

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER  
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
January 11, 2022

The Kettle River City Council was held in the meeting room of City Hall, Tuesday, January 11, 2022.

**Members Present:** Mayor David Lucas, Councilor Collier, Councilor Mascarenas, Councilor Kohmetscher and Councilor Doward.

**Absent:**

**Staff Attending:** Kathryn Lake, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer, Robert Tschida, Building Inspector, Kyle Riel, Fire Chief, Jerry Peterson Utilities and Maintenance Worker

**Others attending:** Kevin Peura, John Peura, Marcia Sarvela, Judy Marsyla, Ed Lund, Pat Lund

Mayor Lucas called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Discussion with Mike Beutow, local contractor who did water and sewer hook for a new build, regarding the invoice that was sent to the city. The council decided not to pay this invoice until further information can be obtained. Mike stated he would attend another meeting to discuss this issue.

There was a motion made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Kohmetscher which carried by a majority to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Ayes: Mayor Lucas, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Councilor Doward & Councilor Collier
- Minutes, December 14, regular council meeting; with the following Changes to minutes: Counselor Doward said Nay to Mayor Lucas being on NRDC.
- Claims (6414, 6416-6417, 6421-6425, 6427-6434 = \$17,435.09)
- Cash control statement, receipt, disbursement registers, and bank reconciliation.
- Budget summary

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**Administrative Department** report submitted by Kathryn Lake, City Clerk/Treasurer:

- Daily, weekly, monthly duties.
- Worked on the end of the year tasks
- Talked with the city auditor, getting stuff ready for them.
- The remaining council member's email was shut off on Friday or Monday because they forgot to shut it off previously. Another email has been sent but she refuses to use it and blocked me from an email so there is no communication.
- Talked to the state of MN about MNDot about removing the snow off HWY 73 so they will do that.
- People on one end of town are having a lot of trouble with rust in their water right now so Jerry flushed the hydrants again today, the hydrants have been flushed twice now in the last week.
- The second camera needs to come down so it can be charged and then they can get put back up. We will need to figure out a way to sweep them off so the solar panels aren't covered in snow.
- There has been one application received for Dave's position.

Mayor Lucas asked Councilor Doward if she was able to complete the Board of Equalization training? Councilor Doward stated she couldn't get the website to work. Mayor Lucas stated that the county board will keep Kettle River's for the next 2 years. Councilor Kohmetscher stated that she would be willing to complete the training tonight and hopefully the deadline will be met.

Mayor Lucas stated that we need an updated email and phone list for everybody.

**Utilities Department** report submitted by Jerry Peterson, Utilities

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- Water pumped for December was 177400 gallons which is up 18700 gallons from November. Part of that is flushing hydrants, and part of that there is a bypass going at the lift station to keep it from freezing.
- Completed the Fluoride report yesterday
- Wastewater report is due on the 25th
- WHP update has been completed and forwarded to Chris Parthum
- Brush pile will get burned when Dave returns to work.
- They will find out the cost of the transformers for the generator they are looking into purchasing.
- Fire department to please continue flooding the skating rink.
- Consider replacing the old water meters, as was discussed at the last meeting.
- Water usage report was completed.

## **Fire Department:**

- December 4 fire calls and 3 medical calls
- January (so far), 2 fire calls and 1 medical.
- Ice rink update: they have been working on it and putting water down. There are air bubbles in the ice right now, so they are going to start spraying instead of dumping.
- Update on Silver Township: They were supposed to have a meeting with Sue Pederson after Christmas, and she canceled again. Bernadine will not be back until Spring. Silver Township has signed their contracts so they should be paid.
- Kyle needs to work on the 2023 budget so he will do a budget with Silver Township and one without.
- There are 11 guys in the fire department.
- Kyle will get the reports completed.

## **City Council:**

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Councilor Collier stated that the old city tractor needs to be replaced and there may be grants the city could get which could purchase a new tractor. Councilor Collier priced a Kubota for \$25,667 without the rear blade which would be another \$1000.00 and a John Deere which was \$24,465. Councilor Collier would recommend they go with the John Deere. The council will see what is available through a grant and go from there.

Mayor Lucas is thinking that with the amount of rust in the water that there is more than just a problem with the standpipe and there are still iron pipes underground. Mayor Lucas suggested that they are going to be re-doing this part of HWY 73 in 2029 and the pipes could be replaced then. He also stated that this part of HWY 73 is extremely dangerous and has needed to be replaced and updated for 30 years, but whenever funding becomes available it gets diverted to other projects. Mayor Lucas is encouraging citizens and businesses to write letters about the hazards of this stretch of road. He will be contacting local businesses to see if they would be willing to write these letters.

