

**WALKER CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WALKER FIRE HALL MEETING ROOM
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015**

CALL TO ORDER –Acting Mayor Gary Wilkening

- Acting Mayor Gary Wilkening called the regular scheduled meeting to order at 6:01p.m.
- Pledge of Allegiance
 - Council members present: McMurrin, Nelson, Senenfelder, Shaw and Wilkening
 - Council members absent:
 - Others present during portions of the meeting included:

Dean Morrill, Pilot Independent
Wayne Tennis, Police
Neil Lange, City Employee
Gail Levenson, Cass County EDC
Justin Shaw, Self
Jackson Shaw, Self
Scott Bruns, Self
Ron Burns, Self
City Wannarka, LLACC
Mya, Self

Terri Bjorklund, City Administrator
Jon Valen, City Attorney
Pamela Smith, City Employee
Fred Rogers, Self
Justice Shaw, Self
Shannon Shaw, Self
Melanie Burns, Self
Lynn Eaton, Karvako Engineering
Sherry Hannem, Self
Steve, Self

SWEARING IN OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS-Administrator Terri Bjorklund

Acting Mayor Wilkening turns the meeting over to Administrator Bjorklund for the swearing in of Mayor and Councilmembers.

Bjorklund swears in Jed Shaw-Mayor, Annie McMurrin-Councilmember, and James Senenfelder-Councilmember.

Former Mayor Bruns approaches the Board members and states a brief thank you.

Acting Mayor Wilkening turns meeting over to Jed Shaw.

CONSENT AGENDA

M/S Nelson/Wilkening to approve the Consent Agenda Items 1 thru 11 as follows, waving the reading.

1. Approve Walker City Council public hearing minutes of December 1st, 2014.
2. Approve Walker City Council regular meeting minutes of December 1st, 2014.
3. Approve Walker City Council regular meeting minutes of December 18th, 2014.
4. Review and file Walker Police Department Monthly Report.
5. Review and file Cass County Economic Development report.
6. Approve Cash Balance Report as of November 30th, 2014.

7. Approve payment of invoice 24489 in the amount of \$48,572.50 for General Obligation Improvement Bonds, Series 2007A.
8. Approve payment of invoice 24490 in the amount of \$94,848.75 for General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series 2008A.
9. Approve payment of invoice 11919 in the amount of \$450.00 for General Obligation Improvement Bonds, Series 2007A, paying for Agent Services.
10. Approve payment of Minnesota PFA G.O. Bonds in the amount of \$75,218.22 due February 20th, 2015.
11. Review and file letter from the Department of Natural Resources regarding the Leech Lake Management Plan for 2016-2020.
Motion passed (5-0)

SCHEDULED CITIZEN PRESENTATIONS –Mayor Jed Shaw

- Gail Levenson Cass County EDC – Presentation of Tax Abatement Request
Gail introduces herself to the public and the board. She states that Ron and Melanie Burns would like to expand their business in Walker. They own an assisted living company named Northside Care properties; they would like to purchase 607 2nd Street South, (Grandma Jo’s). They will only be purchasing the real estate for this, not the business. She states they are hoping to close in January-early February. The proposed business is going to be called Hillcrest assisted living. It will be a 10 unit assisted living. They expect to hire 2 full time nursing assistants and 1 part time registered nurse. They project to hire up to 7 more people by year two including CNA’s and a manager. This facility is currently being rented by the School District until the end of June. This is at current assessed as Commercial-Rental property with taxes assessed at \$14,064.00 a year. Their assisted living business is a residential Care business. When it was run as a residential Care business the taxes assessed was \$5,674.00 a year. Their cash flow projections don’t support the extra \$10,000.00 dollars. Per a conversation between Levenson and the County Assessor, the tax assessment was made on January 1st of this year, taxes payable through 2016. For this reason we are asking for you to consider tax abatement just on the City taxes for 18 months; from July 1st 2015 through 2016. They are eligible by Statute for the next 15 years because they are increasing jobs and providing services for residents. The benefits of the city would be an increased payroll, presumably local people to spend money within the City of Walker. The cost to the City would be an abatement in year one in the amount of \$6,355 and \$6,711 in year two. It’s different than a TIF, because then you have all three units of government-the county, the school district and the city must agree. If you do it as a single entity abatement it would only be approved by the City. It would require a public hearing and passed by Resolution.

STAFF COMMENTS – Administrator Terri Bjorklund

- 2015 Experienced Officials Leadership Conference
Bjorklund states that if any of the board members are interested in attending to please contact her.

