



**Regular City Council Meeting  
December 12, 2023, at 6 pm**

The following councilmembers were present at the hall: Councilmember Nick Dagele, Councilmember Ken Grey and Councilmember Adam Langhorst

The following councilmembers were absent: Mayor Scott Helfman 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: John Mikrot Jr., Judy Koch, Tom Koch, LaVonne Sullivan, Emily Danelski

**Call to order:** Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Acting Mayor Langhorst 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 shared they are looking at FEMA grants. A grant writer will be needed which will cost approximately \$6,000. The Fire Department will need to purchase new turnout gear and replacement cost estimates are ranging about \$20,000 - \$30,000 for the department. There was a total of 8 calls within the last month. There was a total of 3 sealed bids for the two trucks for sale.

Acting Mayor Langhorst opened the sealed bids and read the bids as follows:

Bid # 1:	1989 Ford F3500	\$1650.00	Ron Romaniwki
Bid # 2:	2002 Chevrolet 2500	\$5501.00	Curt Wilson
	1989 Ford F3500	\$2501.00	Curt Wilson
Bid # 3:	2002 Chevrolet 2500	\$8151.00	Bob Linc

The Fire Chief and Council discussed the bids and agreed to accept the two highest bids, \$2501.00 from Curt Wilson for the 1989 Ford F350 and \$8151.00 from Bob Linc.

[Councilmember A. Langhorst made a motion to accept the bid of \\$2501.00 from Curt Wilson for the 1989 Ford F350 and the bid of \\$8151 from Bob Linc for the 2002 Chevrolet, seconded by N. Dagele. The motion carried with a roll call vote all members present voting in favor, S. Helfman and D. Lingle absent.](#)

**Special Guests and Visitor Comment**

John Mikrot was present to discuss extending the current water and wastewater contract with the city. The council would like to add the following to the current contract:

- Flush all fire hydrants once a year at the rate of \$50.00 per hour
- Completion of monthly reports, including Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) and submitted to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) one-time additional fee of \$60.00

New contract pricing would be for a term of six years for the following amounts:

From January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024:	\$2,930 per month
From January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025:	\$3,000 per month
From January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026:	\$3,070 per month

From January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2027:	\$3,140 per month
From January 1, 2028, through December 31, 2028:	\$3,210 per month
From January 1, 2029, through December 31, 2029:	\$3,280 per month

The council stated they would discuss this more later in the meeting and have a final decision at the January 9, 2024 meeting for John Mikrot.

The minutes of the November 14, 2023, Regular City Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting Minutes were submitted for approval.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the November 14, 2023, Regular City Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting Minutes were submitted for approval.

[Councilmember K. Grey made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 14, 2023, Regular City Council & Finish 2024 Budget Meeting, Councilmember N. Dagle seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, S. Helfman and D. Lingle 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/ Dagle made a motion to approve Claims Paid, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, S. Helfman and D. Lingle 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. Dagle made a motion to approve the Unpaid Claims, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, S. Helfman and D. Lingle 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. Dagle made a motion to approve the Financial Report/Review, seconded by Councilmember K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, S. Helfman and D. Lingle absent..](#)

### **Reports of Departments**

**Cemetery Committee:** Mayor Helfman provided an email update that there is nothing new.

**Compost Committee:** No update.

**Park Committee:** Councilmember N. Dagle did look at the tables at the park that have been vandalized and he will be able to fix them in the spring.

**Public Works:** Worked on holiday decorations. Mayor Helfman helped the Public Works Superintendent to pump out all the Fire Hydrants in the city. Closed all the vents at the lift stations and spent some time on all the locks with WD40. All the mowers are stored for the winter. At this time there is no ice at the storage units building up.

**Roads:** Mayor Helfman provided an email update stating that all the manholes were marked or sufficient gravel cover for the winter. That L&L Granite did move the stone away from the roads and fire hydrant. Mike Buetow was out putting salt mix out today.

**Solid Waste:** Consider sending a blight letter to L&L Granite, continue to watch if improvements not seen.

**Storage Facility:** The City Clerk/Treasurer confirmed that there are currently 4 vacant small storage units and 4 vacant large storage units as of December 12, 2023.

**Water/Sewer Operator:** Mayor Helfman provided an email update even though he was unable to attend the meeting in person to keep everyone informed.

The flow meter that was damaged by lightning is on order and things are taken care of on the insurance end. That is probably going to be installed in March.

Talking with Minnesota Rural Water about the sediment buildup in the ponds. We are on schedule at the end of January to sludge judge the ponds then and get a better assessment of the situation.

