

**WALKER CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
WALKER FIRE HALL MEETING ROOM  
MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER – Mayor McMurrin**

Mayor Annie McMurrin called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Councilmembers present: Mary Beth Hansen, Annie McMurrin, Char Moore (via Zoom), and Jim Senenfelder
- Councilmembers absent: Gary Wilkening
- Others present during portions of the meeting include:

Hope Fairchild, City Administrator	Wayne Tennis, Chief of Police
Michael Ridlon, Public Works	John Valen, City Attorney
Dean Morrill, Pilot Independent	Jennie Meyer, Zoning Administrator
Kim Carlander, Self	Craig Carlander, Self
Joe Sherman, Self	Brian Alto, Self
Kiara McMurrin, Self	Stacey McMurrin, Self
Norma McMurrin, Self	Paul Nye, Self
Vivian Auel, Self	John Burn, Self
Susie Burn, Self	Joel Mensch, Self
Erin Haefle, Self	Amie Ystobe, Self

- Mayor McMurrin will turn the meeting over to Administrator Hope Fairchild for the swearing in of the Mayor and Council Members.

**OPENING OF SEALED BIDS – Mayor McMurrin**

- The City Council will now open sealed bids for the excess land and building sale located at 207 Fourth Street North, Walker, MN 56484, Parcel No. 96-337-0940. The City of Walker reserves the right to open competitive bidding immediately after the bids have been opened and read, from the floor to those individuals/entities that submitted a qualified sealed bid on or before 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The Walker City Council will award the sale of the above-described property to the highest and most responsible bidder (the bid most favorable to the City); however, the Walker City Council does reserve the right to reject any and/or all bids.

**M/S** Senenfelder/Hansen to accept the highest bid for the sale of 207 Fourth Street North, Walker, MN 56484 excess land and building sale with all requirements met, in the amount of \$32,500.00 from Kimberly (Bednarczyk) Carlander.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

Mr. Morrill of the Pilot-Independent Newspaper asked if the City is planning on building a new library.

Mayor McMurrin said yes.

Mr. Morrill asked if a location had been chosen for the new library.

Mayor McMurrin stated that a location had not yet been chosen.

Councilmember Senenfelder explained the City would like to build a new library, with possible conjunction with other partners, in hopes it is not 100% City funded.

Mr. Morrill questioned how much money has been raised so far for the new library building. Councilmember Senenfelder stated that around \$660,000.00 has been raised thus far for the library.

Mr. Morrill questioned when and/or why did the City decide not to build at the current library building location.

Councilmember Senenfelder stated it was a discussion that has been going on for about 4-5 months. Councilmember Senenfelder continued that per the architect, it was a very large building on a small footprint. The soil was a large consideration as the footings alone would be in excess of \$300,000.00. Councilmember Senenfelder stated that a different location would save money, and that other locations have been looked into, but there is no current location set at this time, nor does the City have all the money needed to construct a new building.

Mr. Mensch, self, stated that he came with the understanding the opening of the sealed bids would be followed by open competitive bidding.

Administrator Fairchild stated that the excess land and building sale letter read that the City of Walker reserves the right to open competitive bidding immediately after the bids have been opened and read, but that it was not guaranteed.

### **CONSENT AGENDA – Mayor McMurrin**

**M/S** Senenfelder/Hansen to approve consent agenda items 1 through 14 as follows, waving the reading.

1. Approve Walker City Council regular meeting minutes of December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
2. December Walker Planning Commission/Board of Adjustments meeting was not held due to lack of business.
3. Review and file December Zoning Administrator report.
4. December Park Advisory Board meeting was not held due to lack of business.
5. Review and file draft of Walker Public Library Board minutes of December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
6. Review and file Walker Police Department Monthly Report.
7. Review and file Public Works Committee meeting minutes of December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020.
8. Review and file Walker Area Joint Fire Department Minutes of December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
9. Approve request of the Accounting Department for the General Fund 101 charging TIF 2-15 Fund 419 \$4,321.00 for the 2020 TIF administrative fees as of 12-22-2020.
10. Approve payment of Application for Payment No. 6 in the amount of \$96,126.84 to RL Larson Excavating, Inc. for work done during the 2020 Northside Project through November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
11. Review and file letter from Matthew Davis of Chippewa National Forest Supervisor's Office.
12. Review and file Minnesota Local Government Payment Advice in the amount of \$21,027.00, dated December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
13. Approve of Chase on the Lake's liquor license application for On Sale and Sunday Licenses.
14. Approve of Invoice No. 15702 to Microtech Computer Center in the amount of \$2,528.06 for installation, new emails, and updated Microsoft Office Software.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

**SCHEDULED CITIZENS PRESENTATION – Mayor McMurrin**

1. Paul Nye – parking concerns located at 409 Michigan Avenue W.

Mr. Nye presented a photo indicating the continued issue of people parking in front of his and his neighbor’s driveway, sometimes blocking the entire driveway. Mr. Nye has safety concerns and it is inconvenient for him and he would like a sign or any solution to this on-going problem. The problem in the winter is that the yellow curb is covered by snow.

