

**Harris City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 16, 2023**

- I. **Call to Order:** Mayor Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. **Roll Call:** City Clerk Shannon Geier conducted roll call. Present were Mayor Randy Carlson, Councilmember David Maack, Councilmember Al Siedow, and Councilmember Garret Pearson. Councilmember Diane Miller was absent. City Clerk Geier announced a quorum was present.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** Siedow made a motion to approve the September 11, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes and Accounts Payable. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- V. **Public Comment:** None.
- VI. **Regular Agenda:**
 - A. **Hydrant Repairs Update** – Pearson made a motion to approve repair of two water hydrants this year by Jones Construction, one by the Lutheran Church and the other by cold storage, preferably in that order. Siedow seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
 - B. **Local Road Improvement Cover Sheet and Task Order** – Siedow made a motion to approve amended Task Order #1 for MSA to work on the LRIP application at an hourly rate up to a total of \$4500. Maack seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
 - C. **2023-25 Resolution (LRIP) Local Road Improvement Program** – Siedow made a motion to approve amended Resolution 2023-25, A resolution seeking the support of Chisago County to act as project sponsor should the City of Harris be selected to receive Local Road Improvement Program funds. The termination point will be changed to show Deerwood Trail. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
 - D. **Lead Service Line information and mailing** – Geier presented an example letter to residents requesting their help in providing information to the City for determining the type and size of their water service lines. The council approved the letter and mailing it to residents.
 - E. **Splash pad for water tower** – Carlson made a motion to table for more information. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
 - F. **Water Tower Change Order #2** – Corrected document, for information only, showing a \$5,600 reduction in price.

- G. **2023-29 Resolution committing to Financial obligation for the Water system with State Funding for the Water Tower Project** – Pearson made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-29, A resolution committing to certain financial obligations for the water system in conjunction with federal and state funding for the 2023 water tower improvement project. Maack seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- H. **Treasurer Update/Report** – City Treasurer Sue Riesing brought some issues to the council for their consideration that might be helpful when reviewing the city finances. She has concerns about overspending and the fact that much of it may be due to bad policies or lack of adherence to the policies. It has been difficult for her to manage the budget to get accurate information for the council. The purchase order policy was revised to allow for department spending up to \$2000. If a p.o. is not obtained, she has no idea that those costs are outstanding. It is easy for a significant amount of money to be spent without council awareness or approval if multiple expenses occur just below the threshold. The policy should be reduced to a \$500 limit to help combat overspending. The fire department recently received five sets of turnout gear without a purchase order in place. The bill was \$15,592.26 and because there was no p.o. or council authorization she had not known to include those costs in the budget projections. Meanwhile, the council authorized a similar dollar amount to be spent towards our portion of SCBA gear expense not covered by the FEMA GO grant leaving no money available for the turnout gear. Another area of concern is the number of fire dept. members. The Auditor indicated that most cities our size have 16 to 18 fire dept. members and the council should consider quality versus quantity when hiring so the roster is mixed with those who can respond during daytime hours and those who can respond during nighttime hours. An assessment that may be helpful is to find out how many calls are EMS and how many fire calls are for the City of Harris versus mutual aid, how many are daytime calls and how many are nighttime calls. There are some members of the fire dept. that do not attend many fires but remain on the roster. That does not make sense financially and the members are not maintaining their required percentages for training and/or fire call response. Her job as the Treasurer is to make sure financial information is transparent for the council to determine if funds should be used for other infrastructure. The Mayor will discuss these issues with the Fire Chief, Deputies, and Captains and ask them to be prepared for the next meeting.
- I. **Public Works Working Supervisor** – This position will be offered to Jayde Terhell as a full-time position at \$35 per hour, one week of vacation, and \$400 per month HRA/HSA. The hours can be flexible if the expected duties are completed. M Health Fairview Jobcare Department will be used for back screen, functional evaluation, health history, occupational screening, and non-dot urine drug screen.
- J. **Update on repair electric outlet on streetlight poles or solar lights** – Tabled.
- K. **Dog park at Firemen’s Park** – Siedow made a motion to purchase 400’ of used fence from Braham for \$400 for a dog park fence. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

- L. **Class 5 for Grand Ave north of Sunrise** – Pearson made a motion to get a load of gravel from Knife River and fix Grand Ave potholes. Siedow seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- M. **2023-24 Truth in Taxation hearing date** – Siedow made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-24, a resolution setting the truth in taxation hearing dates for Dec 13, 2023. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- N. **2023-26 Resolution Adopting the preliminary 2024 Property Tax Levy** – Carlson made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-26, a resolution adopting the preliminary 2024 property tax levy. Siedow seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- O. **2023-05 Ordinance Mineral Extraction moratorium** – Pearson made a motion to approve amended Ordinance 2023-05, an interim ordinance prohibiting acceptance or consideration of applications for new mineral extraction interim use permits for six months. Maack seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-1, Siedow opposed.
- P. **2023-06 Ordinance Natural and Native Landscaping** – Siedow made a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-06, an ordinance amending chapter 95, section 95.03, and section 95.04. Carlson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- Q. **George letter resignation** – Carlson made a motion to accept the resignation of George Valvoda from Harris Public Works effective October 31, 2023. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

VII. Staff/Department Reports:

- A. **Public Works** – Written report. Siedow made a motion to approve repair of grader by RDO, estimated at \$3,192.63. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. New locks are needed for public works. The council discussed looking into card key entries for all public buildings and security systems.
- B. **Fire Department** – Written report. Siedow made a motion to accept the resignation of John Rotter from the Harris Volunteer Fire Department effective 09/22/2023. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- C. **Planning Commission** – Written report.
- D. **PeopleService Report** – Written report.
- E. **Clerk's report** - Written report. Carlson made a motion to close the City Hall Office December 22 – January 2nd for the holidays. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. Staff will continue to monitor emails and phone messages. Pearson made a motion for Geier to work Tuesday, 10/17 instead of Thursday and to close the office Thursday, 10/19. Siedow seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- F. **Mayor and Council Reports** – Basement windows in Legion have been replaced and installation of playground equipment at Schoolhouse Park has begun.

VIII. **Adjourn:** Siedow made a motion to adjourn. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. There being no further business, Mayor Carlson adjourned the meeting at 9:19 pm.

City Clerk – Shannon Geier

Randy Carlson - Mayor

Date Approved

APPROVED