



Regular City Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting
November 14, 2023, at 6 pm
Sturgeon Lake City Hall

The following councilmembers were present at the hall: Mayor Scott Helfman, Councilmember Nick Dagle and Councilmember Ken Grey

The following councilmembers were absent: Councilmember Adam Langhorst and Councilmember David Lingle

The following city employees were present at the hall: Fire Chief Al Cekalla, City Clerk/Treasurer Sandra Osterdyk, and Public Works Superintendent Larry Coursolle

The following city staff members were absent: none

Members of the public that were present: Shelly Coursolle, Joseph Pelawa, Judy Koch, Tom Koch, Marcia Eiyneck, Emily Danelski

Call to order: Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor Helfman called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Fire Department Report

Fire Department Report: The Fire Chief said that the department is looking to sell two trucks. He will get the information and verbiage that will go on the City of Sturgeon Lake website and for the newspaper advertisement as well. The two trucks will be sold in a sealed bid process. All sealed bids will be opened at the December 12, 2023, council meeting. The reserve for the Ford F350 will be set at \$1,000 and \$6,000 for the Chevrolet 2500.

The Fire Department has two new volunteer firefighters who have recently joined the department, Cody Lemke and Kyle Olson who are currently waiting for background checks to clear. This now brings the total to 17 members. Turkey Bingo was Friday, November 10, 2023, at the Star Club in Kettle River which resulted in a very good crowd attending. Final numbers from the event will be provided at the December 12, 2023, meeting. There was a total of 12 calls within the last month.

The discussion of the new Fire Hall continues. They recently visited with two different architectural firms to get numbers. There will be additional meetings in the future. It has been asked that the bond request be increased to \$5 Million due to the preliminary numbers after the meetings which are roughly around \$3.5 Million. Mayor Helfman said he would reach out and provide an update once he hears back. Also discussed was the idea of adding a new City Hall to the project and if a community center is wanted and/or needed for the city. Councilmembers and the fire chief have been asked to draft a design of what they feel would be proper for a new Fire Hall/City Hall and send it to the city clerk for the next meeting. The City Clerk will send the previous designs from the 2022 discussions to the council for review. Consideration of where the new building will be located was also discussed. Currently, there is land owned by the city near the water tower or St. Isidore Catholic Church has property that is open for sale. The Fire Chief explained that the St. Isidore Catholic Church property is ideal for the department's needs as it would allow for drive-thru bays.

[Councilmember N. Dagle made a motion to increase the bond request to \\$5 million, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, A. Langhorst and D. Lingle absent.](#)

Special Guests and Visitor Comment

Judy Koch was present to propose that four of the residents on Cathedral Pines be allowed to lease back the green space from the City of Sturgeon Lake. This would prevent trash from being dumped on the vacant lots. There would be stipulations that the residents could not harvest trees, build any structures, or store items on these lots. It would be an added \$500 a year in revenue for the city. Scott asked for paperwork to be forwarded to the City Clerk and that it would need to be reviewed by the City Attorney before the council voted on the green space proposal.

Budget Review

After a review and discussion of the 2024 budget revenue and expenses, it was finalized by the council. The City Clerk/Treasurer will move to a salary of \$45,000, effective immediately that includes paid holiday with meetings being paid at 21.63 per hour. The City Hall office will be open Monday – Thursday from 9:00 am until 7:00 pm, starting October 13, 2023.

[Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve the 2024 Annual Budget and salary of the City Clerk/Treasurer with paid holidays with meetings being paid at \\$21.63 per hour, Councilmember K. Grey seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.](#)

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 12, 2023, Public Hearing: Water Sewer Special Assessment Hearing and Regular Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting Minutes and October 10, 2023, Regular Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting Minutes were submitted for approval.

[Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve the minutes for the September 12, 2023, Public Hearing: Water Sewer Special Assessment Hearing and Regular Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting Minutes Councilmember Ken Grey seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.](#)

[Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve the minutes for the October 10, 2023, Regular Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting Minutes with the three corrections requested Councilmember Ken Grey seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.](#)

Financial Report

Claims Paid: The Clerk/Treasurer presented the claims paid to the council. Any questions the council had about the Claims Paid were answered satisfactorily by the Clerk/Treasurer.

[Councilmember N/ Dagele made a motion to approve Claims Paid, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.](#)

Unpaid Claims: The Clerk/Treasurer presented the Unpaid Claims to the council. Any questions the council had about the Unpaid Claims were answered satisfactorily by the Clerk/Treasurer.

[Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve the Unpaid Claims, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.](#)

Financial Report/Review: The Clerk/Treasurer presented the Financial Report/Review. Any questions the council had were answered satisfactorily by the Clerk/Treasurer.

[Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve the Financial Report/Review, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.](#)

Reports of Departments

Cemetery Committee: No update.