Councilmember Senenfelder asked City Attorney John Valen about the option of temporary signage.

City Attorney Valen stated that signs would be problematic when it comes to snow plowing. Chief of Police Wayne Tennis stated has dealt with the Cass County Social Services employees parking too close to Mr. Nye’s driveway in the past, but was told by Cass County that they cannot control where their employees park.

Chief Tennis stated that he was not sure about the reasoning behind it, but between 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street on the south side of Michigan Avenue parking is not allowed.

Mr. Nye stated that he and Chief Tennis discussed some different options, including a no parking sign that said no parking from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., which would affect patrons of local businesses and of Cass County Social Services. Other options considered were 10-minute, 1 hour, or plainly just no parking signs, though Mr. Nye and his neighbors would prefer not to go this route due to how important parking spaces are to the community.

Public Works Director Mike Ridlon asked Chief Tennis if placing a couple of signs saying no parking between signs would be a good solution.

Chief Tennis stated that there are not many cars that can fit there as it is.

Councilmember Senenfelder questioned what could be done until an ordinance change was made to stop parking between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

City Attorney Valen stated that a resolution would need to be passed to do something, but again, signage is the problem.

Mayor McMurrin questioned if placing big flags on either side of the driveway for the winter could help the issue.

Vivian Auel, self, stated that she had already placed poles on either side of the driveway.

Mr. Nye stated that he doesn’t think continuously writing tickets is the answer.

Mayor McMurrin stated that more discussion would be had on the matter.

Councilmember Senenfelder asked Chief Tennis if he had any other suggestions.

Chief Tennis stated that placing a ten-minute or half-hour parking sign could be a solution when the ground thaws, but for the winter months, Mr. Nye should call Chief Tennis to come take care of the problem.

**CITY STAFF COMMENTS – Administrator Hope Fairchild**

1. The City of Walker would like to thank Chief of Police Wayne Tennis for his continuing 30 years of service with the City.

**PERSONNEL, BUDGET & ADMINISTRATION – Councilmember Senenfelder**

1. M/S Senenfelder/Hansen to approve of claim #58796 to claim #58928 including voided check numbers 58665, 58850, 58851, 58877, 58878, 58929, and bank drafts in the amount of \$436,489.40 through 12/30/2020.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

2. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 01-2021, a Resolution Stating Annual Designations.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
3. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 02-2021, a Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to Sign All State and Federal Airport Grants.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
4. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 03-2021, a Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to Sign all State and Federal Grants.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
5. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 04-2021, a Resolution Accepting Donations Made to the City of Walker Through Fiscal Year 2021.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
6. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 05-2021, a Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing to Receive Public Comment on the Proposed Adoption of Ordinance 2021-01, an Ordinance to Update the Fee Schedule.  
Public Works Director Ridlon explains that the City's bulk water sales will be changed from \$4.00/100 gallons to \$7.00/1000 gallons. The monthly rental rate for a hydrant meter for construction companies to rent will be a one-time \$30.00 fee. When the public works employees are called to meet a company for bulk water, it will now be \$35.00 a trip. Rental for the vac trailer will be \$500.00/week.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
7. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 06-2021, a Resolution Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 2020-04, an Ordinance Adding Dedication to Public Standards to City Code.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
8. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 07-2021, a Resolution Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 2020-05, an Ordinance Adding Zoning Classification Designation to City Code.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
9. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 08-2021, a Resolution Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 2020-06, an Ordinance Amending Part II: Land Development and Land Use Ordinances, Chapter 109: Zoning and Subdivisions, Generally, Section 109.195 Extractive Use/Mining.  
**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin **Nays:**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**
10. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 09-2021, a Resolution Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 2020-07, an Ordinance Amending Part II: Land Development and Land Use Ordinances, Chapter 109: Zoning and Subdivisions, Article II. Administration and Enforcement, Section 109.45 Planning Commission.

**Roll Call: Ayes:** Senenfelder, Hansen, McMurrin

**Nays:**

**Motion passed (3-0)**

11. **M/S** Senenfelder/Hansen to approve of the request of the Accounting Department to transfer \$643.98 from the General Fund 101 to the Legion Abatement Fund 420 for the second half of 2020 abatement payment to Spencer Ross Post 134.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

12. **M/S** Senenfelder/Hansen to approve of the payment of invoice no. 3644544 in the amount of \$14,749.70 to Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP for professional services rendered and costs advanced through December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

13. **M/S** Senenfelder/Hansen to approve of the summarization of terms of service letter from Miller McDonald, Inc., dated December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

14. Tabled for further discussion: the approval of 2021 Council Committee Appointments as presented by Mayor McMurrin.

Councilmember Senenfelder questioned why he was taken off the police commission, as he has a degree in criminal justice, 35 years' experience in law enforcement, has been involved in hiring/firing, wage negotiations, etc., involved in many investigations, and feels that he is the most qualified.

