

**MENAHGA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**Monday, September 10, 2018**

The Regular Meeting of the Menahga City Council was held in the Council Chambers on Monday, September 10, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Mayor Pat Foss.

Present: Mayor Pat Foss, Council Members Craig Lawrey, Tim Ellingson, Roger Henstorf and Larry Karjala.

Staff present: City Administrator Gina Ellingson, Public Works Director Frank Thelin, Police Chief Scott Koennicke, Police Officer Keith Waaraniemi, Liquor Store Manager Renata Parks, Attorney Jeff Pederson and Greenwood Connections Administrator Laura Ahlfs

Guests Present: Rob Weaver-Fire Relief Association Treasurer, Dan Huebsch-Wadena County CCY, Dave Hillukka-Economic Alliance, Brian Kabat-Uniti Towers, Adam Ripple-Rinke Noonan, Robyn Keranen and Arthur Huebner.

**Approval of Agenda**

Approval of minutes

- a. August 13, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes
- b. August 22, 2018 Special Meeting Minutes

**Motion by Henstorf, to approve minutes as presented.**

**A member from the audience, Art Huebner had a question regarding some of the minutes, although the minutes he was referring to were from July and had been approved at the August meeting. He questioned why there was a change in the administrator position level being offered when there was another candidate being considered.**

**Another member from the audience, Robyn Keranen, also had questions regarding the minutes and whether the mayor had the authority to negotiate salaries. Mayor Foss answered the questions, stating he brought forth a counter offer and that the council approved the appointment at a Level 10 at the Special meeting held on July 23rd.**

**Communications and Appearance Requests:**

Dave Hillukka, with Economic Alliance was present to review the various sponsorship levels. At his request for the City to fund at the \$10,000 level, Mayor Foss explained that the Council will be discussing this further over the next few months during budget planning.

Rob Weaver, fire relief association treasurer, was present to request the Council increase the annual benefit level from \$1,300 to \$1,600/year of service. Based on the association's current asset level, the request would not require additional municipal contribution. The request was tabled until a future meeting.

**Public Input:** None

### **Reports by Departments:**

Laura Ahlf, Greenwood Connections Administrator: Administrator Ahlf reviewed the September 4, 2018 Greenwood Connections September Board Meeting Minutes and recommendations including payment of the August 2018 bills, July 2018 financial report, accepted employee hire/termination/separated report, scholarship awards, ECPN update, IT support needs, potential VA contract, building project update-hoping for a September 17<sup>th</sup> completion date.

**Motion by Ellingson, seconded by Karjala, to approve the Greenwood Connections September 4, 2018 Board meeting minutes and financials, as presented, all in favor, motion carried.**

Gina Ellingson, City Administrator: Administrator Ellingson reported on a meeting with Ryan Miles of Ehlers, the financial firm handling the city's investments. Mr Miles will be attending the October meeting to clarify some questions regarding the investment costs and returns. Also reported on a building permit request from Scott Maaninga to build a structure on a land locked parcel on the South side of Spirit Lake. He is requesting an easement from the City on the campground property to access his property. Because he is unable to obtain an easement from the adjacent property owner, he is requesting the City to give an easement entirely on the Campground property along the West edge of the parcel. The alternative to an easement would be petitioning for a cartway. Council members Ellingson and Karjala felt the City should let Mr. Maaninga petition for the cartway.

Scott Koennecke, Police Chief: Chief Koennecke presented the call stats for August. Police Officer Waaranimi requested the Council's approval for a software license.

He currently spends 3-4 hours per week submitting reports to State and Federal agencies and this software would streamline the process and would take minutes to complete the reporting process. They asked for approval of the \$6,280 fee, payable in 2019 and confirmed the expense was included in the amounts submitted for the 2019 preliminary levy. An approving resolution will be submitted at the next Council meeting.

**Motion by Henstorf, seconded by Karjala, to approve the software purchase and training fee of \$6,280 payable in 2019, all in favor, motion carried.**

Chief Koennecke requested approval to hire Pam Hodgden as a part time police officer. Officer Hodgden works for Leech Lake currently and would work minimal hours as needed.

**Motion to approve the hiring of Pam Hogden as a part time police officer made by Henstorf, seconded by Ellingson, all in favor, motion carried.**

The meeting was closed at 8:28 p.m. for discussion of negotiation for the newly formed police union.

The meeting reopened at 8:53 p.m.

