

ARLINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 6, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m., Vice Mayor Reetz presiding.

Members present: Vice Mayor Reetz, Borchert, Griep, Vrklan, Wills

Members absent: Mayor Kreft

Also Present: Deputy Clerk Tesch, Attorney Arneson, Kurt Menk, Supt. Thomes, Matt Jaunich, Building Inspector Darin Haslip, Curt Boeder, Greg Goblirsch, Dwight Grabitske, Darin Mielke, Jean Olson, Pauline Wiemann, Dee Czech, Sue Morrisette, Kathy Homme

Motion by Griep, seconded by Vrklan, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Borchert, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes from the July 2 & July 16, 2007 meetings as presented.

Motion by Vrklan, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the bills as presented.

Vice Mayor Reetz explained that the Council was nearing the end of the process for hiring a new City Administrator as they interviewed 5 candidates last week.

Motion by Vrklan, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to hire Matt Jaunich as the new City Administrator, starting date tentatively early September.

Building Official Darin Haslip introduced himself (a fully certified building inspector) to the Council. He stated that the transition has been going well. He explained the process he uses for determining valuations, etc. He commented that he is working with the P&Z Consultant directly regarding setbacks, zoning, etc. prior to issuing any permits. Vrklan commented on that he was impressed with the professionalism that he seen with regards to certain instances that have occurred.

Historical Society (AHS) Members Curt Boeder, Dwight Grabitske and Greg Goblirsch were present to ask the City for a \$20,000 loan to finish the final phase of the restoration of the old fire hall. Deputy Clerk Tesch explained that there was money in the Buildings/Parks/Grounds Improvement Fund (a reserve account) that could be used plus there was approximately \$3,500 left in the Margaret Major Fund. She added that the veterans were given a loan of \$10,000 and \$3,500 was still outstanding, but anticipated to be paid off by the end of the year. Vrklan suggested granting the AHS \$10,000 (included balance of M.Major fund), plus give them a long-term loan for \$10,000. The AHS members expressed concern that they have no regular source of income to be able to pay the City back. Griep suggested having Staff research how to fund this project without tapping into reserves and report back to the Council at the next meeting. Reetz suggested looking at the General Building Capital Fund. Grabitske commented that once the restoration has been completed, the building can be placed on the State Historical Register and funds are made available yearly for maintenance purposes.

The following members of the Library Committee were present to give their semi-annual report to the Council: Director Kathy Homme, Jean Olson, Dee Czech, Sue Morrisette and Pauline Wiemann. Homme thanked the Council for the additional hours the Library can be open on Tuesday mornings. She stated that the computers continue to be a major asset to the Library. She commented on the summer reading program and how the kids were enjoying it. Brief discussion was held on the hours the Library is open.

Homme explained that part-time Library Aide Caitlin Franke had submitted her letter of resignation, but asked to be considered as a sub for holidays, vacations or during the summer. Homme stated she was ok with this, as Franke did an excellent job at the Library. She stated that 25 individuals had applied for the position and 6 were interviewed. She was recommending Pat Grabitske for the position.

Motion by Wills, seconded by Griep, and passed by unanimous vote to hire Pat Grabitske for the part-time Library Aide position at \$6.15 per hour, approximately 15 hours a week.

Homme spoke on the building itself and what repairs/maintenance need to be done. She will be talking with Supt. Thomes about these and getting some estimates.

Homme updated the Council on where the Library Committee was at with regards to the 501c3. She added that she had applied for the Carl & Verna Schmidt Foundation grant. The Library was awarded \$12,000 through this grant, which the money will be used in the genealogical area (update all their films).

Darin Mielke was present to discuss increasing the benefit level for the Fire Relief Fund. He talked about what investments, assets and liabilities the department has. He stated that the department has been investing wisely the last few years and has been able to maintain a 2% surplus. He further explained that if the department ended up with a deficit, the City would have to get involved and make up the difference, which has happened in surrounding communities. The Relief Association was asking to increase the benefit level from \$1,000 to \$1,150 per year of active service per member.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to increase the Fire Relief Association's benefit level to \$1,150 per year of active service per member.

Brief discussion was held on the City's annual contribution of \$100 per active firefighter. Mielke commented that this amount has been the same since the early 1980's, has not been increased. It was suggested to give this some consideration during the budget process for 2008.

Motion by Vrklan, seconded by Griep, and passed by unanimous vote to contribute the annual \$100 per active firefighter to the Fire Relief Association totaling \$2,800.

Mielke explained that the Fire Relief Association is dissatisfied with the current auditing company and would like to switch companies. He commented on some of the issues (timeliness and quality) they are having with the current company. He presented some information on a firm in Mankato that deals with auditing fire relief accounts directly. It was suggested to contact the current auditing company to find out what they are charging and if the issues can be resolved.

The job descriptions for the Fire Chief, First & Second Fire Chief, Safety/Training Officer and Fire Fighter were reviewed. Reetz explained that a template for the job descriptions had been obtained from the League of Cities website and they (Fire Department Officers, Councilmember Wills and himself) started making changes to fit the department. He stated that the department will no longer hold elections for the open officer positions; they are going to a selection process where members who are interested in an open position, will have to apply for it and meet the position qualifications.

Motion by Wills, seconded by Vrklan, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the job descriptions for the Fire Chief, First & Second Chief, Safety/Training Officer and Fire Fighter as presented. (See file for copy).

Supt. Thomes updated the Council on the street vacuuming/jetting that had taken place during the period of July 30 through August 6<sup>th</sup>. He stated that it went better and faster than anticipated; the jetting company was very thorough. As they were working, they were able to map out all of the streets and provide the size of the pipes running through them (the city was unable to tell them this). Some of the problems they encountered were a collapsed storm sewer, bricks, tree roots, sanitary sewer issue and a skateboard. Thomes spoke on a few ideas that he was given regarding yearly maintenance/prevention.