We may want to consider having Mikrot Municipal take care of the hydrant flushing. They would flush when they are doing other towns and be able to schedule any needed repairs with Minnesota Rural Water.

**Zoning:** N. Dagele stated that there is one request looking to build but he needs to have a survey done as he is too close to the right of way. He needs to re-evaluate there are no exact lines.

**City Clerk/Treasurer:**

There are no titles for the 1989 Ford F350 or the 2002 Chevrolet 2500 that can be found. One file folder was in the flood file drawer for the 2002 Chevrolet 2500 with only the original sales invoice from 10-21-21 in yet.

The 2024 Water /Sewer Delinquent Assessment was completed and sent to the county and approved with no issues. A reminder of the 2024 Election year and that judges are needed. January 19 Absentee voting begins. The first training is scheduled for February 5, 2024, and need to attend. The last day to appoint judges is February 9, 2024. On February 13, 2024, voter pre-registration closes. The first election is March 5, 2024, Presidential Nomination Primary (PNP).

CarlsonSV will be onsite April 29 and 30, 2024 for the annual audit. The pre-visit requests have already been received and have already started to work on this list. Completed the renewal application for LMCIT Workers' Compensation Coverage: City of Sturgeon Lake and the renewal Application for LMCIT Workers' Property Casualty Coverage: City of Sturgeon Lake which required provided an updated Flood Map for Park and City Hall to get them rezone to have Flood coverage on the Policy again. The City is also do again for a Property Appraisal. HCA Asset Management has been contracted by the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust to conduct the property appraisals. This is required once every 7 years on all buildings. UBPAY Online has four people signed up so far and those using it seem to like it.

Earned Sick and Safe Time goes into effect on January 1, 2024. The Payroll System is updated and ready to go with accrual and to show time on paystubs. Need specifics from the council to complete the Employee Notice to send to employees. Need to draft some type of Cannabis Policy or Ordinance for the City to have some records on file.

The question was asked when the Fire Department wanted to have their 2024 payroll completed as typically, they want it paid before the Holiday and that is next week.

**Mayor:** Already provided in Roads and Water and Sewer sections.

**New Business**

**RESOLUTION 2023-22: A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING UNPAID CHARGES**

The City Clerk/Treasurer shared with the council that a of \$28,991.30 was sent to Pine County to be added to 18 residents' 2024 property taxes.

[A. Langhorst made a motion to accept Res. No 2023-22 A Resolution Certifying Unpaid Charges, seconded by N. Dagele. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor with a roll call vote.](#)

Northern Pine Riders Snowmobile Club Gambling License Application at the Sturgeon Lake Pizza Pub

**Res No. 2023-23: A RESOLUTION APPROVING A PREMISES PERMIT FOR LAWFUL GAMBLING ACTIVITY**

[K. Grey made a motion to accept Res. No 2023-23 A Resolution Approving A Premises Permit for Lawful Gambling Activity Allowing Northern Pine Riders Snowmobile Club to be at the Sturgeon Lake Pizza Pub, seconded by N. DageL. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor with a roll call vote.](#)

Res. No. 2023-24: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2023 BUDGET AND TAX LEVY

[N. DageL made a motion to accept Res. No. 2023-24 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE BUDGET AND TAX LEVY, seconded by A. Langhorst. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, S. Helfman and D. Lingle absent.](#)

The 2023 Report of Outstanding Indebtedness was completed and sent to Pine County

Motion to Approve the Application for 1 Day Temporary Liquor License for St. Isidore's Knights of Columbus for January 7, 2024, Polka and Prayer

[N. DageL made a motion to Approve the Application for a 1 Day Temporary Liquor License for St. Isidore's Knights of Columbus for January 7, 2023, seconded by K. Grey. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor with a roll call vote, S. Helfman and D. Lingle absent.](#)

Discussion around the 2024 Election was held. The City Clerk/Treasurer shared that there will be three elections to be held in 2024 which will require election judges. Getting election judges is a challenge as the city currently pays \$12.00 an hour. Other cities in the area are rumored to be paying \$15.00-\$20.00 an hour. The council asked that the City Clerk/Treasurer put together some numbers for the January 9, 2024, meeting for them to review.

2024 Election Schedule:

- Presidential Primary      March 5, 2024
- Primary Election          August 13, 2024
- General Election          November 5, 2024

Helen Kliniski Subdivision Request for her property at 3179 Logan Drive, PID # 46002300, was recently updated from the previous request last December 13, 2022, to change it to the 22.07 acres split of Tract A – 17.07 acres & Tract B – 5 acres.

