

ARLINGTON CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 16, 2006

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

Members present: Mayor Czech, Borchert, Griep, Reetz, Voight, Wills

Members absent: None

Also Present: Administrator Krueger, Street Supt. Thomes, Rhonda Matz, Nicole Dodge, Paul Christensen, Chris Gutschow, Tom Noack, Douglas Reker, Eleanor Trocke, Ambulance Manager Brian Thomes, Kurt Menk

Motion by Griep, seconded by Reetz, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the agenda with the following additions:

6.5) Ambulance Service – new personnel

5d) Asphalt Repair at Four Season's Park

13.5) EDA Lot Loan.

Motion by Voight, seconded by Griep, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes from the October 2, 2006 meeting as presented.

Motion by Reetz, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the bills as presented and Statement of Funds for September.

Street Supt. Thomes stated that Robinson Trucking is interested in providing 1 truck for snow hauling. He stated that he had also been in contact with Cemstone who was willing to provide 2 trucks. He stated that both bids were for \$75 per hour per truck.

Motion by Voight, seconded by Borchert, and passed by unanimous vote to hire Robinson Trucking and Cemstone at \$75 per hour per truck to haul snow during the 2006-2007 snow season (subject to proof of insurance, etc.).

Supt. Thomes explained that there is a need again this year to advertise/hire 2 part-time drivers to assist with snow removal this year. The city has 2 trucks that it uses during snow removal and does not have enough drivers. Reetz expressed concern that a requirement for the last employee hired was to obtain a Class "B" driver's license to be able to assist with snow removal and if this has not been met, it should be addressed before anyone else is hired for this purpose.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to authorize Street Supt. Thomes to advertise for 2 part-time drivers to assist with snow removal.

Supt. Thomes presented a bid in the amount of \$896 (each, need 2) for some jacks with wheels for the snow plow and sanding truck. He stated that the snow plow currently has jacks with skids on them. The skids wear down (average replacement is 1 month at a cost of \$180 each) and then the cutting edge wears down faster (lasting only 1-2 years and costs \$1600 for a pair of replacement edges). He explained that Winthrop has had the wheel jacks for some time and has not had to replace anything (they last). Thomes further explained that the wheels are better for going over the railroad tracks or cracks in the roads, the skids do catch on these areas and cause damage.

Motion by Reetz, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to authorize Street Supt. Thomes to purchase a pair of swivel snow wheels with adjusters at a cost of \$896 each for the snow plow.

Supt. Thomes spoke on the alley behind the Methodist Church. He has been receiving complaints about the existing water problems. The city's engineer has looked at this alley and determined that paving it would be the best option with 100% assessment to the property owners. However, there is not a catch basin at the end of the

alley and the water would run along the Avenue to the north, which this corner can't handle the water that it currently gets. He explained that they are planning to reconstruct 4th Avenue in 2008. He suggested waiting with paving the alley and including it with the reconstruction project so a catch basin could be put in at the end of the alley and the work would only have to be done once. Administrator Krueger explained that if the alley work is done in 2007, part of it would have to be taken out and redone in 2008 because the street elevation is expected to change with the reconstruction. Krueger expressed concern about having work done that will only fix part of the problem and essentially create a bigger problem in another area, when they could wait one more year and the entire problem would be taken care of.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Reetz, and carried (Reetz opposed) to schedule a public hearing with the Methodist Church and residents that live on the 300 Block of West Alden and West Brooks Street to see how they feel about cementing the alley now and redoing part of it later, or if they would be willing to wait 1 more year.

Supt. Thomes explained that he had contacted Hardline Asphalt to come and look at the tennis/basketball court at Four Seasons Park about repairing the holes made from the tent stakes during the Sesquicentennial Celebration. Thomes stated that they will come back to remove the plugs, refill the holes with a softer material (rubber) and then put a layer of blacktop over to make the surface as flush as possible for \$600. Voight questioned why he hadn't talked to the company before the tent stakes were put in. Thomes explained that he had nothing to do with the tent or its placement; this was handled by the Sesquicentennial Committee. He further explained that because of the condition of the basketball court prior to the celebration, the tent would not have been able to be placed where it was.

Motion by Voight, seconded by Reetz, and passed by unanimous vote to accept the bid from Hardline Asphalt in the amount of \$600 to make the necessary repairs to the basketball court in Four Seasons Park.

Administrator Krueger stated that the Historical Society was requesting the city to hire a structural engineer to look at the old fire hall building (more specifically the south wall supporting the tower) so they may continue with their plans for the restoration project. He explained that the Historical Society felt that this cost should be taken care of by the city, because the building is owned by the city and any funds they have are designated specifically for the façade only. Administrator Krueger commented that he had contacted LS Engineers to look at the structural integrity of the tower area and provide the city with a written report. The cost would be figured at an hourly rate not to exceed \$600. Voight and Borchert both expressed concern that money has already been spent on this building and it was not looked at by a structural engineer first. Reetz questioned what will happen if the report comes back less than favorable, will the Historical Society figure this into their costs or expect the city to make the necessary repairs. Administrator Krueger believes that the Historical Society will expect the city to cover this cost. Griep questioned how soon this would have to be done. Administrator Krueger commented that they want to keep moving on this project and fundraising efforts need to be made. Voight questioned which fund the money would come out of to pay for the structural evaluation. Krueger said the general public building fund.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Reetz, and passed by unanimous vote to accept the bid from LS Engineers to look at the structural integrity of the old fire hall building (more specifically the south wall supporting the tower area) at a cost not to exceed \$600.

