

City of Menahga
Special Meeting/Work Session City Council Minutes
Monday, November 28, 2022 at 6:00 pm

A. Call to Order

The Menahga City Council held a Special Meeting/Work Session on Monday, November 28, 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	Jody Bjornson
Robyn Keranen	Absent: Dan Warmbold	

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

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Departmental Reports

• **Police Department – Adam Gunderson**

Chief Gunderson – absent.

Temporary Administrator Ahlf reported that no information on the Vandalism/Hate Crime had been received.

The Helmsley Charitable Trust granted 18.8 Million to the U of M Medical School. The City of Menahga was awarded 4 AED units which will be used by the Menahga Police Department (3 units) and the Menahga Fire Department (1 unit).

Main Motion: To approve the donation of 4 AED Units from the Helmsley Charitable Trust for the Menahga Police Department and Menahga Fire Department.

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

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

1. Monthly Report

Ron Yliniemi presented the Council with his monthly report. Yliniemi reported that Minnesota Power will be placing wreaths on the light poles on 11/29/2022.

Councilman Tomperi asked Yliniemi what is the usual time that the staff start plowing the roads, so they are cleared for drivers in the morning. Yliniemi stated they could start anywhere between 3:30 – 4:00 a.m. depending on the number of inches of snow.

Yliniemi reported that Public Works staff have and will continue to sweep and clear the St. Urho statue area for the Tree Lighting/Santa Visit ceremony sponsored by the Menahga Civic & Commerce on December 3, 2022.

KLM service agreement and Maguire Iron, Inc. contracts were discussed with both reporting cost schedules for the inspection of the upcoming water tower. Yliniemi stated that there was a large gap between the quotes of each company. Tomperi added that he has heard that KLM was a good company. Yliniemi recommended that the City approve the 10-year contract with KLM within the 60-day period. This discussion was tabled until the December 12th Regular City Council Meeting.

2. Sidewalk Cleaning Minimum Fee

The streets have been plowed and salt/sanded after the recent snowfall. Since the ground was not frozen, Yliniemi reported he didn't put the wing down. Public works did a practice run in finding out the time and labor costs of removing snow from resident's sidewalks. It has been determined to charge residents in a separate billing than through utilities. An additional line item will

be added to the fee schedule to go along with the Motion. The fee schedule currently is \$100 per hour. A \$15.00 fee per resident sidewalk clearing will become effective December 1, 2022.

Kurtti reported that Tim Bloomquist, Publisher/Editor of the Review Messenger, would allow the City to submit a feature of "City Happenings" at no cost to the City, to inform the public of local changes and this information could be communicated there.

Main Motion: To approve Public Works clearing of City resident's sidewalks effective December 1, 2022, at a minimum rate of \$15 per parcel.

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

- **Northbound Spirits – Heather Shepersky**

- 1. Monthly Report –**

- Liquor Store Manager Heather Shepersky reported that she is addressing cost and the possible increase of prices within the municipal on and off-sale liquor store. Mayor Olson requested that a separate profit and loss report be provided to the Council each month. Shepersky stated that she would work on it. She is trying to get things operational to her liking. Ahlf discussed the finances of the Liquor Store's 2022 YTD profit, with Off-Sale \$27,000 and On-Sale \$73,812.

- Mayor Olson mentioned that Councilmember Warmbold had stated there was an issue with clean-up in the basement of the Liquor Store. Shepersky stated that she will look at what needs to be addressed in that area more towards the middle of January, 2023.

- Maintenance issues at the Liquor Store were discussed including the error in the size of the new sink that was ordered. Dustyne Hewitt will communicate with the vendor to possibly return the sink, which is made for an industrial kitchen, not a bar. Samuelson-Laney is currently working on ordering a

correct sized sink. They will also be completing the repairs to some of the drains and piping.

Shepersky reported the rope lights in the northeast corner area of the Liquor Store were ordered and replaced this past month. Previous lights were provided by the Budweiser vendor, but they had not responded to repair or replace said lights.

2. Ordering ashtrays for outside the Municipal Liquor Store.

Shepersky stated that she had information on purchasing 2 new ashtrays for the outside of the building. The two current ashtrays have been ruined from years of use. It was determined that Ron Yliniemi of Public Works would assist in finding appropriate replacements.

- **Administration – Laura Ahlf**

1. Monthly Report and October 2022 Financial Statement and Balance Sheet

Interim City Administrator, Laura Ahlf stated that the General Fund appears that there is a loss, but the 2nd half of the taxes in the amount the \$170,071, has not posted yet. Local government aid for the 2nd half will be received 12/26/2022. Only 58% of the budget revenue has been applied to-date which needs to be taken into consideration for the General Fund. Once all the revenue is applied the city should not show a loss for the fiscal year.

