

## GOOD THUNDER REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting  
February 8, 2021

Mayor Robert Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00p at City Hall at 130 S Ewing Street in Good Thunder, MN 56037. Councilors Ron Kaul, Sarah Karels, Jim Prom & Tom Froehlich were present. Brian Beckel, City Maintenance, and Ashney Helleksen, City Clerk-Treasurer were also present. Mayor Robert Anderson presided. The pledge was recited, immediately followed by a moment of silence.

Councilor Froehlich made a motion to approve the agenda, Councilor Prom seconded and the motion was carried. Councilor Froehlich made a motion to approve the minutes & bills, Councilor Kaul seconded and the motion was carried.

Blue Earth County Sheriff's report was submitted and reported 54 hours of service in January.

Good Thunder Fire Department's report was submitted and reported 7 Medical calls and 1 Fire Alarm.

City Maintenance Brian Beckel reported that we are waiting on Bolten and Menk to do the survey on Protein Sources lot for the new waterline to be run down there, then we can get an easement in place. The Easement for the sanitary sewer project is still in the works, and hope to have it signed by the next meeting. City Attorney Chris Kennedy was present and stated there hasn't been any progress and if nothing changes, starting the process of eminent domain may be the only choice. Mr. Kennedy talked to the property owner's attorney last week, Mr. Johnson and he was under the impression it was settled already.

Council suggested Mr. Kennedy speak with the Attorney again, Mr. Kennedy stated that having Mrs. Helleksen reach out to the property owner directly may be better than going through the attorneys, and cheaper as well. Councilor Karels asked, "if we went this route, how long would that process take?" Mr. Kennedy stated, it could take 60-75 for the process.

The property owner wants to put the land in CRP and that needs to be done by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Anderson stated, "we as a city need this done, we think it's a big source of our I & I and we just can't wait, we just want to fix out problem." It was also stated if it's not settled by March, then we should move forward with eminent domain. Councilor Froehlich asked, "so we are going to direct Ashney to write him this letter you are talking about?" "I don't think you have to direct Ashney, she will reach out to him, and let him know." Mr. Kennedy stated. Councilor Prom ask, "Does she mention all the options to him them?" "Absolutely," Mr. Kennedy replied.

Mayor Anderson stated, "we might as well get the materials coming for the project, just get them ordered. Even if we had to store them for a bit by the lagoons." Mr. Beckel said he would reach out to Josh again at DMI and get it ordered.

A generator for the City Shop was mention, as when the power goes out, Mr. Beckel can't open the doors to get the tractor out to take a second generator to the lagoons. "Get one." Councilor Kaul stated.

Mrs. Helleksen stated that our insurance inspector was here of last week to inspect the properties, and take pictures. Mrs. Helleksen also suggested a review of the liquor license for the Thunder Bar for last

Beckel also mentioned there was an insurance inspector here last week, not much on that he was just locating properties and taking pictures of them.

Water supervisor Brian Severns wasn't present but submitted the Historical water use via email.

Clerk Helleksen mentioned that the Clerks institute will be virtual this year, that is May 3<sup>rd</sup> – May 7<sup>th</sup>, she the clerk will be here, but not here as I need to focus on that. The Annual Conference will be in St. Cloud on June 15-18<sup>th</sup>, in person we decide that I am going to that one. It was the one last year that was cancelled due to covid. Councilor Karels asked, "what was the cost of that one?" Mrs. Helleksen stated she believed it was "around \$800 with hotel and classes". "Is this the one you have to go to or is it the one in may?" Councilor Prom asked.

LJP is going to look into spring clean-up scheduling starting in March, they plan to do curb side as of now, but that could change, depending on covid. Councilor Froehlich said it would be closer to fall. Clerk Helleksen suggested that maybe council reviews the Thunder Bar liquor license fee and gives back a percentage of what was paid. With Covid, the city of Mankato is giving a percent of that cost back to the business owners, as Covid had them closed a good amount of time. The Thunder Bar's license is \$500/year. Councilor Prom suggest maybe 75% refund of their fee. Councilor Karels said, "I would be fine with refunding a percentage of it for 2020."

EDA - Clerk Helleksen found a sample EDA handbook, that would be a great starting point or guideline for the city to start. "I had messaged Mr. Kennedy about the EDA and establishing it with the possible ownership of the school, the future well site property." Mr. Kennedy stated, "Ashney has a good brochure as a starting point, it has examples of resolutions, policies and such. What you need figure out is who is the EDA going to be, how many members will be on the EDA. You could do the council or a few council members and business owners in town." Mayor Anderson asked, "Who would the EDA cover and the money comes from the City Council budgeting in for an EDA Fund right?"

Mr. Kennedy explained, that Mayor Anderson was correct and the city set paramotors for who is eligible for EDA Funding. "the city needs a governmental purpose to make money on it, not just to make money." Clerk Helleksen asked, "we have business owners who own businesses in town, but do not live-in town, do they need to live in town to be on the EDA like they would council or can they live outside of town?" Mr. Kennedy explained, "the council would look at this as more of a commission, and that they could live out of town. There is another city that's has a banker on their EDA and he doesn't live in the city." There is generally 5 or 7 members.

Mrs. Helleksen also mentioned that Blue Earth County send the letters back for the road closures for the event, so we are good to go on that and the bands for the 150<sup>th</sup> have been booked, Fat City Allstars will play on Friday and Red Dirt Road will be playing on Saturday.

