

**City of Ottertail  
Regular Meeting  
September 16, 2021  
6:00 PM**

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

Absent: None

Staff Present: Clerk-Administrator Elaine Hanson; Maintenance Coordinator Justin Lohse; Deputy Clerk Amanda Thorson.

Also present: Jake Huebsch, Sourcewell-Planning/Zoning; Sam Felix, City Attorney; Bob Schlieman, City Engineer-Apex; Jenna Baker from the Citizen's Advocate, official paper; Seth & Brook Dokken, Robert & Stephanie Jensen, Tim & Robin Klinkner, Troy Nelson, Randy Hutmacher, Steve Carney, Joyce Falaady, Terry Dunn, Kalen & Jamie Fischer, Rod Foss, Stephanie Ellingson, Mark & Stephanie Jorgenson.

**CALL TO ORDER:** by Mayor Grobeck at 6 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Re-Zone AG to SF- Property to be rezoned – Approximately 26.97 acres of Lot 4 Block 2 Deer Run Estates 3rd Addition owned by Randy & Joan Hutmacher and 9.69 Acres Deer Run Estates owned by Seth and Brook Dokken. Jake Huebsch explained to the attendees what the purpose of rezoning was with emphasis that rezoning has nothing to do with classifications from the county. Seth Dokken made a case for not re-zoning due to tax increases even after an email from the assessor said contrary. Many people in attendance wanted to see the area continue to be ag land. Seth Dokken wanted to keep the land as AG and said does not want to see any single-family homes. Several other members of the public voiced their concerns on the re-zone. Randy Hutmacher said his land was intended for Single Family housing because of the infrastructure that he placed. It was re-stated that the use can still be the same, the zoning is for future planning. Motion to close the public hearing was made by Windey and second by Carlson, carried.

Mayor Grobeck opened the second hearing.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Tax Abatement for Duane & Judith Frakki at 520 Three Lakes Road. Frakki's are building a new home which qualifies for the Otter Tail County Big Build program and the mirrored program for the City. The plan has been administratively approved at the County. Motion made by Hill and second by Carlson to close the hearing. Carried.

**OPEN REGULAR MEETING:** Mayor Grobeck opened the regular meeting.

**AG to Single Family:** Motion made by Carlson and second by Hill to approve to only re-zone the Hutmacher property to Single Family and leave the Dokken property as AG. All voted in favor, carried. Huebsch suggested that Dokken could consolidate the three residential lots into one at the county.

**Tax Abatement:** Motion by Hill and second by Windey to approve Resolution 2021-21 Tax Abatement for 520 Three Lakes Road. All voted in favor, carried.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

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

- a. Approve Minutes of August 19, August 31 Budget notes, September 8 – Public Information Mtg on water.
- b. LG220's for Heartland Buglers @ Thumper Pond 12-3-21; OT Ducks Unlimited @ Woodshed 10-9-21.
- c. Financial and various reports.
- d. Approve claims #3410-3440 with additions totaling \$153,028.18 and approval to pay late coming invoices.

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**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Fire Department:** None.

**City Hall:** 1) Reviewed letter from LMCIT's Joe Gerhts, Sr. Loss Control Consultant with suggestions for claim resolutions in work comp and property casualty claims in the past years. Also suggesting Deputy Clerk Amanda Thorson attend the LMC Clerks Academy and other safety and training opportunities. 2) Hanson shared that No Dumping signs have been ordered to be placed at the area when tree/brush have been accumulating. There seems to have been some shingles dumped there now. Hill also suggested putting signs at the recycling bins. Rena at Otter Tail County should be contacted regarding furniture and other items that have been showing up at that site. 3) Reported that Justin Lohse has passed his Class D Water Operators test. 4) A quote to clean carpets as the Community Center and City Hall for \$990.50 was provided. Motion by Hill and second by Windey to approve the quote and get the cleaning done by K & S Carpet Cleaners and Restoration. All voted in favor, carried.

**Otter Tail County EPAC:** No report.

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Mark & Stephanie Jorgenson would like to have a drive-thru coffee shop on the north side of the mini mall owned by Stephanie Ellingson-Dykoff. Some of city property would be needed for flow of the traffic. Concerns were location of Ellingson's septic system and electric pedestal and water hydrant and well head owned by the city as well as liability. Could affect the traffic flow around City Hall. Both Huebsch and Atty. Felix thought the plan could work with some considerations to be addressed through an interim use permit or a conditional hearing process. Staff will work with Huebsch and the Jorgenson's to develop a workable plan.

**STAFF RECOGNITION:** Mayor Grobeck recognized Deputy Clerk Thorson and Maintenance Coordinator Justin Lohse for their hard work and dedication with a certificate.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Water Public Information Meeting.** A total of 31 attendees and 4 on Zoom were present for the public information meeting on September 8 at the community center. Of that number 25 were a definite yes that the city should look into doing its own system and 2 felt more information was needed regarding grants. A preliminary engineering report will be required to get the information needed to look at grant opportunities. Schlieman would like to put together a proposal and task order to review. Motion to authorize Apex Engineering (Schlieman) to move forward with the Prelim and other documents was made by Carlson Hill and second by Hill. All voted in favor, carried. Atty Felix said that he needs to have direction on responding to Henning regarding what transpired at the water committee meeting held in Battle Lake with Henning and Ottertail.