2. Research Accepting Credit Card for Administration Office

Dustyne Hewitt, who is responsible for the Utility Billing, requested that the credit card matter be tabled for further research. It had been found that a Motion had been made with a previous Council to accept credit card payments. Dustyne will have the information ready by the December 12th, 2022 Council meeting.

3. Lustila Property Line Adjustment

Jensine Kurtti informed the council the Lustila family who owns two adjoining lots PID #17-330-0210 and PID #17-330-0240 are asking that the south 60 feet of 212 Main St. E be transferred to the 16 Cedar Ave SE property. In allowing the adjustment, the 2 lots will be similar in size and appearance to the other lots on that block.

A Motion by the City of Menahga is required for their legal counsel to move forward in creating the changes.

Main Motion: To approve the Property Line Adjustment for parcel #'s 17-330-0210 & 17-330-0240. This adjustment will be filed with the Wadena County Recorder at the cost of the property owner.

Moved by:	Keranen
Seconded by:	Tomperi
Action:	Motion carried by a 4-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Bjornson, and Keranen

4. DNR Parcel within City Limits

Jensine Kurtti reported to the Council that there is an 80 acre parcel in the southwest portion of the City which the State owns. There have been issues with people hunting with firearms on the land.

Dustyne Hewitt stated DNR staff Jordan Anderson requested that all calls coming to him will be sent to local law enforcement as he is unable to enforce the "No Hunting" with firearms within City limits.

Councilmember Tomperi said that there were signs previously posted but they had blown down. Hewitt is to communicate with Jordan Anderson on this issue.

Main Motion: To approve that signs be placed on the City limit border of the DNR property stating that use of firearms is not allowed.

Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded by:	Bjornson
Action:	Motion carried by a 4-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Bjornson, and Keranen

5. Extend Deadline for City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer Position

Mayor Olson asked if the city should check with Drummond to assist in finding a City Administrator. Keranen questioned if we could hire one of our applicants who could be trained.

The conversation turned to looking at mentorships and consultants to guide the candidates through the League of Minnesota Cities. Tomperi suggested finding a retired City Administrator.

Bjornson shared that it wouldn't hurt to look at the applicants. The applicants deserve to know where their status is at.

Kurtti mentioned that the City had reached out to a couple of options in that regard. Those options weren't cost effective, i.e., one retired professional had asked for special housing, food, mileage, and \$65 per hour.

Ahlf reminded the council that the city does have applicants and the right person could learn.

Olson stated that maybe we should look at a company to assist in hiring.

Ahlf stated she was willing to check with the Wadena City Administrator on how their search was conducted.

Hewitt was approved to contact DEED further on this matter.

The Council discussed various questions about the pay scale. Kurtti reminded the Council that ex-Interim City Administrator Betty Thomsen had discussed this issue at the August 26th, 2022 Council meeting. A pay scale range from similar Cities will be brought to the December 5 Budget meeting.

Main Motion: To approve extending the application process for the City Administrator position indefinitely until filled.

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

6. Work session for December 2022

Main Motion: To forego the Work Session Meeting for December 2022.

Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded by:	Keranen

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

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

- 1. Monthly Report**

- Dave Kicker was absent. Laura Ahlf, acknowledged a verbal request by Chief Kicker that will be tabled until December 5, 2022.

- The Menahga Fire Fighters will be paid on December 3rd, 2022.

New Business

- 1. Fee Schedule 2023 – Update and Present at December Regular Meeting**

- There are many Planning and Zoning fees that will be brought to the Council after the upcoming Planning and Zoning meeting. There was some discussion regarding the fee schedule.

- This topic will be brought back in December 2022.

G. Consideration of Bills

- **Batch #111522PAY2 - \$15.00, Batch #112122UBPostage - \$229.24 Batch #112822PAY - \$134,240.47, and Fire Department Annual Payroll - \$14,914.08. Total \$149,398.79**

- Questions were brought up by Tomperi about the furnace repair at the Liquor Store. Keranen questioned the consulting billing.

Main Motion: To approve Batch #111522PAY - \$15, Batch #112122UBPostage - \$229.24, Batch #112822PAY - \$134,240.47 and Fire Department Annual Payroll - \$14,914.08, for a total of \$149,398.79.

Moved by:	Bjornson
Seconded by:	Tomperi
Action:	Motion carried by a 4-0 voice vote
In favor:	Olson, Tomperi, Bjornson, Keranen

Opposed: None

H. Adjournment

Main Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:00 pm.

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

Dustyne Hewitt
Administrative Secretary

Mayor Elizabeth Olson