

**City of Ottertail  
Regular Meeting  
City Hall, March 17, 2022 - 6:00 PM**

Council Members Present: Mayor Ron Grobeck, Mike Windey, Jill Carlson, Jan Hill and Jessica Grimes.

Absent: None

Staff Present: Clerk-Admin. Elaine Hanson; Amanda Thorson, Deputy Clerk; Maintenance Coordinator Justin Lohse; Fire Chief Joe Ahlfs; Bob Schlieman, City Engineer, Apex.

Also present: Bernie Steeves, Tyler Wohler Memorial Trail representative; Chad Koenen from the Citizen's Advocate, official paper.

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Grobeck. All present recited the pledge of allegiance.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Motion by Hill and second by Grimes to approve the consent agenda with additional items and payables. All voted in favor, motion carried.

- a. Approve Minutes of 2-17-2022.
- b. **Resolution 2022-09 Re-establishing Polling Place due to Redistricting.**
- c. **Resolution 2022-10 Adopting Assessment for Unpaid Utility Bill.**
- d. LG220 Permit w/No Wait – N WTF Ottertail Lakes Chapter – Thumper Pond, raffle.
- e. 1-4 Day Temp Liquor – Ottertail FD Relief Assn. Turkey Feed – April 13, 2022.
- f. Financials & various reports
- g. Approve claims #3650-3682 in the amount of \$ 83,337.70 with changes /additions and approval to pay late coming invoices

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Fire Department:** 1) Chief Joe Ahlfs reported a 2022 Dodge pick-up has been located for the grass rig at Nelson Auto Center in Fergus Falls. Total cash price is \$ 42,185. Fire Department was given the approval to purchase a grass rig up to \$100,000 which includes needed equipment last fall. The truck will be outfitted with skins, lights and equipment, needs to get quotes. 2) Radios came in on Monday. It will take a week or two to get them into service. 3) Asked to have the medical expenses purchase ceiling raised to \$1,000 due to rising costs. Motion by Carlson and second by Hill. Motion carried. 4) Council invited to Fire Relief annual appreciation for FD and Townships on April 13th at 6 p.m.

5) There were 5 rescue calls and 2 fire calls. Garage fire on Hill Top Road had 10 members on the scene and mutual aid from Perham of 8 members and 1 tanker. Garage was a total loss due to a propane tank malfunction.

**City Hall:** 1) Deputy Clerk Thorson informed the Council that an increase of postage will happen in July and then again in January 2023 with scheduled increased every 6 months. She asked if the Council would be interested in prepaying for 6 months to take advantage of the price now before it goes up. Motion by Carlson and second by Hill to pay for the upfront postage. Motion carried. 2) City-wide clean-up has been scheduled with Steve's Sanitation for June 4th. 3) Thorson asked the Council if they would consider purchasing furnace filters from Technique Furnace Filters for a cost savings. Filter will last four time longer than the filters that are being purchased now. Motion by Carlson and second by Hill to give it a try. Motion carried. 4) Reviewed a schedule for the Habitat 500 Bike Ride going through Ottertail between July 14 and July 17th. They will be using the Community Park. Same day as the Community Auction but should not interfere with that event. 6) The City of Ottertail and Otter Tail CDC has been invited to speak at the League of MN Cities Annual Conference in June during a breakout session on housing. Ottertail City represented by Deputy Clerk Thorson will explain our Building Big program and Otter Tail County's Amy Baldwin will share the County's program of the Big Build.

**OTCEPAC:** No meeting. Emergency Summit on April 21 at Thumper Pond.

**Reports-Forum-Presentations:** Tourism board met reported Council member Carlson. The board will be working with the newly formed Ottertail Chamber of Commerce with the help of Erik Osberg, Otter Tail

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County to promote the area and possible winter events. Mayor Grobeck again shared his plans for the Otters About Ottetail and the huge Adirondack chair to promote tourism in Ottetail City.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Engineering Agenda:** Bob Schlieman, City Engineer, Apex reported on the bid opening from March 9th for the Tyler Wohler's Memorial Trail. The low bid was Williams Excavating with \$180,347.35. Other bids coming in were from Central Specialties, Ottetail Aggregate, and Sellin Brothers. The Council has 75 days to award the contract to the low bidder. The overall estimated budget base on the low bid including a \$15,000 contingency is \$255,000. This is an increase from the \$225,000 when the project was bid last year. If the Council wishes to move forward there are additional items to be addressed including purchasing wet-land credits, coordinating with Otter Tail Power to move some overhead wires (they will need to obtain a permit from MnDOT, and a temporary grading permit will need to be acquired. Schlieman reported that Bernie Steeves had inquired whether the project could be split into two years. After getting in contact with MnDOT, regarding the question, the answer came back from MnDOT as a no.

