

CITY OF PELICAN RAPIDS COUNCIL MINUTES – 11-29-00

The City Council of the City of Pelican Rapids met in regular session at 3:30 p.m., Wednesday, 11-29-00, in the Pelican Rapids Public Library meeting room. Present: Mayor Wayne Runningen, Council Members Denise Magnusson, Dave Gottenborg, Paulette Nettestad and John Waller III. Absent: none. Also present: Administrative Assistant Richard A. Jenson, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Glenys Ehlert, Utilities Superintendent Brent Frazier and Planning Commission Chairman Steve Backstrom.

Meeting called to order by Mayor Runningen.

Items added to the agenda: Appointment in Street Department; Holiday Lighting Committee Letter; Maplewood Hiking/Biking Trail Letters and Liquor Applications.

Administrative Assistant Richard A. Jenson reviewed the statement from Otter Tail County for the Jennie-O/West Central Turkeys appraisal for Tax Court. The City Council previously took action to pay 1/3 the cost up to \$3,300. The City's portion of the appraisal fee was \$3,000. Motion by Nettestad, seconded by Gottenborg to approve payment of City's portion of appraisal of the Jennie-O/West Central Turkeys property. Motion passed unanimously.

Township Fire Agreements will be renewed for three years. Jenson reviewed some minor changes in the billing process. Motion by Gottenborg, seconded by Magnusson to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the Township Fire Agreements as proposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget Hearing is 12-5-00, 7:00 p.m. at the library. Proposed Budget 2001 No. 4 was discussed.

Jenson reviewed application process for street department position. A committee including Street Superintendent Vern Benson, Mayor Runningen and Jenson interviewed five candidates. Their recommendation to the City Council is to appoint Thomas Soberg to the position. Motion by Nettestad, seconded by Magnusson to hire Thomas Soberg as a full time Equipment Service/Mechanic and Operator in the Public Works Department at the rate of pay of \$11.00 per hour. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Runningen reported that the Public Works Department has voted to decertify the union so their representation will be up on 12-31-00. The Police Department will continue as a union unit.

Council Member Waller arrived at 4:00 p.m.

Mayor Runningen read a letter from the Holiday Lighting Committee thanking the Council for their work and contributions to the holiday decorations.

Mayor Runningen read letters of support for the Maplewood Hiking/Biking Trail from Paul Deschene and from the Pelican Rapids Chamber of Commerce.

City Council received three applications for Non-Intoxicating Malt Liquor (3.2 Beer) Off-Sale Licenses. Motion by Waller, seconded by Nettestad to approve the following license applications subject to review, verification and completion of police background checks: Patrick H. Serquina at Pelican CND Enterprises Inc.; Rick James Loerzel at Holiday Station and Paul Alan Evenson at Southtown C. Store. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Runningen removed himself as chairman and from any participation in discussion of Facilities Committee's report.

Acting Mayor Dave Gottenborg assumed the chair. Gottenborg and Nettestad serve on the Facilities Committee for the City. City Council requested that the committee and architect reevaluate the Lake Region Electric Cooperative site and buildings on Hwy. 59 North. Gottenborg reviewed the report on the Lake Region Electric buildings. The buildings would meet many needs of the city including city offices, council chambers, police department, liquor store and vehicle storage and shop.

Council Member Nettestad said the council needs to make a decision about whether they are in favor of the project enough to pursue negotiations with Lake Region Electric Cooperative. Then the Council will consider the results of the negotiations. If approved by Council, the question will go before the voters. These actions would result in the sale of the city shop, municipal liquor store and city hall.

"It's a concern to leave the downtown, but the cost of making city hall handicapped accessible and solve the liquor store access problems makes the Lake Region Electric Cooperative former headquarters attractive," said Nettestad. Council discussed various comments about negotiating, public relations and presentation of the alternatives to the public.

Motion by Waller, seconded by Magnusson approving the concept of Facilities Committee's plans and to authorize the committee to negotiate with Lake Region Electric Cooperative regarding purchase of the former headquarters building. Voting yes: Acting Mayor Gottenborg, Council Members Magnusson, Waller and Nettestad. Voting no: none. Motion carried.

Mayor Runningen resumed the chair and adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Glenys Ehlert, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer