

CITY OF PELICAN RAPIDS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES-11-29-05

The City Council of Pelican Rapids met in regular session at 4:00 p.m., on Tuesday, 11-29-05, in Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Wayne Runningen, Council Members Ben Woessner, John E. Waller, III, David Gottenborg and Richard Peterson were present. No one was absent. City Administrator Don Solga, Clerk-Treasurer Glenys Ehlert, Building Official Dave Neisen, Library Director Pam Westby, Fire Chief Trevor Steeves, Jim Johnson and Jerry Barnes of the Pelican Rapids Press were also present.

Mayor Runningen called meeting to order.

Items added to the agenda are the Airport Lighting Project and Certify Unpaid Bills to County Auditor.

Mayor Runningen welcomed City Building Official Dave Neisen to the meeting. Neisen explained his certification and licensure as a building official in the State of Minnesota and with the International Code Council. Neisen serves several communities, providing building inspection services through his business, Solutions for Cities, LLC. He reviewed staff member Jerry Johnson's certification as a Minnesota Building Official Limited. Neisen has experience with zoning and city planning and currently is the city planner for the City of Perham. Neisen commented that his feeling is that contractors want to do things correctly and he prefers to educate people about building requirements.

"I appreciate the work Dave has done educating the homeowners who are doing their own projects," Administrator Solga said. "Dave is able to do this in a tactful way because of his knowledge and experience."

Neisen said he provides a log of the open building permits to the City so the citizens and Council Members know when he is inspecting various items and projects.

Mayor Runningen and Fire Chief Trevor Steeves reviewed a grant application for 50% of the cost for fire equipment for a total project of \$6,000 with a maximum grant award of \$3,000 from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Motion by Waller, seconded by Peterson to authorize the mayor and clerk to sign 2006 Forestry Assistance Matching Grant with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Motion passed unanimously.

Fire Chief Steeves reviewed the need for a new Fire Hall and a proposal presented to the townships and other city in the Fire District. The cost of a new building is estimated at 1.7 million dollars. The proposed location would be on Hwy. 59 at the Park Region Cooperative full service station and office building. Park Region would remove the propane tank and provide a clean site to the City and townships. The 1.7 million includes the cost to demolish the existing building. Park Region

Cooperative is considering relocation on Hwy. 108 West and 9th St. NW in the JOBZ Zone.

Council Member Peterson suggested securing a twenty year commitment from the townships to provide payment for the bond.

Jim Johnson was present to discuss an unpaid utility bill for a rental property he owns. He said, "It is unfair to charge me for a bill that the renter didn't pay."

Council Member Woessner said, "It may not be fair but it is reality." Council Member Peterson commented that Johnson was asking the City to absorb the cost and that wasn't going to happen.

During discussion, council members considered unusual circumstances in addition to requirement that property owners are responsible for the water and sewer bills for rental property. Motion by Gottenborg, seconded by Peterson to charge Jim Johnson \$138.99, credit a payment of \$28.44, and waive the delinquent fees and shut off charges.

Motion by Gottenborg, seconded by Peterson to amend the motion to remove late fees and shut-off charges for this account, instead of a specific amount for the bill due. Motion passed unanimously. Administrator Don Solga said the City will calculate a new bill for Jim Johnson to pay. If not paid by 12-15-05, penalties will be charged

Administrator Don Solga said City Code 401.04 reads: **Subdivision 1, Accounts in Name of Owner.** All accounts shall be carried in the name of the owner. The owner shall be liable for water and sewer services supplied to his property, whether he is occupying the property or not, and any charges unpaid shall be a lien upon the property.

Library Director Pam Westby presented a report on activities at the Library.

Mayor Runningen announced the Truth in Taxation Hearing is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., on Monday, 12-05-05, Council Chambers, City Hall.

Motion by Gottenborg, seconded by Waller to approve payment of the 11-29-05 Accounts Payable Listing as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Administrator Don Solga said each department has done a good job in using the comp time. Motion by Peterson, seconded by Waller to approve payment of 37.25 hours of compensatory time to Utilities Superintendent Brent E. Frazier. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Waller, seconded by Peterson to approve a raffle for St. Leonard's Church on May 6, 2006. Motion passed unanimously.

Administrator Don Solga reviewed the Airport Lighting Project. The City received two bids for the work.

Motion by Waller, seconded by Gottenborg to accept the low bid of Kevin Dillon's bid of \$7950 for the labor portion of the Airport Lighting Project. Motion passed unanimously.

Council requested additional information on the certification of unpaid bills to the county auditor. Item will be reconsidered at a later date.

Council discussed the budget proposed for 2006. Council Members made some suggestions. Mayor Runningen said the Budget Committee will meet and review the suggestions prior to the Truth in Taxation Hearing on 12-05-05 at 7:00 p.m., Council Chambers, City Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Glenys Ehlert, CMC
Clerk-Treasurer