This information led to a discussion with Bernie Steeves, representing the Tyler Wohler's Memorial Trail committee. Currently the group has \$130,000 in donations falling short of the \$255,000 needed to complete the trail. After discussion it was determined to wait until the April meeting to see where donations are before awarding the bid.

**Financial Management Plan:** Tabled until Council has time to review the spreadsheets from Kyle Sawyer at Ehlers.

**Pickle Ball Court:** Mayor Grobeck shared the funds for the pickle ball court would be provided by the Lion's at \$10,000, Ottetail Community Fund \$5,000 and a private donation of \$1000. Total cost of the court is approximately \$25,000. Possible \$10,000 would be needed from the Park capital outlay funds. Motion by Carlson and second by Hill to plan for up to \$10,000 from the park fund to be earmarked for this project. Motion carried.

**Big Build Developer Agreement doc:** Tabled until a clarification can be made on the deferred assessments for infrastructure can be made.

**Deputy Clerk:** Clerk-Administrator Hanson brought forward the recommendation of the personnel committee to hire Vanessa Burlingame as deputy clerk when Deputy Clerk Thorson is promoted to City Clerk-Treasurer. Burlingame has accepted the offer and will start on April 4th. Hanson reported that a total of 5 candidates were interviewed and a total of 8 applications. Starting for Burlingame will be paygrade 3 \$16.60 with an increase to paygrade 4 at \$17.99 after 90 days probation at which time benefits will be provided.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Call for CUP Hearing:** CUP Residential in Commercial District. Motion to call for hearing for 310 Hwy 78 N. made by Hill and second by Grimes. April 21 at 5:00 during regular meeting. Motion Carried.

**Call for Abatement Hearings:** 102 Acorn Trail & 108 Lueders Road. Motion to call for the hearings during the regular city council meeting on April 21 at 5:30 p.m.

**Call for Variance Hearings:** 101 E Main (impervious) at 5:00 p.m., special hearing at City Hall prior to regular meeting. Special Hearing: 614 Three Lakes Rd, set back standards and special date of March 31 at 4:00 p.m. Motion to set these variance hearings made by Carlson and second by Hill. Motion carried.

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**New Meeting Time: Resolution 2022-11 Establishing New Regular Meeting Time for City Council.** Motion by Carlson and second by Grimes to adopt Resolution 2022-11 to change council meeting time to 5:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. Motion carried.

**Membership Request:** Viewed a letter from the National Civic League to join their organization to support local leadership. Clerk-Administrator Hanson recommended not to join. No action taken.

**LMCIT Insurance Tort Liability:** Liability Coverage Waiver motioned by Windey to indicate the City DOES NOT WAIVE THE MONETARY LIMITS AS SET BY STATUE. Second to the motion by Hill. Motion carried.

**New Community Center:** Mayor Grobeck and Council member Windey, spoke with state representatives about putting a new community center on the 2022 Bonding Bill authored by House Representatives Franson and Rasmussen and Senate Representative Ingebrigtsen. This project is considered a “high priority” of the planning committee and Grobeck was asking the city re-affirm its interest in a new center. The bonding bill is for \$275,000 and donations of \$200,000 and the new building would be built on the site where the Lions hold their annual polka daze. Grobeck has already talked to builders. The bonding is not guaranteed, but if the city receives the funds, it would be committed. The bond has passed the House and is still in Senate. His request was to move the center up on the list of projects which were discussed at the financial planning work session and to re-affirm the project and commit the funds if available. Motion made by Hill and second by Grimes to re-affirm and move the project up on the list if funds become available. Motion carried. Windey mentioned that if there is money left over it can be used for maintenance. Prevailing wages, specifications including ADA and sealed bidding is required.

**Zoning:**

**Correspondence/Meetings/Training/FYI-reminders**

March 22-25, MCFOA Conference – Amanda will be attending.

March 30 - LMC Loss and Safety Workshop in Alexandria, Amanda and Justin will be attending.

April 13 – Justin will be attending a MWRA training in Elbow Lake.

With no other business to discuss, the Council adjourned at 7:17 p.m. a motion by Carlson and second by Hill. Carried.

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Elaine Hanson, MMMC  
Clerk-Administrator

Attested by

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Ron Grobeck, Mayor