

**City of Ottertail
Regular Meeting
City Hall Thursday, January 18, 2024—5:30 PM**

Council Members Present: Mayor Ron Grobeck, Mike Windey, Jill Carlson, and Elizabeth Augustus

Absent: Council Member Jan Hill

Staff Present: Amanda Thorson, Clerk-Treasurer; Nessa Burlingame, Deputy Clerk; Justin Lohse, Maintenance Coordinator; Joe Ahlfs, Fire Chief

Also Present: Linda Meyer, Ottertail Lakers 4H Club

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Grobeck opened the meeting at 5:30 PM. All present recited the pledge of allegiance.

- a. Approve Minutes 12-21-2023 Regular Meeting
- b. Approve Minutes 12-21-2023 Truth in Taxation Public Hearing
- c. Resolution 2024-01 Official Designation for City of Ottertail
- d. Resolution 2024-02 Authorizing Signatures
- e. Resolution 2024-03 Procedure to Comply with Regulations to Reimbursement of Bonds
- f. Resolution 2024-04 Accepting Donation from Otter Tail Lakes Property Owners Associations
- g. LG220 Application for Exempt Permit - Duck Unlimited @ Thumper Pond 2-16-2024
- h. LG220 Application for Exempt Permit – NWTF @ Thumper Pond 3-15-2024
- i. Approve Pay Equity Implementation Report 2024 to MMB
- j. 4th Quarter Services Sold Enterprise Account (Water Fund)
- k. Monthly Financial Reports
- l. Approve claims 4472-4498 for \$46,060.22 with additions and approval to pay late coming invoices

Carlson made a motion to approve the additions and the consent agenda with the additions. Windey seconded the motion. All voted in favor; motion carried.

Public Forum & Comment/Presentations

Mayor Grobeck presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the Ottertail Lakers 4H Club and Ottertail Scout Troop #307. The council thanks both organizations for the volunteer work they have done for the City of Ottertail and our Community.

Reports

Fire Department: Chief Ahlfs reported it had been a light month. There were 7 medical calls and mutual aid to both Henning and Perham on structural fires. Chief Ahlfs also mentioned there is a lot of sickness going around. He also mentioned looking for volunteers for the Polar Plunge coming up.

City Hall: Clerk Thorson reported that the City did not receive the safety grant from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. In their letter response they informed city staff that they received a number of applicants far exceeding the available funds. It was discussed that the council had previously spoken on the remodel of the entry way at City Hall. It was reiterated at this council meeting that regardless of receiving the grant, the plans to reinforce the reception desk and entry way should still move forward. The council agreed that it would be a safety issue for City staff not to move forward with

the remodel with or without the grant. Clerk Thorson agreed and stated that the City would apply for the grant again as well.

Clerk Thorson requested approval to attend the 2024 MCFOA Conference. Carlson made a motion to approve Clerk Thorson's attendance at the conference. Augustus seconded the motion. All voted in favor; motion carried.

Clerk Thorson also requested approval for Lohse and herself to attend the Safety and Loss Control workshop in Alexandria on March 27th. Windey made a motion to approve Thorson and Lohse's attendance at the workshop. Carlson seconded the motion. All voted in favor; motion carried.

Clerk Thorson shared with the council that the City of Ottertail received Public Safety Aid Grant for \$28,138. Thorson informed the council that there was no requirement to spend the money at a certain deadline but there are restrictions on what the funds can be used on. Mayor Grobeck suggested holding a raffle where those who receive a winter safety packet from the City would be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a roadside emergency kit. Grobeck suggested using \$500 of the Public Safety Aid to purchase 10 emergency roadside kits as the prizes in the raffle. Carlson made a motion to purchase ten emergency roadside kits for a total budget of \$500. Windey seconded the motion. All voted in favor; motion carried.

OTCEPAC: Windey reported on the different meetings and workshops he's been attending. Over different meetings Windey has learned that several places are hurting for funds for ambulance services. There has also been an emphasis on mental health, especially for those in emergency services. Windey also reported that the Fire Hall/Community Center may be eligible for grants to expand. Windey also provided a schedule which can also be found at Otter Tail County with Emergency Management. The schedule lists several different workshops and trainings throughout the year.