2024 MN Dot Ramp Project on 1-35 that will impact the interstate ramps at Sturgeon Lake. This is a preventative maintenance project that will put a new surface on the interstate in two layers. Each layer has to cure for a half day, requiring the 1-35 ramps to be temporarily closed. Interstate work will not occur on the weekends and will be typically a Monday - Thursday operation that moves pretty quickly. The biggest impact is the cure time. This is anticipated to happen May – September 2024.

Caleb Anderson is no longer with Pine County. He has accepted a new role position with the Duluth Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Erin Hoxsie will be the interim contact for Planning and Zoning inquiries, her contact information is 320-216-4220 or via email at [erin.hoxsie@co.pine.mn.us](mailto:erin.hoxsie@co.pine.mn.us).

2024 Proposed Taxes for Storage Lockers and Water Tower had been reviewed by the council. It was noticed that the Storage Locker proposed taxes went down from the previous year by \$290.00 and the Water Tower proposed taxes went down by \$42.00 from the previous year.

MN Broadband Line Extension will be added to the City of Sturgeon Lake website. The Line Extension Connection program's goal is to connect residents and businesses that lack access to broadband internet service to service providers, and then assist in the expense of extending broadband to those locations. The council encourages everyone to check it out for additional information. The more residents that don't have high-speed internet that go out to this link and put in their address the better. It will take time but it's possible with the grant money available they could get it installed.

Fair Housing Plan was reviewed and discussed briefly by the council and agreed to continue to work with Section 3 on this program. Throughout the Small Cities Development Grant for the City of Sturgeon Lake, Lakes & Pines as well as the City of Sturgeon Lake will develop fair housing activities. One activity will be done each fiscal year over the course of the 30-month grant.

[A. Langhorst made a motion to Approve the Fair Housing Plan, seconded by N. Dagel. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor with a roll call vote, S. Helfman and D. Lingle absent.](#)

Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) Section 3 Plan was reviewed and discussed briefly by the council and agreed continue to work with Section 3 on this program. The City of Sturgeon Lake, in conjunction with Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) Grant, has the following plan to direct employment and other economic opportunities generated by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) financial assistance for housing and community development programs, to the greatest extent feasible, towards low- and very low-income persons, particularly those who are recipients of government assistance for housing. This plan outlines how the City of Sturgeon Lake and its sub-recipients, contractors, and subcontractors will comply with HUD's Section 3 requirements, as applicable, in implementing the City of Sturgeon Lake's SCDP grant. To the greatest extent feasible, funded project work will be directed towards low- and very low-income persons and to Section 3 businesses. In addition, to the greatest extent feasible, work will also be directed toward women- or minority-owned businesses.

[A. Langhorst made a motion to Approve the Fair Housing Plan, seconded by N. Dagel. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor with a roll call vote, S. Helfman and D. Lingle absent.](#)

### **Old Business**

Wastewater Pond discussion will be discussed at the January 2024 meeting.

The Water/Sewer contract with John Mikrot will be finalized at the January 9, 2024, council meeting.

The proposed 2024 Meeting Schedule and Holiday's observed were reviewed by the council.

[K. Grey made a motion to approve the Meeting Schedule and Holiday's to be observed, seconded by N. Dagel.](#)

The council settled on the Earned Sick and Safe Time as 1 Hour for every 30 Hours worked with a cap of 48 Hours per year. There will be an allowed rollover allowance of up to 80 Hours per year. Hours will be accrued and not front-loaded in one large sum at the start of the year. All eligible employees are to provide as far in advance notice as possible when using Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST), ideally 3 days, they are to inform the Mayor and/or the Clerk via phone and or text message. The City Clerk/Treasurer will update the Earned Sick and Safe Time employee notice and send a draft copy to the council for review before sending it to eligible employees before the December 31, 2023, notification deadline.

The Cannabis Ordinance had been discussed. The City Clerk/Treasurer has supplied copies of other cities' Ordinances as examples to use as a guideline to help draft a simple Ordinance for the City of Sturgeon Lake so there is something on record at this time. The council has asked that a draft copy be available for review at the January 2024 meeting.

### **Announcements**

The next Regular City Council Meeting will be Tuesday, January 9, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

### **Adjournment**

[Councilmember K. Grey made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilmember N. Dagel. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle and A. Langhorst absent. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm](#)

Respectfully submitted,

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Sandra Osterdyk  
City Clerk/Treasurer, City of Sturgeon Lake

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Scott Helfman  
Mayor, City of Sturgeon Lake