Ambulance Manager Brian Thomes stated that Jason Mueller (Class A driver's license) and Lori Turan (Class D driver's license) have expressed an interest in taking the EMT class that starts in the next week. He had background checks done on both individuals; there was nothing outstanding on either one. He commented that he received a phone call from Neal Wisch (another ambulance member) just before coming to the meeting that Brad Robinson was also interested in taking the same class, but he did not have the necessary paperwork filled out for him. Thomes stated that Robinson is currently on the Green Isle Fire Dept. and lives right on the line between Green Isle and Arlington. He stated there was some question within the department about being on-call and the response time (to be at the building within 5 minutes). Voight suggested that he (as the ambulance manager) should contact the Green Isle Fire Department Chief directly to get the ok for this individual to join the ambulance service. Krueger suggested that he should also contact Brad Robinson directly. Reetz expressed

concern about the response time also. Mayor Czech felt that it was appropriate to get all the paperwork filled out and in order prior to allowing this individual to start taking the class.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to authorize Jason Mueller and Lori Turan to take the EMT class with the understanding that they must be on the ambulance service for a minimum of 1 year or they will have to reimburse the city.

It was the consensus of the Council to not allow Brad Robinson to take the EMT class at this time due to the issue with response time. The Council commented that they are appreciative of people wanting to become members/drivers, but they have to be concerned with safety as well as response times.

Ambulance Manager Thomes informed the Council that the State has changed the standards regarding defibrillators and the unit they use most often on the main rig cannot be changed to meet the new standards and will have to be replaced. The unit itself is about 5 years old, cost around \$10,000 and there is nothing wrong with it, it just cannot be reprogrammed. They are looking for a similar unit to the one on the back up rig (less expensive) that will or can be changed to meet the new standards. He stated that he has started to price out a couple of units and found them to be around \$2,000. Thomes stated that the hospital and other area agencies have already made the change to the new standards. He will have more information ready in time for the next meeting.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to hold a Special Council meeting on Wednesday, November 8th at 6:30 p.m. to canvas the general election results.

Mayor Czech commented that he would like to appoint Mike Scharping to the Police Committee. He would also like to re-appoint Kevin Lindstrand to the Hospital Board.

Motion by Reetz, seconded by Griep, and passed by unanimous vote to accept Mayor Czech's recommendation to re-appoint Kevin Lindstrand to the Hospital Board for another term.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Reetz, and carried (Voight opposed and Borchert abstained) to accept Mayor Czech's recommendation to appoint Mike Scharping to the Police Committee.

Motion by Reetz, seconded by Borchert, and passed by unanimous vote to approve P&Z Administrator Jenness' travel request to attend the Land Use Issues for Cities-Avoiding Landmines seminar in Redwood Falls on Tuesday, October 17th.

The Council reviewed the letter of resignation from Joe Kistner from the On-Call position with the City. Mayor Czech thanked him for his years of service on the Police Committee and being On-Call.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Voight, and passed by unanimous vote to accept Joe Kistner's letter of resignation from the On-Call position.

Sibley Medical Center's Financial Director Rhonda Matz was present to discuss the closing of the Adult Day Health Center. She provided some financial information to help the Council better understand why the decision was made to close the center. She stated that the meals on wheels program may have to be looked at in the future. Mayor Czech stated that he had met with the Good Samaritan Center's Administrator about possibly taking over the meals on wheels program. Voight stated that the meals on wheels program is losing money, but the Hospital Board has not discussed dropping this program. If anything, they will continue with it until another organization can take it over. Hospital Board members Eleanor Trocke and Tom Noack, along with the new Hospital Administrator Doug Reker provided their thoughts and comments.

Discussion was held on the Sibley County Faith In Action organization. Mayor Czech stated that they are still looking for a new location for their offices, now that the Adult Day Health Center is closed. He suggested possibly trying to make some space available in the Arlington Services Building. Sibley Medical Center's Human Resource Director Nicole Dodge explained how things worked (financially) between the Medical Center

and Faith In Action. Administrator Krueger made the suggestion to see if the FIA Administrator (Tami Stadther) could move the office to her home and then the city would allow them to use the Technology Center for the meetings as part of the In Kind Services that it provides to FIA. Reetz commented that he was ok with the idea of FIA using the Services building, but the City of Arlington has been the biggest contributor overall to the FIA as far as In Kind Services and needs to draw the line somewhere. Wills questioned what the old ambulance (filter) meeting room was being used for. Krueger stated the ambulance was storing some things in there, plus this room can get noisy at times. Reetz suggested the office space with the sliding glass doors. Krueger said the ambulance has their computer in that space. Rhonda Matz commented that the FIA could probably stay where they are at (in the Adult Day Health Center) for some time, or at least until the building is sold. She didn't think the Hospital Board would object to this.