Lastly the time clock in the office is broken and that it needs to be looked at, its about 5-8 minutes off, Mrs. Helleksen text Councilor Karels a picture and screen shot about it, but Clerk Helleksen didn't want to try and fix it as she did not want to be accused of tampering with the time clock, so it needs to be looked at by a council member or city maintenance. Councilor Prom said "I believe I helped set that up and I believe there are some micro buttons on the bottom to reset the time."

Councilor Kaul, "I figured something was wrong because we don't have time cards in the packets. We are supposed to have them in the packets and the daily logs." Clerk Helleksen stated she would make a note so they are in the packet at the next meeting.

Councilor Karels asked, "back in the day we wanted time cards, but we wanted them for the police officers, but we couldn't have them in our packets."

Mr. Kennedy responded, "They couldn't be in the packets before because they had more personal information on them." Councilor Karels, "Okay, I just remember there being an issue with them being in the packets in the past. It was a different situation then."

"As long as there is no personal information on them, the time cards and work logs may be in the packet if council wishes." Kennedy stated.

Councilor Karels stated for the record, "by the way, we do not want residents showing up to our employee's houses during or after business hours for city business. City business is to be conducted during hours."

*There was no Community Comment.*

Delinquent water bills, the city should hold off until April 15<sup>th</sup> to turn their water off, just to avoid and cold weather rules.

Councilor Froehlich would like the council to consider a \$500 increased stipend for the Fire Chief and adding \$500 for the assistant chief. "with all this covid stuff, I can see, well Ron & I can see it becoming quite a strain on them, well frankly all the people involved, but especially those two leaders. It won't make or break the discussion on someone doing the job, but maybe more an appreciation." Councilor Kaul added, "they are spending a lot more time doing stuff than they normally would."

Mayor Anderson asked where the chief is at now? Mrs. Helleksen responded, "\$1,000 plus each call rate." Councilor Prom asked, "is this something we need to budget for next year or something else? Chris is over there thinking hard." Mr. Kennedy expression, "to make sure that it will not interfere with their retirement fund. I don't think it is enough to cause a problem."

Councilor Prom stated, "I think we are fine with it, just double check with Burkhardt to make sure we aren't interfering with anything long term."

Future well site property purchase agreement. City Attorney sees no problem with the city buying it. The question is, "once you own it, what are you going to do with it." It was suggested about having a 3<sup>rd</sup> party manage the property and rent it until the city is ready for a wellsite, or just moving the house off the property right away and just start with the new wellsite. The city would need to look at the costs, is it fixable? What would that cost? The city would need to have Judd Schultz from MVAC inspect the property to know more. Kennedy, "I think the purchase agreement is great, I think the city's plan for down the road for the site is good. The question is just what do you do with the property in the meantime once you purchase it."

*Councilor Kaul stated, "I know it doesn't happen that often but when Ashney or Brian leave, they call the personnel committee, can you text all of us and let us know what's going on, that way when I go to the post office and people are asking why you aren't around, I can tell them."*

*Councilor Karels stated, "I think that's a serial meeting, I don't think she can do that. Like, if she texts all of us, and he responds and I respond, that is a serial meeting." City Attorney Kennedy agreed, "that is a*

*serial meeting.”*

*Council Prom Stated, “we talked about this with the pervious clerk about the same thing.”*

*Councilor Karels suggested maybe messaging each councilor separately.*

*City Attorney Kennedy stated, “The problem with that is, even separately, it’s the same problem if she is texting more than one person and they are responding, its still a serial meeting. One way to make it possible is to go on the city websites and post it there.”*

*Councilor Karels responded, “she does that. I don’t know, if someone asks me, I don’t know how much of it is their business; I not going to say, oh they are at a doctor’s appointment.”*

*Councilor Kaul responded, “I am not going to say that either, I am just going to say that she is taking some time off, or he’s taking some time off. If the doors locked, we know about it.”*

*Councilor Karels responded, “We are closed anyways.”*

*Councilor Kaul responded, “so we know about it, instead of us not knowing about it, okay? I am the one getting hassled about it at the post office from the public.”*

*Council Prom stated, “Tell them to come here and address us then.”*

*Clerk Helleksen addressed the council saying, “Not that it matters but we are open by appointment only, so they would have to get ahold of me before anyways to make the appointment and if someone has an appointment I’m going to be here. I mean, I don’t have a problem texting everyone and letting them know, that’s not a big deal to me.”*

*Councilor Prom interjected, “don’t text me, I trust our employees.”*

The discussion ended with city attorney addressing the council and stating, I was thinking more for when covid was over and everything is opened back up; you’re a small enough community where this is always going to be an issue. As long as I have been city attorney for you, it’s been an issue.

Councilor Karels would like to set up a planning meeting for the up coming projects and park items. Mayor Anderson stated, “they need to bring the plans to us.”

Taking over the Maple River school in town was the final topic of the night. We are going to need to do Pros & Cons, Cost, Maintenance. The city is going to need to have community involvement and input on deciding if we want to move forward with taking it on. Clerk Helleksen will reach out of M&M Insurance and the League of Minnesota Cities for cost and ideas. If city hall is moved to the “old school” building, this will open up city hall for another business intown.

“lots of planning, and community input will be needed.”

Councilor Froehlich inquired about water bill 223; and why the usage was so high. Clerk Helleksen looked up the account and informed him there was an error when reading the bill and it read the whole life of the meter when the new owners took over and not just the last ready. There was an adjust made to the account to reflect the correct numbers and shouldn’t be an issue at the next read.

Mayor Anderson thanked City Attorney Kennedy for coming out to the meeting.

Councilor Kaul made a motion to adjourn, Councilor Prom seconded and the motion carried and meeting ended at 8:25pm.

Next Council meeting is Monday March 8, 2021 at 7:00 pm