**Engineering Agenda:**

**Water Tower Improvements:** Reviewed report of KLM inspection. Schlieman provided a task order from 2016 to be amended for Elevated Water Storage Tank Improvements. Services to include Preliminary Design, Final Design, bidding & negotiating services, construction phase services, post construction phase and commissioning services. Plan is to have the project completed by October of 2022. Schlieman reviewed the cost schedule as well at \$87,000 estimated engineering services most of which will be done by KLM as water tower specialists. Apex will be involved with design, bidding & negotiating. \$405,000 is estimated construction. Motion by Carlson and second by Hill to accept the amended terms of the main agreement for another 5 years (10 total). All voted in favor. Secondly a motion to approve to approve the present task order (Apex) for this project was made by Carlson and second by Hill. All voted in favor, carried. On a side note, Schlieman has been working with Lohse on what will be needed and testing when the tower is being worked on and what color will the tower be painted. As before the City's logo with some color modifications for the Otter and color stripping and a dark blue bottom was agreed upon. Schlieman will get some renditions for the council to view.

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**Happy Acres 2nd Addition.** Black top is the next step. Will be ready for an assessment hearing sometime yet this fall.

**Resolution 2021-33 Approving Right-of-Way-Roadways, Drainage and Easement Vacations** located in the recorded plat named Happy Acres, Inc., and authorizing deeds to be drafted except as identified as easements in Lot 1 of Block One and Lots 1 & 2 of Block Two was motioned by Windey and second by Carlson. All voted in favor, carried.

**2022 Preliminary Budget:** Clerk-Administrator Hanson reviewed the preliminary levy increase of 5% as suggested by Council at its budget work session on August 31st. General Fund levy of \$457,256 and 2017 GO Bond levy of \$56,224 for a total preliminary levy of \$513,480. Council was reminded that the levy can be lowered but cannot be any higher. Motion made by Hill and second by Windey to approve the preliminary levy. All voted in favor, carried.

**2021 Truth-in-Taxation Hearing:** Motion by Carlson and second by Windey to set December 16, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. for the T-N-T hearing. All voted in favor, carried.

**Ottertail River:** After some discussion, Tuesday, October 5th at 7:00 p.m. the public will be invited to hear from Minnesota DNR and Fisheries on the topic of what can be done with the Ottertail River canal.

**Pickle Ball:** Mayor Grobeck and Councilmember Windey have met with Woessner's Construction on new pickle ball courts estimated at \$20,000 - \$25,000 which includes two or three courts.

**Tyler Wohler's Trail Group:** Instead of a letter, Council directed Mayor Grobeck to speak with Mr. Bernie Steeves to see if they can help with some of the costs that have been spent by the City for engineering services.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Burlingame Resignation:** Motion made by Windey and second by Carlson to accept **Resolution 2021-34 Accepting resignation of Councilmember Judah Burlingame and declare a vacancy.** All voted in favor, carried. Three people have interest in the seat. In the past Council has asked for a paragraph on why the person would like to sit on council. Council will decide on the appointment at the October meeting.

**Financial Management Plan/Water Rate Study Proposal:** Motion by Hill and second by Carlson to accept the proposal from Ehlers Public Finance Advisors to aid in financial planning and water rate study. All voted in favor, carried.

**Regional Safety Group:** Council declined to enter into the safety group for OSHA compliance and other safety topics offered by the League of MN Cities.

**Medicare Premium Reimbursement Arrangement/Benefit Summary Plan:** Hanson requested the Council enter into an agreement for Medicare Health Insurance. She will be retiring at the end of May 2022 and will be reducing hours to 30/wk after the first of the year providing a savings to the City not being eligible for the group health plan. The arrangement will allow the City to reimburse for Medicare supplement, Part B and Part D. Motion by Windey and second by Carlson to approve the arrangement for Hanson. All voted in favor, carried.

**Medica Policy:** Motion by Carlson and second by Hill to approve Medica insurance quote for city employees for 12-1-2021 to 11-30-2022. All voted in favor, carried.

**Smart Room:** Motion by Carlson and second by Hill to enter into an agreement with Otter Tail County for Blandin Broadband Community Smart Room Project, outlining roles and responsibilities of each entity. All voted in favor, carried.

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**Negative Sick Pay:** Clerk-Administrator Hanson asked the Council to consider negative sick pay for employees that do not have enough sick-time built up for health issues. Hanson was instructed to write a policy and amend the personnel policy to authorize negative sick leave of 30 hours after all other leave time has been depleted. Should employee leave service to the City and it has not been paid back, the negative amount to be deducted from final paycheck. Motion was made by Carlson and second by Hill. All voted in favor, carried.

**Zoning:**

2021-46 Delbert Thalmann – 100 Thalmann Rd. Move 28 x 36 Garage on to lot.

2021-47 Martha Robertson – 127 Riverview Rd. New attached 48 x 30 garage w/office & porch

2021-48 Dan & Joan Schneider – 119 Lynn Rd New 16 x 24 sunroom.

2021-49 Ricky & Karen Loock – 128 Lynn Rd. 10 x 16 storage shed

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

a. DC Thorson will be attending LMC New Clerk Academy October 7th & 8th in St. Paul

b. Maintenance Coordinator Lohse plans to attend MRWA Winterizing Storage Tanks Oct. 27 St. Cloud.

With no other business to discuss, the Council adjourned at 8:16 p.m. a motion by Carlson and second by Hill. Carried.

Submitted by

s/s \_\_\_\_\_

Elaine Hanson, MMMC  
Clerk-Administrator

Attested by

s/s \_\_\_\_\_

Ron Grobeck, Mayor