

Minutes of the January 5, 2015 City Council Meeting

The January 5, 2015, meeting of the Good Thunder city council was called to order, at 7:00 p.m., by Mayor Robert Anderson. The meeting convened in council chambers located at 130 Ewing Court, Good Thunder, Minnesota. Newly elected officials, Jim Prom-Council member; Sarah Karels-Council member; and Robert Anderson-Mayor had been sworn into office by taking the official oath, administered by Clerk-Treasurer, Cheryl Barnard, prior to the meeting. Council members in attendance were: Kenton Giese; Sarah Karels, Kim Hernandez, and Jim Prom. Others in attendance: Jerry Birr, City Maintenance; Larry Rahn, Good Thunder Fire Department; Cheryl Barnard, Clerk-Treasurer.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council member Ken Giese made a motion to approve the agenda as distributed and submitted. Council member Kim Hernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Council member Ken Giese made a motion to approve the December 1, 2014, city council minutes as presented and distributed. Council member Jim Prom seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Greg Burkhardt, Burkhardt & Burkhardt LTD, had planned to attend the meeting to explain the health insurance reform that will affect the city starting in 2015. However, due to weather conditions, Mr. Burkhardt, was unable to attend the meeting. Clerk-Treasurer, Cheryl Barnard, presented information she had received from Mr. Burkhardt: In 2014 The IRS and Department of Labor stated that employers could no longer pay or reimburse employees for their individual health insurance premiums and be tax free. The city of Good Thunder has always indicated what the health insurance reimbursement was on employees payroll and taxes were always withheld Ms. Barnard stated. In 2015 employers can no longer pay for individual health insurance premiums as done in the past even if taxes are withheld as this would violate the Affordable Care Act and could result in a \$36,500 fine per employee. Employers can no longer sponsor health flexible spending arrangements as a plan. In moving forward Mr. Burkhardt acknowledges that the acceptable way to handle this situation is to reimburse the city's employees for health insurance on an after tax basis by increasing the employee's hourly or salary wage. Another item discussed was Fire Reliefs and new pension standards. GASB 67 and 68 are new pensions standards that will need to be followed. GASB 67 states that the total pension liability is based on the actuarial present value of projected benefit payments. An actuarial valuation must be complied with as the city's audit opinion will be modified if the fire relief doesn't provide the city with an actuarial valuation of the plan. Mr. Burkhardt will answer any questions the city, or the fire department relief association representatives have. Discussion followed.

Council member Sarah Karels made a motion to approve that the current health care monthly coverage reimbursement for city employees be placed in the employees total wages, with taxes taken out accordingly. Council member Kim Hernandez seconded the motion.

Jerry Birr, City Maintenance, reported that 142 water meters have been installed. Birr has knocked on doors with no one answering, and a few need to have plumbing work done before meters can be installed. Discussion followed regarding Birr giving a time limit for homeowners coming into compliance with this installation. Council member, Kim Hernandez, stated that a fifteen (15) day time period to make satisfactory arrangements with Birr installing the meters be given. The council directed Ms. Barnard to

contact the City Attorney and see if the city can pay for any plumbing work in which a homeowner is unable to pay and then have the city bill them for the amount of the plumbing work completed.

Council member Sarah Karels reported that Tri-City Police Chief, Ryan Jordan planned on attending tonight's council meeting. However, there are structural issues in the police office in Amboy that he would be addressing at their council meeting this evening. Police concerns were discussed and addressed. It was stated that moving forward any discussion of police concerns are to be brought to the police commission, not the city council, and would be addressed at their meetings.

Larry Rahn, Good Thunder Fire Department, reported that the fire department responded to six (6) medical calls, one (1) structure fire and two (2) medical aid calls. Mr. Rahn reported that Alpha Wireless will be installing transmitters in each town and these transmitters will be paid for by Blue Earth County. This is due to calls not being received by department personnel. Mr. Rahn presented a check from Rapidan United Fund which is to be used towards the purchase of an air-pack for the fire department.

