. Designation of Duties in Absence of a City Administrator and Appointment of Interim City Administrator.

Betty Thomsen spoke to the council on efforts that she had made to try and find a new City Administrator. She explained that her position was a temporary one, and that her last day at the City of Menahga will be

August 31, 2022. Thomsen informed the council that she had spoke with Greenwood Connections Administrator Laura Ahlf

Main Motion: To appoint Laura Ahlf as the Interim Administrator effective September 1, 2022 with the duties outlined in the supplemental sheet of information and that Mayor Olson and Councilmember Durwin Tomperi will work out the financial aspect of the appointment. Ahlf’s appointment will include being one of the official signatories for the City of Menahga, for checks, contracts, etc.

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

5. Consideration of Sale of City-Owned Lots.

Betty Thomsen explained that it was discovered that the City of Menahga owned 4 Lots in the Odland’s Addition. Due to the fact that the city has very few buildable parcels, city staff was trying to identify some of the vacant lots in the City and came across these four lots. Three of the lots are in Odland’s Pine Acres 4th Addition (Block 1, Lots 1,2,3) and one lot in the Odland’s Pine Acres 5th Addition (Block 1, Lot 1). These lots were purchased by the City in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s as they were located next to the cemetery. These lots are in a residential area that is supplied with City Water & Sewer and all assessments have been paid on these parcels. The council felt that the best use of this property will be to put them back on the tax rolls, and that other areas of the cemetery can be used for future expansion. The council decided to investigate the matter and bring it back at the next Regular Council Meeting.

6. Campground Manager Wage Increase

Betty Thomsen wanted to inform the council that she had researched employee Ralph Cox’s employment with the City and discovered that he had not had a raise in several years. Thomsen felt that he is a real asset and has done a great job managing the Campground this year, as well as other maintenance items. Thomsen said that the 2023 Budget has Cox’s position at \$19.00/hour and asked the council if the increase could be given effective September 1, 2022. The council agreed that Ralph Cox deserved a wage increase.

Main Motion: To increase the Campground Manager, Ralph Cox's wages to \$19.00/hour effective September 1, 2022.

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

F. Consideration of Bills

- **Batch #082922PAY - \$105,920.80**
- **EFT 073122 - \$60,348.49**

Robyn Keranen asked about the bill from WileyWeberLaw for \$1,190. Thomsen replied that there was a complaint that required that the City have an outside investigation preformed.

Main Motion: To approve and pay the bills as presented: Batch 082922PAY in the amount of \$105,920.80 and EFT 073122 in the amount of \$60,348.49 for a total of \$166,269.29

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

G. Adjournment

Main Motion: To adjourn at 7:25 pm.

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

Acting Clerk, Jensine Kurtti

Mayor Elizabeth Olson

Temporary Administrative Support Tech.