

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA
JANUARY 24, 2022

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the second meeting of the City Council of the City of La Crescent for the month of January was called to order by Mayor Mike Poellinger at 5:30 PM in the La Crescent City Hall, La Crescent, Minnesota, on Monday, January 24, 2022.

Upon a roll call taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following members were present: Members Ryan Hutchison, Cheryl Jostad, Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner, Dale Williams, and Mayor Mike Poellinger. Members absent: None. Also present was City Administrator Bill Waller, City Attorney Skip Wieser, and City Administrative Assistant Angie Boettcher.

Mayor Poellinger asked if anyone wished to take action to change the agenda as presented. There were no changes requested.

ITEM 1 – CONSENT AGENDA

At this time, the Mayor read the following items to be considered as part of the Consent Agenda for this regular meeting:

- 1.1 MINUTES – JANUARY 10, 2022
- 1.2 BILLS PAYABLE THROUGH JANUARY 20, 2022
- 1.3 CASH BALANCE/ACTIVITY REPORT – DECEMBER 2021
- 1.4 LIBRARY REPORT – DECEMBER 2021

At the conclusion of the reading of the Consent Agenda, Mayor Poellinger asked if the Council wished to have any of the items removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion. Member Hutchinson made a motion, seconded by Member Williams, as follows:

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cheryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.1 – INTRODUCE NEW LIBRARIAN

Jess Witkins, the City's new Library Director, was in attendance to introduce herself to City Council. This item was informational, and no action was taken.

ITEM 3.2 – AGENDA REQUEST – STEVE SCHAMS

City Council reviewed an agenda request from Steve Schams regarding maintaining passage for customers of Sterling Pharmacy. Mr. Schams addressed City Council and recommended maintaining the 2 hour parking restriction 24/7 instead of during business hours only in order to allow proper snow removal. It was recommended to City Council to review downtown parking ordinances at a future City Council meeting. No action was taken.

ITEM 3.3 – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

City Administrator Waller reviewed with City Council the following recommendations from the Personnel Committee:

1. At the November 22, 2021 City Council meeting, the City Council approved a medical leave of absence for Police Chief Doug Stavenau. There was not an end date to the medical leave of absence, with periodic updates being provided to the City Council regarding the Police Chief's return to active duty. For City Council information, Police Chief Doug Stavenau's medical leave of absence is on-going, and is expected to last an additional two to three months.

2. The La Crescent Police Department has a staffing level of eight (8) Police Officers. Due to medical leaves, the Police Department is currently operating with six (6) Police Officers. It will be sometime before the two (2) officers that are currently on leave return to active duty. In addition, two (2) of the remaining six (6) Police Officers will be going on medical leaves in the near future, reducing the staffing level in the Police Department to four (4) Police Officers. Given the present and future anticipated leaves, along with the limited availability of part-time officers to fill current and future openings, the Personnel Committee is recommending that the City Council hire Ethan Hofschulte as a Police Officer for the City of La Crescent. Mr. Hofschulte would start at Step 1 in the union contract. Pursuant to the terms and conditions of the LELS contract, Mr. Hofschulte will serve a 12-month probationary period. For City Council information, Mr. Hofschulte has worked as a part-time Police Officer for the City of La Crescent since August of 2021. It was recommended to City Council to amend the 2022 general fund budget to reflect this additional position, understanding that the budget will be adjusted during the year as employees return from and leave for medical reasons.

3. That the City Council approve the hiring of Danae Forman as a Bookkeeper for the City of La Crescent. Ms. Forman has worked at Merchants Bank in La Crescent since 2007, and is currently employed there as the Lead Teller. Ms. Forman would start at step 1 in the union contract. Pursuant to the terms and conditions of the union contract, Ms. Forman will serve a 6-month probationary period.