Mayor McMurrin states she understands Senenfelder's concerns but that she appointed herself as Police Commissioner because she wants to learn more in that department. She indicated Senenfelder would be consulted if need be.

Councilmember Hansen expressed her concern about all the changes going on in the community, there needs to be some solid ground and feels that Senenfelder should remain the Police Commissioner.

Councilmember Senenfelder expressed how important it is in the Police Commissioner position to keep everything confidential.

15. **M/S** Senenfelder/Hansen to approve of the successful completion of Jennie Meyer's six-month probationary period and adding a 3% increase to her hourly wage, effective January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

16. **M/S** Senenfelder/Hansen to approve of the successful completion of Stacey McMurrin's six-month probationary period and adding a 3% increase to her hourly wage, effective January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LIQUOR STORE, AIRPORT & LIBRARY – Councilmember Hansen**

### **PARKS & AMBULANCE BOARD – Councilmember Moore**

1. Discussion on letter from Otto Ringle regarding lighting the Circle of Time in 2021.  
Councilmember Senenfelder questioned if the City received any more information outside of the letter.  
Administrator Fairchild stated that the City had not received any other information.  
Public Works Director Ridlon indicated that there was at one point an electric bill that was supposed to be paid by the Circle of Time but never was.

Mayor McMurrin stated that she thought there was some ground lighting around the statues. Public Works Director Ridlon stated that he also thought there was ground lighting, and that he would look, and this could be brought to the Public Works Committee.

**PUBLIC WORKS & SAFETY/CEMETERY – Councilmember Wilkening**

1. M/S Hansen/Senenfelder to continue to not charge late fees or turn off water on delinquent water and sewer accounts until the Minnesota Peacetime Emergency is over, at which time Council will reevaluate.

Administrator Fairchild stated that she provided an email response from a researcher at the League of Minnesota Cities regarding the legality of charging late fees and turning off water. Councilmember Hansen questioned if we were able to start charging late fees but not turn water off.

Administrator Fairchild stated that based on the email, shutting off water is not recommended. The City also cannot shut water off if the heating of the home would be affected.

Mayor McMurrin questioned how much the late fee was.

Administrator Fairchild stated that the late fee is 10% per month.

Councilmember Senenfelder asked if the City continues to see more and more past due water/sewer bills.

Administrator Fairchild stated that in 2020, around 5 accounts were certified to their property taxes.

Public Works Director Ridlon stated that he did not think that 5 accounts being certified was too horrible considering the City was not shutting peoples' water off.

Administrator Fairchild stated that not charging late fees has been a loss of money to the City.

**Motion passed (3-0)**

2. Discussion on opening of newly constructed trailhead restrooms.

Administrator Fairchild stated that the trailhead restrooms are currently closed to the public until the Council decides on when to open them.

Councilmember Senenfelder stated that Council should make a plan regarding how the trailhead restrooms will be taken care of. He stated that because of COVID-19, maybe right now is not the best time to open them.

Public Works Director Ridlon stated that having a solid plan and hours of operation is a good idea.

Councilmember Senenfelder agreed.

Councilmember Hansen questioned if the restrooms were winterized.

Public Works Director Ridlon stated that they are winterized; heat is on and water is running. He stated that he has a water meter leak to fix there.

Councilmember Hansen stated that after touring the trailhead restrooms, she was concerned about the stalls, as they were not anchored to the ground. She asked if Public Works Director Ridlon would take a look at them and see if he thought they needed to be anchored to the ground.

Public Works Director Ridlon stated that he would take a look at the stalls and make a recommendation to Council. He stated that drinking fountains cannot be installed on the building until it warms up as they are not winterized. They will have to be pulled every winter from the building and kept in heated storage.

Councilmember Senenfelder asked Public Works Director Ridlon if the public works staff would have any problems taking care of the trailhead restrooms.

Public Works Director Ridlon stated that taking care of the trailhead restrooms will add to the staffs' morning workload for sure, but as of right now he doesn't think that it will be a problem.

Councilmember Senenfelder suggested that there should be a discussion on maintenance and planning for the trailhead restrooms at the next Public Works Committee Meeting.

Chief of Police Wayne Tennis stated that the trailhead restrooms shouldn't be open past 8 or 9 p.m. because they are located in the City's bar district.

3. **M/S Senenfelder/Hansen to advertise for the four open Cemetery Board seats for one week.**  
**Motion passed (3-0)**

**OTHER BUSINESS – Mayor McMurrin**

- City offices and DMV will be closed on Monday January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- City Council will now go into an attorney-client privilege closed session to discuss Chase on the Lake's TIF Event of Default.

Regular meeting closed at 6:54 p.m.

Regular meeting opened at 7:29 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT – Mayor McMurrin**

Mayor Annie McMurrin adjourned the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Annie McMurrin, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hope Fairchild, Administrator/Clerk-Trs.