Council member Kim Hernandez, accepted a check from Rapidan United Fund in the amount of \$290. This donation is to be used towards the purchase of an air pack for the Good Thunder Fire Department. Council member Ken Giese seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Clerk-Treasurer, Cheryl Barnard, presented information for 2015 council committees. Mayor Robert Anderson felt strongly that an alternate should be appointed on the police committee if he serves on the committee. If he is unable to attend a meeting, due to his trucking business, this alternate could serve in his capacity. Councilor Karels stated that she was sure the Tri-City Police Commission had discussed this scenario of having alternates and felt that this would not be acceptable. Ms. Karels will confirm this decision at the next meeting and report back to the council. Discussion followed. (Ms. Barnard was contacted by Kathy Ikier, City Administrator and informed that no alternates are acceptable on the police commission.)

Council member Jim Prom made a motion to approve the 2015 Council Committees. Council member Ken Giese seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. (2015 Council Committee list attached.)

Clerk-Treasurer Barnard informed the council that she had contacted Terry Bovee regarding Phase 2 of the Wellhead Protection Project. Mr. Bovee had previously assisted on Phase 1 of the city's project as he had worked for the Minnesota Department of Health before retiring. Phase I of this project was paid for by the state. Mr. Bovee is now an independent consultant and would be the project planner for this project for the city if the council approves his proposal. At the last meeting, Amanda Strommer, Principal Planner for the Minnesota Department of Health Drinking Water Protection had stated that completing Phase 2 of this plan could cost the city up to \$10,000 to be completed. Barnard informed the council that Mr. Bovee will prepare this plan for \$2500. Additional services that arise outside of the projected plan would be charged at a rate of \$85 per hour plus expenses. Brian Severns, Water/Wastewater Operator and Cheryl Barnard, Clerk-Treasurer will need to assist in the completion of this project. They will meet with Mr. Bovee in January and hold discussion of potential contaminants and what material will be needed from them regarding the MDH requirements. Mr. Bovee is proposing to have a draft plan completed by late July 2015 with submittal to the MDH by mid-fall 2015. If the timeline is followed, the final plan will be completed in late December 2015 as required. Discussion followed.

Council member Sarah Karels made a motion that the city hire Terry Bovee as an independent consultant and project planner for Phase 2 of the Wellhead Protection Plan at a cost of \$2500. Council member Ken Giese seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Sarah Karels and Kim Hernandez met and drew up a concession stand Rental Policy. Such a policy would be for the purpose of renting the concession stand for raising funds for nonprofit organizations, youth or adult athletic groups, or a community function or party. Examples are: 4H, Scouts, Youth Sports, Adult Leagues, Good Thunder Day celebration, reunions, etc. Daily concession stand fees would be \$25 with a \$50 deposit. Discussion followed regarding an organization that is currently serving food at the park in their own trailer. Council member, Kim Hernandez, will contact them and Council member, Sarah Karels, will contact Maple River Community Ed to discuss this policy. The council at this time discussed their disappointment in how Thunder Valley has been left after Friday night ball games. Council members Hernandez and Karels, and others on the council, have gone and picked up bags of aluminum cans, and trash, after ball games at the park. Another concern was a report of public urination at the ball field. These items need to be addressed as they are unacceptable practices for this facility. Police presence was also discussed. Discussion followed.

Ms. Barnard presented City Code Appendixes for Fees. Recommendations were made. Council member Kim Hernandez made a motion to approve the 2015 City Appendixes and **Resolution #2015-01, 2015 Organization and Appointment Resolution**. Council member Ken Giese seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilor Jim Prom discussed the MN State Building Code with the council. At this time, the city is not under this code, but has their own Zoning Code which is followed.

Council member Jim Prom made a motion to approve the bills as presented and distributed. Council member Sarah Karels seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous:

- Informational meeting to discuss the condition, and possible upgrade, of Halladay Street. City Engineer, Jeff Domras is to be asked to attend the meeting. Mayor Robert Anderson will contact City Engineer Domras to discuss possible cost estimates. This meeting is to ask residents what they feel should be done with the street.
- Council member, Kim Hernandez, discussed two properties on Main Street that are nuisances and questioned if they could be condemned. Police Commissioner, Sarah Karels, will discuss this with Tri-City Police Chief, Ryan Jordan.
- The council was informed that Lyra Township will build a snow fence, in the field adjacent to Mielke Street, as needed.

Council member Ken Giese, made a motion adjourning the meeting. Council member Kim Hernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Cheryl A. Barnard
City Clerk-Treasurer