4. The following items will be presented at a City Council meeting in February of 2022:

- a. Establishment of a post-retirement healthcare savings plan for full-time City employees that are not represented by a bargaining unit.
- b. A review of job descriptions for the Administrative Assistant and Administrative Clerk positions.
- c. A phased retirement option for Debbie Shimshak.
- d. A memorandum of understanding with the AFSCME Union regarding Kara Tarrence assuming certain responsibilities in the interim as the City's Finance Director.

City Administrator Waller updated City Council on the status of Police Chief Doug Stavenau's medial leave of absence. This item was informational, and no action was taken.

Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner, as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF ETHAN HOFSCHULTE AS A FULL-TIME POLICE OFFICER FOR THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT, WITH MR. HOFSCHULTE STARTING AT STEP 1 IN THE UNION CONTRACT, AND THAT PURSUANT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE LELS CONTRACT WILL SERVE A 12-MONTH PROBATIONARY PERIOD, AND TO ALSO AMEND THE 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET TO REFLECT THIS ADDITIONAL POSITION, UNDERSTANDING THAT THE BUDGET WILL BE ADJUSTED DURING THE YEAR AS EMPLOYEES RETURN FROM AND LEAVE FOR MEDICAL REASONS.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, all Members present voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Hutchinson, as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF DANA E FORMAN AS A BOOKKEEPER FOR THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT WITH MS. FORMAN STARTING AT STEP 1 IN THE UNION CONTRACT AND PURSUANT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE UNION CONTRACT, MS. FORMAN WILL SERVE A 6-MONTH PROBATIONARY PERIOD.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, all Members present voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

City Council reviewed the items to be presented in February, 2022 relating to the retirement of City Finance Director Debbie Shimshak. This item was informational, and no action was taken.

ITEM 3.4 – ICE ARENA LEASE EXTENSION

City Attorney Wieser reviewed with City Council a proposed extension agreement between the City of La Crescent and La Crescent-Hokah School District relating to the ice arena building located on South 14th Street. The building is owned by the City, while the underlying real estate is owned by the School District. The original Lease Agreement was executed in 1994 and had an initial termination date of 2024. In 2016, the City and School District agreed to *inter alia* extending the term to 2034 with City option of extending an additional ten (10) years to 2044. City Council reviewed these Agreements. At this time, it was recommended to City Council to approve the lease being extended to 2044 with a ten year (10) option until 2054. The purpose of finalizing this extension at this time will allow the City to move forward with consideration of a potential solar array project located at the ice arena. At this time, no decision has been made regarding a solar array.

Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member Hutchinson, as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXTENSION OF THE LEASE BETWEEN THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT AND LA CRESCENT-HOKAH SCHOOL DISTRICT RELATING TO THE ICE ARENA BUILDING LOCATED ON SOUTH 14TH STREET. TO 2044 WITH A TEN YEAR (10) OPTION UNTIL 2054.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, all Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.5 – RESOLUTION – HORSE TRACK MEADOWS WEST PLAT and
ITEM 3.6 – FOURTH AMENDMENT TO DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

City Attorney Wieser reviewed with City Council the Fourth Amendment to the Development Agreement for the original Horse Track Meadows Development. The purpose of amendment is to delete Lot 54, which was originally planned for multi-family housing, but subsequently re-subdivided into single family housing lots with the creation of the Horse Track Meadows West plat. The Horse Track Meadows West plat has a separate Development Agreement. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member O’Donnell-Ebner, as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOURTH AMENDMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT FOR THE ORIGINAL HORSE TRACK MEADOWS DEVELOPMENT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, all Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

City Attorney Wieser reviewed with City Council a Resolution approving the plat of Horse Track Meadows West. The purpose of this resolution is to put the meeting minutes in recordable form with the County Recorder's Office regarding the City's agreement to accept a reduced width of the walking path from the first plat to the second plat. Following discussion, Member Williams introduced the following resolution and moved its passage and adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 01-22-05

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINAL PLAT FOR HORSE TRACK MEADOWS WEST
IN THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT**

WHEREAS, MSM Development, LLC has duly petitioned the City of La Crescent City Council for approval of the final plat of Horse Track Meadows West.