PERSONNEL, BUDGET & ADMINISTRATION – Councilmember Senenfelder

1. **M/S** Senenfelder/Wilkening to approve of Claim #50497 to Claim #50632 including voided check number 50500, 50514, 50515, 50571, 50593 and bank drafts in the amount of \$304,939.13.
Motion passed (5-0)
2. **M/S** Senenfelder/McMurrin to approve of Resolution 01-2015, a Resolution Stating Annual Designations.
Roll Call: Ayes: Nelson, Senenfelder, Shaw, McMurrin, Wilkening Nays: None
Motion passed (5-0)
3. **M/S** Senenfelder/McMurrin to approve of Resolution 02-2015, a Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to sign all State and Federal Airport Grants.
Roll Call: Ayes: Nelson, Senenfelder, Shaw, McMurrin, Wilkening Nays: None
Motion passed (5-0)
4. **M/S** Senenfelder/Wilkening to approve of Resolution 03-2015, a Resolution Authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to Sign all State and Federal Grants.
Roll Call: Ayes: Nelson, Senenfelder, Shaw, McMurrin, Wilkening Nays: None
Motion passed (5-0)
5. **M/S** Senenfelder/Wilkening to approve of Wayne Tennis's request to attend the 2015 Executive Training Institute on April 19th thru April 22nd in St. Cloud, MN at a cost of \$325.00, plus meals, lodging and mileage.
Motion passed (5-0)
6. **M/S** Senenfelder/McMurrin to approve of the 2015 Council Appointments.
Motion passed (5-0)
7. Discussion and possible action on Property Tax Abatement request.
Wilkening questions if they applied through the County for any abatement taxes. Levenson-It would strictly be a local decision.
Wilkening states that typically a request like this is run through a sub-committee first, like our TIF. He states that because some members on the TIF committee are involved in this transaction having another board member sit in on this and consider putting a meeting together shortly.
McMurrin volunteers to sit on the TIF committee with Wilkening for this decision.

M/S Wilkening/McMurrin to table the request of tax abatement until it can be reviewed by the TIF Committee.

Ayes: Senenfelder, Shaw, McMurrin, Wilkening Nays: None

Abstain: Nelson

Motion passed (4-0)

City Attorney Valen adds that this abatement cannot be approved until you have a public hearing and suggest to the Council if they have some interest in this they may want to schedule a public hearing at this time.

Bjorklund brings up the draft Resolution 04-2015 for public hearing.

Senenfelder questions Bjorklund if there are any other costs that the City might incur for this tax abatement.

Bjorklund states that the last abatement that was done with Ehlers and Associates, whom does our TIF abatement and also worked with Mary Ipple whom wrote the agreement, estimating that is around \$2,000.00 not including staff time.

Wilkening questions Bjorklund if February 2nd allow for adequate time.

Bjorklund states that she has a time-line and it is very doable for them.

M/S Wilkening/McMurrin-to approve of Resolution 04-2015, a Resolution calling for a tax abatement hearing on the proposed tax abatement program for Hillcrest Assisted Living, LLC

Roll Call: Ayes: Senenfelder, McMurrin, Wilkening Nays: None

Abstain: Nelson, Shaw

Motion passed (3-0)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & LIQUOR STORE – Councilmember Nelson

1. **M/S Nelson/McMurrin** to approve of the request of Liquor Store manager Steve Kolp to purchase and install five ceiling fans for the Liquor Store accepting the quote from Olson Electric in the amount of \$2,205.00.

Motion passed (5-0)

LIBRARY, PARKS & AIRPORT – Councilmember McMurrin

1. **M/S McMurrin/Nelson** to approve of the request from the Leech Lake Chamber of Commerce to use the Park for the National Walleye Tournament on June 10th through 14th, 2015.

The board discusses whether or not this is the same Walleye Tournament that has been here before.

It is clarified that this one is in replacement of the prior walleye tournaments not in addition.

Wannarka states that this one is two weeks later than the previous one.

Motion passed (5-0)

PUBLIC WORKS, SAFETY & CEMETERY – Councilmember Wilkening

1. **M/S Wilkening/McMurrin** to approve of the recommendation of the Public Works Committee for Jon Fank to attend the Minnesota Rural Water Association Water and Sewer training in St. Cloud March 3rd thru March 5th, 2015 at a cost of \$225.00 plus lodging, meals and mileage.

Motion passed (5-0)

2. Wilkening notes the recognition of the 2013 Water Fluoridation Quality Award.

3. **M/S Wilkening/McMurrin** to approve to enter into the following agreement with the Circle of Time Committee requests dated December 31, 2014 allowing for the completion of the current circle with the following agreements:

- Setting of a tent on the City Hall lawn August 13, 2015 for the dedication is approved, however the serving of alcohol is denied.
- Installation of a water feature and additional lighting is denied

- The current plaques that are unreadable should be replaced and the continued maintenance of the circle by the committee is required.
- The Circle of Time appoints the Chair for their Committee.

Senenfelder questions the requests of item 2 and 3(water feature and lighting)? Is this because they are not in compliance with the original agreement?

Wilkening explains that there never was a water feature and this was added recently and was recommended at public works that they don't need to have a water feature. The lighting is in addition as well, they had already added a light pole located near there. Wilkening questions at what point do they stop the building, the water feature seemed to be too much as well as the request for more lighting.

Shaw questions the appointment for the Chair for their Committee.

Wilkening clarifies that the Circle of Time Committee within the City of Walker, like the Park Board, Public Works, Library, etc. It is a committee that is formed by a group of residents. We don't have anything to do to appoint their Chair.

Motion passed (4-0)

OTHER BUSINESS –Mayor Jed Shaw

- City Offices and DMV will be closed on Monday January 19th, 2015 in honor of Martin Luther King Day.
- Discussion and consideration of the letters of resolution or support for the Paul Bunyan Expressway.

Wilkening supports the expansion of the four lane highway through the “Y” corridor, how they get through the City of Walker could greatly affect our businesses’. It would be a four lane highway going through Main Street, which would mean no parking on Main Street or to by-pass around the City. Wilkening states that he does not support a four lane through the City.

Nelson suggests because of the complication of this subject that no action be taken on this at this meeting.

Senenfelder notes that the people on this Highway 371 Committee are from Bemidji.

ADJOURNMENT-Mayor Jed Shaw

Mayor Shaw adjourned the regularly scheduled Meeting at 6:37p.m.

Jed Shaw, Mayor

Attest: _____
Terri Bjorklund, Administrator