Supt. Thomes stated that the Parks Committee was recommending a fence/barrier be placed between the railroad tracks and the play equipment at Four Seasons Park for safety reasons. He explained that the railroad requires a 50 ft. setback from the tracks which would place the fence right next to the play equipment. The railroad was willing to grant a variance to the City to place a fence on railroad property (30 ft. from tracks within the setback

area), which would include a yearly \$85 permit fee. Thomes had obtained 2 separate bids and stated that they were for materials only; the City would do the installation.

Motion by Wills, seconded by Griep, and passed by unanimous vote to accept the bid from Thomes Bros in the amount of \$745.50 for a 4 ft. high, 175 ft. long chain link fence for Four Seasons Park to be placed between the railroad tracks and play equipment.

Supt. Thomes commented that the Parks Committee would like to have sidewalks put in as follows:

- 1) Four Seasons Park - from Adams Street to the play equipment;
- 2) Frenzel Park – from Baker Street to the play equipment;
- 3) Fairview Park – from the parking lot to the new shelter.

He obtained a bid from CMC Construction in the amount of \$4,768.75 (Four Seasons-\$2,501.25, Frenzel-\$743.75, Fairview-\$1,523.75 of which Good Samaritan is to pay half-\$761.88).

Motion by Vrklan, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to accept the bid from CMC Construction in the amount of \$4,768.75 for sidewalks for the above referenced parks.

Supt. Thomes spoke briefly on the erosion problem that is occurring on the east side of the creek near the East Brooks Street Bridge. The County has been recommending that something be done and since the creek is low right now, it is a good time to rip rap the bank.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Borchert, and passed by unanimous vote to accept the bid from Melsha Construction in the amount of \$8,900 to rip rap the east bank of the High Island Creek near the East Brooks Street Bridge.

Discussion was held on the letter from Chief Rovinsky regarding the purchase of a new squad car. The Police Committee recommended accepting the bid from Brau Motors in the amount of \$25,362 for a 2008 Chevy Impala. It was understood that the department would be getting rid of 2 squads and use the new one exclusively.

Motion by Vrklan, seconded by Griep, and carried (Borchert opposed) to authorize Chief Rovinsky to purchase a new squad car through Brau Motors in the amount of \$25,362.

The Council reviewed 3 bids for replacing the fence on the west side of the cemetery that is near the trailer park. The Cemetery Committee recommended accepting the low bid from Haggemiller Lumber for a six foot high fence in the amount of \$5,234.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote accept the low bid in the amount of \$5,234 from Haggemiller Lumber to install a six foot high fence at the cemetery near the trailer park.

Brief discussion was held on the area in the cemetery near the old entrance and the possibility of reducing the sale price of these lots. Borchert commented that he missed the last Cemetery Committee meeting and was unsure what they were actually recommending, as they have discussed several ideas for this area.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Griep, and passed by unanimous vote to table the discussion on reducing the price of the lots in the cemetery near the old entrance.

Attorney Arneson stated that he would like to participate in both the Commercial and Rental Rehabilitation portion of the Small Cities Development Grant Program. He would like to replace windows in the apartments above his office building, along with replacing the roof. However, because he is an employee of the City, he was requesting another attorney determine whether a conflict of interest does or does not exist prior to him applying for the grant. This attorney should make the determination and forward his findings onto to DEED. Attorney Arneson was recommending Doug Nesvig (Gaylord's City Attorney) since Arlington and Gaylord entered into the program jointly. He presented the attached Conflict Determination Request Letter.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to accept the Conflict Determination Letter from Ross Arneson and recommend Pettipiece & Associates contact Attorney Doug Nesvig to make a determination on this matter.

Dates for the City Appreciation Dinner were discussed. It was agreed to table this until the next meeting, in order to give everyone a chance to check their calendars.

The Council reviewed the thank you card from Story Hour Director Marie Kreft. The Council also reviewed a letter from a concerned resident/business owner regarding policing.

It was the consensus of the Council to change the date of the September 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting to Wednesday, September 5<sup>th</sup> due to the Labor Day holiday.

Reetz stated that Mayor Kreft would like to have a Special Workshop on August 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. to review the preliminary budget. The Council agreed on the date and time for the workshop.

Wills commented that the Utility Committee had met with McLeod Power and the City's electrical engineer to discuss what projects could be worked on yet this year as there were funds still available within the budget. It was decided that approximately 20 poles would be replaced (\$50,000) and a new reclosure control would be added (acts like a giant circuit breaker) at the new substation (\$40,000). They also discussed replacing group operated air brake switches. Reetz added that some of these items were in the 2007 Electrical Capital Plan.

Borchert commented that Elmer Burdorf has resigned from the Cemetery Committee. They were not recommending a replacement at this time.

Borchert questioned if well #2 was fixed. Reetz stated that they were still waiting for the pump to come in. Reetz will check on this and report back.

Vice Mayor Reetz recessed the regular meeting and called the closed meeting to order.

Griep updated the Council on what has been happening at the hospital.

*\*\*Minutes Incomplete – See Council Folder for Complete Information\*\**

Vice Mayor Reetz adjourned the closed meeting and reconvened the regular meeting.

Wills questioned what was being done about employees accruing vacation time. Reetz stated that nothing has been done yet, but the problem does need to be addressed with getting all employees back on track per the handbook policy.

Borchert commented on the deaf child sign on Dayton Street and the Welcome to Arlington/Compost site sign that went up at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Henderson Road. He thought there was a policy in place that all signage had to be approved by the Council. Wills expressed concern that posts are being installed without calling Gopher State.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

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Deputy Clerk Lisa J. Tesch

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Vice Mayor Curt Reetz