WHEREAS, the City Planning Commission recommended the approval of the final plat.

WHEREAS, The City Council of the City of La Crescent approved the plat on November 8, 2021 as fully set forth in the approved City Council Meeting Minutes dated November 8, 2021.

WHEREAS, The City Council wishes to place of record with Houston County Recorder that portion of the Meeting Minutes applicable to county real estate records.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council hereby approved the final plat of Horse Track Meadows West with the following conditions:

1. That the City accepted a reduction of the walking path from twenty (20) feet, as contained in the plat of Horse Track Meadows to ten (10) feet as contained in the plat of Horse Track Meadows West across the north ten (10) feet of Lots One (1), Two (2) and Three (3), Block One (1) Horse Track Meadows West, a subdivision to the City of La Crescent, Houston County, Minnesota.

Adopted this 24th day of January, 2022.

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator

The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner and upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, all Members present voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried and the resolution duly passed and adopted.

ITEM 3.7 – 2022 LICENSE RENEWALS

City Council reviewed an additional 2022 license renewal application from Horman's HVAC, LLC that was received following the last City Council meeting. The application appears to be in order, and it was recommended to City Council to approve the license renewal application. Following discussion, Member Hutchinson made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad, as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE GAS INSTALLER LICENSE RENEWAL FOR 2022 FOR HORMAN'S HVAC, LLC.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.8 – UPDATE ON COVID-19 REVIEW

The COVID-19 Review that Ryan Stotts is completing has been delayed, and will be presented at the February 14, 2022 City Council meeting. This item was informational, and no action taken.

ITEM 3.9 – 2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

City Council reviewed a Memorandum from City Finance Director, Debra Shimshak, which listed the recommended budget adjustments for the revenues and expenditures for 2021. The memorandum listed an explanation for any significant adjustments. It was recommended to City Council to adopt a Resolution regarding these adjustments. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner introduced the following resolution and moved its passage and adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 01-22-06

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING CERTAIN ADJUSTMENTS TO THE
2021 GENERAL FUND BUDGET**

WHEREAS, the City Council has been presented with proposed expenditure and revenue adjustments to the 2021 General Fund Budget by the Finance Director, and

WHEREAS, the City Council deems it in the best interest of the City to approve these adjustments as presented.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council hereby approves the budget adjustments for the revenues and expenditures for 2021 as presented by the City Finance Director and as attached to these Minutes and marked as Exhibit 3.9.

Adopted this 24th day of January, 2022.

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator

The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Member Hutchinson and upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, all Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried and the resolution duly passed and adopted.

ITEM 3.10 – REVIEW NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION

City Administrative Assistant Boettcher reviewed with City Council that both the Caledonia Argus and the Fillmore County Journal had been contacted to get the number of city residents that subscribe to their circulations. The Caledonia Argus currently has 63 residents in La Crescent that subscribe. The Fillmore County Journal had not yet responded. A representative from the Caledonia Argus was also present. This item was informational, and no action was taken.

ITEM 6.1 – STAFF CORRESPONDENCE/COMMITTEE UPDATES – EXPLORE LA CROSSE

City Council reviewed the Agenda from the January 18, 2022 La Crosse County Convention & Visitors Bureau In Person Board Meeting, which included the Minutes from the November 16, 2021 Board Meeting. No action taken.

Houston County Commissioner, Dewey Severson, gave an update to City Council regarding ongoing Houston County matters including the No Wake Zone for the West Channel of the Mississippi River and the County ARPA money of \$30,000.00 to the Fire Department.

ITEM 8 – CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

There were no updates from the La Crescent Chamber of Commerce.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Member Hutchinson made a motion, seconded by Member Williams, to adjourn the meeting. Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members present voted in favor thereof, viz;

Ryan Hutchinson	Yes
Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried and the meeting duly adjourned at 6:08 PM.

APPROVAL DATE: _____

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator