

MENAHGA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 11, 2011/ 7:00 P.M.

The regular meeting of the Menahga City Council was held in the Council Chambers on Monday April 11, 2011. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Foss.

Members present: Kim Rasmussen, Maxine Norman, Roger Henstorf and Alden Yliniemi.

Mayor Foss presented correspondence from the League of Women Voters encouraging open government which Councilor Rasmussen will read at this time.

Open Government Proclamation

WHEREAS, James Madison, the father of our federal Constitution, wrote that “consent of the governed” requires that the people be able to “arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives,” and

WHEREAS, every citizen in our participatory democracy has an inherent right to access to government meetings and public records; and

WHEREAS, an open and accessible government is vital to establishing and maintaining the people’s trust and confidence in their government and in the government’s ability to effectively serve its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the protection of every person’s right of access to public records and government meetings is a high priority of the Menahga City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Menahga City Council is committed to openness and transparency in all aspects of its operations and seeks to set a standard in this regard; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Menahga City Council commits this month, commemorating the 261st anniversary of James Madison’s birth, and throughout the year 2011 to work diligently to enhance the public’s access to government records and information, to increase information provided electronically and online, and to ensure that all meetings of deliberative bodies under its jurisdiction, and their committees, are fully noticed and open to the public.

MOTION BY NORMAN TO APPROVE THE MARCH 14, 2011 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES WITH CORRECTIONS. YLINIEMI SECONDED. ALL AYES MOTION CARRIED.

Julia Kicker made a presentation on the “Hooked on Fishing” program. She explained that the program benefits youth by teaching fourth grade students to enjoy angling. They attend in school presentations by the DNR, County Sheriff and fishing professionals. They are also taken on a fishing trip and receive a rod and reel, tackle box, t-shirt and picnic meal. She requested that the city again serve as the financial pass-through agency for the program.

MOTION BY HENSTORF TO APPROVE THE CITY TO SERVE AS THE PASS-THROUGH FOR THE HOOKED ON FISHING PROGRAM. NORMAN SECONDED. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

Councilor Yliniemi reported for Chief Kicker on fire department activities. They had a recent small structure fire. Recent training included a walk through at Blueberry Pines. They also plan to do training walk throughs at the school and nursing home.

Mayor Foss mentioned the state legislature is considering Sunday liquor. He advised the Council that this is something we should be aware of and be prepared to make a firm decision as to whether it is worth doing.

Utilities superintendent Rost reported on the meeting with the County engineer on the Main street project. They are in no hurry and are looking at far out as 2015 for the project. They stated it might be a beneficial cost savings for the City to do other city street project at the same time to save tonnage and contractors. We should start looking at funding and cost figures from our engineering firm and possibly other firms.

MOTION BY HENSTORF TO AUTHORIZE THE WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE TO OBTAIN COST ESTIMATES FROM ULTIEG ENGINEERING FOR PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR PROJECTS ON MAIN STREET, FIRST STREET NW AND COTTONWOOD AVENUE, COMBINED AND SEPARATELY. RASMUSSEN SECONDED. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

HENSTORF MOVED TO ACCEPT THE BYLAWS FOR GREENWOOD CONNECTION AS WRITTEN WITH CHANGES. NORMAN SECONDED. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

NORMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH MINUTES AND FINANCIALS FOR GREENWOOD CONNECTIONS. HENSTORF SECONDED. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

The Administrator reviewed recent grant applications submitted for the “Walk About Menahga Recreational and Walking Trail” project. The principal grant is the Minnesota DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Program for \$31,785 on a fifty percent match. Sources of matching funds and in-kind contributions include: WesMin RC&D Council grant \$1,000, University of Minnesota Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership grant \$2000, City of Menahga \$15,000, Menahga Conservation Club \$2,500, Horizons \$1,000, Menahga C&C \$2,000, State Health Improvement Project \$2,700, Wadena County Sentence to Serve \$2,500, Menahga Girl Scouts \$2,500, Wadena SWCD \$1,500, Volunteers at large \$2,100 and Spirit Lake Association \$100.

Facilities to be developed are the rehabilitation of the Menahga outdoor recreation infrastructure to ensure that it is accessible, safe, energy efficient, economical to operate and maintain and flexible enough to accommodate changing needs. Targeted facilities include the Spirit Lake Beach Park (fishing pier, boat/canoe access site, walking trail on berm, showcase garden (nature study), address lack of handicapped parking area, Statue of St. Urho Park and picnic area (access trails), marked walking trails to the Menahga Memorial Gardens and back to the Spirit Lake boat/canoe access site.

The administrator also reported that the City’s auditor Eide Bailly is conducting the annual audit. There staff were here for three days and we will be working to provide them with any materials they may need. He will also be working on assembling proposals for updating accounting software and hardware.

The Administrator reported that he attended a meeting of the West Central Economic Development Association. They have developed by-laws and are seeking a 50(c) 3 status. They will be regional economic development organization and are interested in collaborating with the city. Our economic development efforts should complement each other.

The Initiative Fund request for donation was tabled until the July meeting.

The Administrator will provide training dates in May for the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization training.

Henstorf commented that if the Council creates a new ordinance or changes one there needs to be a public hearing before the Council takes action. A notice of the hearing should also be published in the newspaper. It creates openness in government and with public input the public understands why we are doing so. The administrator will present a draft ordinance for the next meeting.

RASMUSSEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE BILLS AS PRESENTED. HENSTORF SECONDED. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

The Council closed the regular meeting for a closed session to perform the Administrator's six month performance evaluation. Upon review and discussion, the council unanimously approved a favorable review and appreciates the work he has done.

The Council then readdressed a negotiation issue from Salo's hiring. After the six month probationary review the Council had agreed to revisit his request to increase his leave accrual. He had requested that after the six-month probationary period his leave accrual would increase to the two week accrual then three week accrual after the second year. The Council discussed the issue and in light of current economic conditions, they could not fully justify the request.

NORMAN MOVED IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST TO READDRESS THE ISSUE TO MOVE SALO TO THE 200 HOUR PTO ACCRUAL LEVEL EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY. SECONDED BY HENSTORF. AYES: FOSS, HENSTORF, NORMAN AND YLINIEMI, NAYS: RASMUSSEN, MOTION CARRIED.

Salo was encouraged to take time off so as not to accumulate too many extra regular hours.

Mayor Foss then reconvened the regular meeting.

HENSTORF MOVED TO ADJOURN. MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:02P.M.

City Clerk/Treas/Adm.

Mayor