Compost Committee: No update.

Park Committee: The tables at the park have been vandalized. Appears to be a resin/epoxy residue that has been put on them now. Councilmember N. Dagele will look at the issue. If needed he may be able to correct the situation.

Public Works: Mayor Helfman helped the Public Works Superintendent to pump out all the Fire Hydrants in the city. There has been machinery moved around to free up more space for storage.

Roads: Mike was out and dumped gravel on Logan and Cemetery Road. The roads are looking good. A letter needs to be sent to L&L Granite for obstruction of the right of way. The City Clerk/Treasurer will get a letter sent by certified mail and if not corrected a site visit will occur the following week. Several other properties have an obstruction of the right of way and these items need to be removed before the first snowfall or the city's liability will be removed on these instances. Mayor Helfman will supply a list.

Solid Waste: no update

Storage Facility: Kiminiski's has completed the paving around the storage building. The dirt has been leveled out as well. Troy Stewart from Pine County stopped at City Hall and was onsite to look at the storage units. The City Clerk/Treasurer confirmed that there are currently 4 vacant small storage units and 4 vacant large storage units as of November 14, 2023.

Water/Sewer Operator: The jetting has been done for the year. The insurance claim has been started on the magnetic flow meter that was damaged by a lightning strike in the vicinity on 9-14-23. There is a \$500 deductible on the policy. The insurance has said to go ahead and order the parts needed without a second quote.

There is a growing mound at the wastewater ponds that has appeared. Currently, it's approximately a good 2.5-3' deep. In 2024, we will need to look at increasing the sewer dump rate and possibly limiting the amount that can be discharged into the ponds. We will need to complete our due diligence before the next steps can be taken. The first step is to have Rural Water out to look at this and supply possible contractors that can remove it without damaging the pond liner.

Zoning: N. Dagele stated that several buildings are appearing now. He will investigate this more, but a letter may need to be sent to the homeowners explaining that a building permit was needed, and they will need to apply for it now, after the fact.

City Clerk/Treasurer: Working to complete the 2023 Water /Sewer Delinquent Assessment that will be payable on homeowner's property taxes in 2024. Those on the list have received two letters and multiple phone calls to collect the debt currently. UBPAY is online and several residents have signed up so far. It appears to be going well currently. There is a rental for 2024 booked already. More information and research on the Cannabis laws and ordinances will be provided as the new department is built out by the state of Minnesota. The City Clerk/Treasurer has reached out to the League of Minnesota Cities about the Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) to see if they have a guideline available which they said they do not. Several cities have ordinances currently or have changed their existing personnel policy.

Mayor: No update that he hasn't already talked about.

New Business

The 2024 Council Meeting Schedule draft was presented for the council to review. This will be reviewed at the December 12, 2023, meeting when everyone is present.

Motion to Approve Liquor License for JJ's and Pizza Pub Jan. 1, 2024 – Jan. 1, 2025

Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve the Liquor License for JJ's Liquor and Sturgeon Lake Pizza Pub, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.

Resolution No. 2023-21: Designate the Polling Place for the City of Sturgeon Lake for the 2024 election year.

Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2023-21: Designate the Polling Place for the City of Sturgeon Lake for the 2024 election year seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with a roll call vote with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent.

The 2024 Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) was discussed. The City Clerk/Treasurer is to send all council members the webinar and presentation from the MN Department of Labor training she attended.

Old Business

Discussion was held around the Compost site. There was some concern with the brush pile due to the invasive weeds. Marcia Einyck attended the council meeting and shared some possibilities. One example was a community garden where spaces could be divided out. She also mentioned having a Farmers Market at the Park. She will write up the guidelines and present them to the City Council for review.

Cathedral Pines Lease Properties will be discussed more at the December 12, 2023, meeting.

Discussion around Cannabis Licenses was brief. The City Clerk/Treasurer shared that she was instructed to point everyone to the state website. As they will need to file there first.

The Cannabis Ordinance had been discussed. The City Clerk/Treasurer said that she had been in contact with the League of Minnesota Cities, and they do not have a basic template available. The only things available that she has seen are other cities' ordinances currently. She will reach back out to the League of Minnesota Cities to see if a template is now available. The City Clerk/Treasurer will send the council members the information she has at this time and supply an update when she hears back from the League of Minnesota Cities.

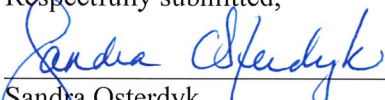
Announcements

The next Regular City Council Meeting will be Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 6:00 pm.


Adjournment

Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent. The meeting adjourned at 9:13 pm

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Osterdyk
City Clerk/Treasurer, City of Sturgeon Lake



Scott Helfman
Mayor, City of Sturgeon Lake