Tourism Board: Carlson reported the snowmobile races were cancelled due to the integrity of the ice on the lake. They will not be rescheduled for this year.

Old Business

Apex: Clerk Thorson reported to the council on behalf of Schlieman. Thorson stated the council would need to approve a purchase agreement for wetland banking credits. The purchase amount is \$2,199.37. Augustus made a motion to approve the purchase agreement. Windey seconded the motion. All voted in favor; motion carried.

Ottertail Daycare & Family Center: A work session is scheduled for February 5th at 5:30 PM held at City Hall. In a previous work session council and staff agreed to look into a lot in Happy Acres owned by Lynette Kinsman. The plan would be to see if she would be willing to "swap" her lot with another within Happy Acres. If she would agree, the City could potentially have a spot in town to give towards the family center. Lynette did not want to trade at first. Now, Lynette has offered the City to purchase the lot for \$40,000 (plus, Thorson informed the council, the City would need to absorb the \$20,000 in assessments). The council advised Clerk Thorson to let Lynette know that they would need to think about it and will have an answer for after the February Council meeting.

New Business

Happy Acres II Lots: The council reviewed a request for proposals for licensed real estate broker services. The council and staff went over the pros and cons of listing the Happy Acre lots with a Realty Firm. Carlson stated that she is not for using a realty group since they require a commission. However, Carlson

did acknowledge that listing the properties with a realtor would advertise to a broader group. Mayor Grobeck meet with Boll Realty and they would require a \$2,000 commission between the seller and listing agent for each lot sold. Carlson suggested that the council and staff look back at this option in April since winter is a difficult time to sell. Burlingame and Thorson will work on revamping the advertising and requirements for the Happy Acre Lots.

Limited Use Permit Sign: The City of Ottertail received a reminder from the Department of Transportation that the limited use permit for the “Welcome to Ottertail” sign on the 78 South will be expiring in two years. MnDOT informed the City that now would be the time to make any updates or changes. Windey wants to make sure all the lights on each of the four signs match in color. Some of the lights on the signs were yellow and others were white. No other updates were mentioned.

2024 Liaisons: Formally known as committees, the 2024 list of Liaisons was reviewed by council and staff. Carlson made a motion to approve the list with the considered changes. Augustus seconded the motion. All voted in favor; motion carried.

Deputy Mayor:

Jill Carlson

Personnel:

Jill Carlson and Jan Hill

Fire Department:

Jan Hill and Elizabeth Augustus

Ottertail Convention

& Tourism Rep:

Jill Carlson

Otter Tail Co. EPAC

Mike Windey & Justin Lohse

Planning Group Representative

Ron Grobeck & Mike Windey

Water Committee

Ron Grobeck, Jill Carlson & Clerk-Treas.

Weed Inspector:

Mayor Ron Grobeck (Statutory)

Emergency Services Director:

Mayor Ron Grobeck (Statutory)

Fire Chief

Joe Ahlfs

Legal Advisor

Sam Felix, primary,

Karkela, Hunt & Cheshire, PLLP

Auditor

Brian D. Koehn, CPA

Consultants

Engineer: Bob Schlieman, Apex Engineering Group

Financial Advisor: Todd Hagen, Ehlers and Associates

Economic Development: Ryan Economic Development Consultant

Planning/Zoning: Scott Saehr, Saehr Consulting

Mileage Rate: 2024 IRS rate .67¢/mile

Zoning

There were no zoning permits for the month of January.

Correspondence/Meeting/Training/FYI-reminders/Local Events

- a. City Hall will be closed on February 19th – President’s Day
- b. Ottetail polar Plunge February 3rd
- c. Ottetail Daycare & Family Center work session on February 3rd

Carlson made a motion to close the meeting. Augustus seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM.

Respectfully,

____s/s_____

Amanda Thorson
Clerk-Treasurer

____s/s_____

Ronald Grobeck
Mayor