Chris Gutschow and Paul Christensen of People Services were present to continue the discussion from the last meeting regarding their proposal to take over the water and sewer department for the City. Administrator Krueger reviewed the advantages and disadvantages that he and Deputy Clerk Tesch were asked to put together regarding keeping the water/wastewater department or allowing People Service to take over. He and Deputy Clerk Tesch had also put an estimated budget comparison together. He stated that the Utility Committee had also reviewed these comparisons prior to this meeting. Chris and Paul reiterated some of the services that they will provide to the City from the tentative contract that they had drawn up and presented to the City. It was suggested to hold monthly or quarterly meetings with the Utility Committee and also with the A-GI WW Committee. Paul and Chris talked about how they recruit their employees and what is expected from them during their employment with People Service. They commented that it usually takes an average of 60 days to find employees when they take on a new customer, but they are able to provide service to those new customers immediately with regard to emergencies. Mayor Czech expressed his thoughts in favor of this transition. Reetz explained that he would abstain from any voting on this matter as he used to work for People Service and wanted to be sure there was no chance for a conflict of interest to arise.

Motion by Voight, seconded by Wills, and carried (Reetz abstained) to approve the Service Contract from People Service to take over the water and sewer department for the City of Arlington effective December 1, 2006, subject to the City Attorney and Utility Committee working with People Service to work out specific details within the contract (fine tune some language).

Brief discussion was held on what the City's next step would be with regard to the employees in the water/wastewater department. Administrator Krueger stated that this should be discussed at the end of the meeting in a closed session because it deals with employee matters directly. Attorney Arneson agreed that the closed session would be appropriate due to the circumstances.

Voight explained that the Hospital Board has signed on a new doctor, but this individual cannot start until next summer as they are finishing their schooling. She stated that they are still looking for more doctors and have a few leads that they are pursuing. She stated that the new Administrator (whom they met earlier in the evening) had just started that day.

Administrator Krueger explained that the EDA had finished up last week with its Strategic Planning Session. They are in the process of putting a report together, which will be presented upon its completion at a later meeting. He stated that he was very pleased with how things went and that it was a very good process to go through; it helped everyone understand the vision of where Arlington is and what direction it is going or needs to go (including how to keep or improve the downtown business).

Wills commented on the first (organizational) meeting of the Joint Trail Committee that had been held last week with representatives from Arlington, Gaylord, Green Isle and the County. Administrator Krueger commented that he was essentially leading this Committee for now and hopes to pass it on to someone else in the near future. He just wanted to get the process started. Krueger stated that there is a lot of interest for this joint trail system. Attorney Arneson commented briefly on the non-profit (501c3) organization that needs to be formed and the process to do this.

Reetz commented on the Utility Committee meeting that had been held recently with United Services Group regarding the current electric service within the City and putting a work plan together (what lines or poles need to be replaced, how loads can be redistributed, etc.).

Administrator Krueger commented that they have started holding Committee budget meetings to try to reduce the tax levy.

Administrator Krueger explained that Ron Soeffker had paid off a lot loan and was in turn applying for a new lot loan for Lot 2, Block 2, High Island Creek Addition. The EDA had approved this request at their last meeting with the condition that all materials currently on site were to be paid in full before the loan would be given because the work (basement dug and in) had already started on this property and this is not something they really approved of. Krueger stated that Mr. Soeffker had provided proof that all supplies/work on site has been paid for.

Motion by Griep, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the lot loan request from Ron Soeffker for Lot 2, Block 2, High Island Creek Addition.

Reetz informed the Council that he would not be able to attend the upcoming Happy Birthday Celebration because his son was coming home on leave from Iraq. Mayor Czech invited the Council to help at the celebration as they were in need of helpers/servers.

Motion by Wills, seconded by Borchert, and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the regular meeting.

Minutes Incomplete – See Council Folder for Complete Information

Mayor Czech called the emergency closed meeting to order. He stated the reason for this meeting was to discuss what was to happen to the 2 employees in the water/wastewater department since the Council voted earlier in the evening to approve PeopleService taking over this department. Attorney Arneson commented that employment is at will, but this situation would be considered a layoff and does not require a lot of procedure as far as ending the employment. He explained that when a layoff happens, the employee(s) is entitled to receive unemployment compensation. The Council expressed regret with taking jobs away, but they felt their decision was made in the best interest of the City. Reetz made the suggestion to the Council to be prepared to have the city buildings re-keyed on November 30th.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Reetz, and passed by unanimous vote to have Administrator Krueger draft a separation letter to the employees in the water/wastewater department explaining that the City will be contracting with People Service effective December 1, 2006 and their employment will end November 30th. The letter was to also explain the terms of employment, such as taking any unused sick, comp or vacation time, and also that they would receive 2 weeks severance pay.

Motion by Borchert, seconded by Wills, and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the closed meeting.

Administrator David L. Krueger

Mayor David Czech