

GOOD THUNDER REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting

December 14, 2020

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

Councilor Kaul made a motion to approve the Agenda, Councilor Froehlich seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Councilor Froehlich stated that he had received a few phone calls from residents concerned about the increase on their taxes. He stated that he noticed the major portion that was increasing was from Blue Earth County and the Maple River School referendum. Councilor Prom stated that his taxes had a proposed increase of 48% over all.

Councilor Froehlich stated that we should look at ours, "we are currently at 4% proposed, and we should be at maybe 1.5% - 2%." Mayor Anderson said, "We don't have to take an increase this year, we could make it another year if we left it the same as it is now. But if we are to increase, 1.5% - 2% at most. It has been a hard year for everyone." Councilor Karels stated, "We have been saving money with the police services and such, so I agree we should go lower."

It was brought up that we also "need to think long term, if we are going to take on the school." Good Thunder would be set to take over the Good Thunder School in 2022, if they decide that it is feasible for our community.

Councilor Kaul stated, "I would like to see it at 2%." Council opened up discussion for the community to add their input, there was residents attending via zoom; Residents had no comments.

With that Councilor Kaul made a motion to approve the 2021 budget with a 2% increase over last year, Councilor Froehlich seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Councilor Kaul made a motion to closed the T n T Meeting, Councilor Froehlich seconded and the motion carried.

With Opening of the regular meeting, there was a question about the Luke's Electric bill, this bill was for the City Shop, and Main Street light repair & replacement. With that clarification,

Councilor Froehlich made a motion to approve the bills, Councilor Prom seconded and the motion carried. Councilor Prom made a motion to approve the minutes from last months meeting, Councilor Froehlich seconded and the motion carried.

Deputy Philips was present from Blue Earth County Sheriff's department. The city had decided to increase from 40 hours a month, to 48 hours a month, with the addition hours focusing more on before and after school hours; Council had noticed and said that it was a great thing to see them at the school. Very positive. Deputy Philips stated there was 58 hours of directed patrol, 20 of those hours were for the school.

No Water / Sewer report.

Streets & Parks;

Easement – No progress or updates. Council asked Mrs. Helleksen to reach out to our Attorney and see what we can do, "We will have an emergency meeting if need be." Council also asked to get information about eminent domain.

GTFD: Had 3 calls for the month of November. 1 Fire Assist, 1 Medical, and 1 Carbon Monoxide Alarm.

No Community Comment.

Small City Development Loans; 5 months behind. The last check they submitted was returned by the bank as "stopped payment" after the payment was cashed and the city had already sent the payment to Blue Earth County. Councilor Prom suggested, "ask Kennedy what we should do." Councilor Froehlich agreed.

Mayor Anderson agreed to "speak with Kennedy and reissue pulling the note in January 2021."

Resolution 20-08 to Certify the election results; Councilor Prom made the motion to approve, Councilor Froehlich seconded and the motion carried.

Xcel Energy is looking to do a power outage December 22, starting at 9am and will last 4-6 hours. Council suggested getting post cards out to the residents who will be affected and for Mrs. Helleksen take the 22nd off due to no power at city hall.

CSAH 1 Project, Councilor Kaul submitted his hours for the meeting on that project as well as his mileage for the days he came back for them. Council reviewed the bill for the project, totaling \$341,541.83.

Councilor Prom made a motion to pay the Blue Earth County bill for CSAH 1 project, Councilor Froehlich seconded the motion and the motion carried. Councilor Kaul went to 13 meetings for

the CSAH 1 project, they were 1 hour in duration, he also requested standard mileage for the days he returned from the lake to go to the meetings. Standard mileage rate is \$0.58/per mile. \$25 was suggested per each meeting as it is our 'Special Meeting rate. Councilor Froehlich said he "would like to see \$50/meeting, plus mileage."

Councilor Prom amended his first statement from \$25/meet to \$50/meeting. Councilor Froehlich made a motion to approve \$50/per meeting for Councilor Kaul and Councilor Karels seconded the motion, Motion was carried.

Councilor Kaul will in addition get Mrs. Helleksen the millage the following day.

LGA for 2021 is \$180,872, which is increased over the 2020 LGA of \$178,000.

Councilor Kaul inquired about the city switching backs to Community Bank in Vernon Center, MN; to shorten bank run time. Councilor Karels stated, "I would like to see a bank move to town before we switch banks."

Councilor Prom stated, "Ashney has maybe about 6 bank runs in the time she has been here, I have made most of them. If we switch banks, we lose any leverage we have to get a bank to come to town. We wouldn't switch banks and then hope they come to our town, they already have our money, why should they bring one to town?"

Mayor Anderson suggested that Mrs. Helleksen can check into seeing what Community Bank offers for digital options and what it takes to switch banks.

- At the January meeting council will review the Council Committees and set up personal reviews.
- MN Waste Processing with increase to \$1.73/ton. Councilor Prom made a motion to approve, councilor Kaul seconded and the motion passed. Councilor Froehlich abstained.
- L.o.M.C work comp dividend of \$2,755 went into the general fund.

Council suggested getting the school building inspected to see if it is feasible for us to take on and if there are any major repairs that would be coming up that we need to be aware of. Mrs. Helleksen stated she would reach out to Wendell at SCSC and see if he has someone that he would recommend to do the inspection for us.

Councilor Prom stated that survives went out and it seemed about 90% or better of residents that responded were interested in the city taking it over and moving city hall there along with a community center, However, we need to make sure it is doable.

Mayor Anderson said, "if it's \$35,000 year to run the building, are we going to be able to do that with out putting it on the tax payers to cover the cost?"

It would be its own line item that the city would need to budget for annually. Further discission

continued, would we sell current city hall and rent out other spaces in the school for office/store front space. Mayor Anderson said, "Our money in saving is making 1%, maybe we should do something with that."

Mayor Anderson would like to Welcome a new business to town. Grant & Linda Barnard purchased the Post office building and opened AON TRADING in the other half of the building.

Council plans to also visit again adding cameras to the fire station for more coverage of the town as there has been an uptick in thefts.

In-Person voting was discussed as well, after the election council would like to see in-person voting brought back to Good Thunder for our residents. Councilor Froehlich made the motion to bring back in person voting. Councilor Karels seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Mayor Anderson also provided an update on Red Iron Mercantile, which is the name he landed on for the Gas Station he is building. There is gas & diesel in the ground, they are working on getting the cement pad and island poured. He is hoping to have gas flowing by Middle of January. He also stated he hopes in the spring or summer to do a "Grand Opening" and maybe during the summers offer Pop corn and Movies on Saturday. "These are just some ideas I had" Mayor Anderson said.

- Raises are to be reviewed in January.
- Councilor Kaul would still like a paper packet vs the digital packet on the computer
- 150th year Celebration is moving forward.
- Pre-Approved 1:1 matching grant application for a resident to replace the windows in their home.
- Council asked Mrs. Helleksen to send easement to Kennedy to review for Protein Sources property.

Councilor Kaul made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Councilor Prom seconded and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:05.