**Motion by Henstorf to form a Police Union Negotiation Committee with Council member Karjala and Mayor Foss serving on the committee and Ellingson as alternate, seconded by Lawrey, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Frank Thelin, Utilities Superintendent: Superintendent Thelin reported the fire hydrants for the nursing home arrived. Brian Hiles, Ulteig Engineering recommended two hydrants. Installation is not lined up, as the contractors are very busy this time of year. The question of how the hydrants and installation will be paid was discussed. Thelin's suggestion that the cost be split between the water department, fire department and Greenwood Connections. It was decided to have a meeting with those department heads and Mayor Foss. Thelin also reported on the temporary road installed at the school for bus loading. Because the road crosses over a force main, it's recommended that for every 2" of insulation, 1' of material needs to be added to the road. He felt that the City needs documentation that if they school doesn't follow the recommendation, any damage to the main would be their responsibility. The contractor had also asked whether the City could provide them with 50 yards of compost. The Council was agreeable to the request. Also mentioned were the ten campsites being tied into the water main with work

beginning next week. The campground will be shut down October 1<sup>st</sup>. Sod at the beach and pavilion will be installed soon.

Jake braking was discussed with member Karjala reporting on conversations with MnDot in Detroit Lakes and St. Cloud. The cost to the City would be \$150 per sign. The Council would need to pass a noise ordinance and have City attorney Pederson submit to the county in order for admin citations to be issued.

### **Notices and Communications:**

None

### **Unfinished Business:**

The cemetery expansion project proposed at the last Council meeting was discussed. Council reviewed the quotes received, noting the low bid of \$64,680.00 from Hough, Inc. A letter from Apex engineer, Jon Olson was also reviewed. He had contacted Hough to inquire whether the project could be done in phases. They indicated they'd be willing to work with the city and would honor their unit prices on a smaller scaled project. Mayor Foss confirmed the perpetual funds thought to be available for the project cannot be utilized. The Council discussed the possibility of issuing bonds for both the cemetery project and the seasonal campground project to save on fees. Gina will check with the financial consultant to see if it is possible to combine into one bond issuance. The subject was tabled until the October meeting.

Discussion regarding the 8 site seasonal campground was discussed with Henstorf stating that the project would benefit the City and businesses, bringing more people to town. The topic has been discussed periodically for over 6 years and he said he'd like a decision to be made whether to proceed in getting bids.

**Motion by Henstorf to go out for quotes with a July completion date. Karjala questioned there would be additional police expenses when the project is completed. Henstorf felt there would not be. Ellingson inquired whether it would be possible to consider doing 4 sites initially to reduce costs. Henstorf said that he felt it would probably be more expensive to do on a smaller scale due to costs for bringing in equipment. Motion seconded by Karjala, all in favor, motion carried.**

### **New Business:**

**Resolution 2018-014 Adopting the Preliminary 2019 Tax Levy in the amount of \$558,113.16 was approved on motion by Lawrey, seconded by Karjala, all in favor, motion carried.**

**Resolution 2018-015 Authorizing Participation with the Community Concern for Youth Program for the amount of \$1,526 was approved as presented on motion by Henstorf, seconded by Lawrey, Karjala in favor and Ellingson opposed, motion carried.**

Council member Karjala reported on a public hearing of the Planning Commission for consideration of a Conditional Use Permit submitted by Uniti Towers to construct a 300' cell tower on an Agricultural zoned parcel. Karjala informed the Council the Planning Commission met on September 6<sup>th</sup>, reviewed the information presented and recommended approval of the CUP noting the requested location is compatible with the existing neighborhood as there are currently two towers within a mile and that subdivision would not be required because of the unique situation in leasing space for a tower.

**Motion by Henstorf, seconded by Ellingson, to approve Resolution 2018-016 Issuing a Conditional Use Permit in the AR district to Uniti Towers for Property located at 1043 Aspen Avenue South, Menahga, MN, with the addition that the lease of property for a cell tower will not require subdivision, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

A representative of American Tower Corporation asked to address the Council. He requested the Council deny the permit because the City's ordinance states there must be a necessity and there are two towers there currently so it was their belief it is not necessary. Uniti Towers' representative said that ultimately it is a business decision and the two companies have failed to negotiate terms. Council member Henstorf said he didn't feel it is up to the Council to negotiate between two competitors. Mayor Foss said that the property owner is acceptable to this and the City would support the decision to allow it.

Council member Ellingson questioned a couple bills and will check further with the Deputy Clerk.

**Motion by Lawrey, seconded by Henstorf to approve the prepayment of bills and payment of payables as presented, all in favor, motion carried.**

**Motion by Karjala, seconded by Lawrey to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 pm,  
all in favor, motion carried.**

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**Gina Ellingson, City Administrator**

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**Patrick Foss, Mayor**