Mayor Lucas would like some information about a library project that Councilor Doward has been looking into. Councilor Doward stated that she just got home today so she didn't have that information available and that right now she is just gathering data. Mayor Lucas stated that she should be discussing this with the council beforehand, Councilor Doward stated that she is gathering data and will then bring it to the council. Mayor Lucas stated that he would appreciate having a heads up, Councilor Collier stated that if she is willing to put in the time to gather the data then she should be able to do that. Councilor Kohmetscher stated that coming to the council beforehand would make sense to discuss the viability of the project since there isn't just the initial cost, there are administrative costs down the road also and the viability of the project might not be there. Councilor Doward stated that she is trying to research these things so she can bring it to council with all the data.

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## **Committees:**

### **Building Committee:**

- Pipe Laying certificate, this is supposed to be renewed every 3 years.
- From now on everyone who digs up a sewer or water line needs to pull a permit for it and the pressure test is their responsibility.
- He is supposed to carry a surety bond from the state. If he was up to date, he would have known this information.
- The city should have a checklist on what is required legally and as far as our ordinances. These need to be laid out and signed before anyone does any work.

### **Planning and Zoning:**

They have sold 3 parcels, there are 2 left. The contract is up this month. Some of the people on the committee would like to take the remaining parcels off the market. The thinking about the 3 acres would be the only place that they could move the city council and/or fire department if that was ever a possibility. The council feels like since there has been very little interest in the properties, that they won't renew the contract at this time. The properties will remain for sale, just not through the realtor.

- Councilor Kohmetscher made a motion, seconded by Councilor Doward not to renew Rick Lewis' realtor contract for the lot across the street and the 3 acres.
  - Ayes: Councilor Collier, Councilor Mascarenas, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Doward, Mayor Lucas.
  - Motion carries

### **Old Business:**

- Straight-line survey has been completed.

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- Hopefully before the next meeting on February 1st, we will have more applicants for Dave's position.

2022 appointments:

- Acting Mayor: Councilor Kohmetscher will retain acting mayor
- Official Newspaper: Moose Lake Star Gazette
- Bank Depository: First National
- City Attorney: Kennedy & Graven
- Auditing Firm: Carlson SV
- Fire Commission: Mayor Lucas & Kyle Riel
- Building Utilities and Safety Committee: Councilor Mascarenas and Councilor Kohmetscher
- Personnel Committee: Councilor Kohmetscher & Elizabeth Mascarenas
- Planning and Zoning: Councilor Collier & Mayor Lucas

A motion was made by Councilor Kohmetscher and seconded by Councilor Doward to accept the 2022 appointments.

- Ayes: Councilor Collier, Councilor Mascarenas, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Doward, and Mayor Lucas
- Motion carries

There needs to be a change of prices of volume of water from \$5-\$6. This, in part, needs to happen for the city to get the loan for the standpipe To qualify you need to have \$10,000 more this year than you did last year. By raising the base rate from \$36 to \$40 and the consumption rate by \$1.00 we will be at that figure. Councilor Kohmetscher stated that she hated to see the rate increase and that she knows that it is a sore spot, but in order for it to be self-sustainable and be able to do the needed repairs, there isn't much of a choice. Councilor Collier and Mayor Lucas agree. A citizen suggested letting the community know why the rates are increasing. The needs should be communicated to the residents. Councilor Kohmetscher

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suggested sending out an informational letter. Mayor Lucas suggested putting the reasons on the bill card.

There was a motion made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas to accept resolution 2022-01 of the \$1.00 water and sewer volume increase.

- Ayes: Councilor Collier, Councilor Mascarenas, Councilor Kohmetscher, and Mayor Lucas
- Nays: Councilor Doward
- Motion carries

The \$2000.00 check was returned to the Dobosenski's after they cleaned up the blighted property.

Mayor Lucas wanted to ask about the website Councilor Doward is wanting to create and he stated that it cannot be a city website. Councilor Doward stated that it wasn't a city website, but a website only for her as a council member only. Councilor Doward stated that she needed to leave. Kathy and Mayor Lucas stated not to do anything unless she had council approval. She said Ok, have a good night and left.

There was a motion made by Mayor Lucas and seconded by Councilor Kohmetscher to not authorize Councilor Doward to make a city of Kettle River Page.

- Ayes: Councilor Collier, Councilor Mascarenas, Councilor Kohmetscher, and Mayor Lucas
- Motion carries

There was a discussion that Councilor Doward is acting as an individual instead of a member of a council. Also, the council had decided in the spring of 2021 that they would not be renewing the city emails and that

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the council members would need to get their own email addresses. Councilor Doward did not do so. Mayor Lucas asked Kathy to set her up with one, so she did and now Councilor Doward refuses to use it.

Councilor Collier made a motion seconded by Councilor Mascarenas to give COLA increase of 5.9% to the City of Kettle River's employees.

- Ayes: Kohmetscher, Collier, Mascarenas and Mayor Lucas
- Absent: Doward
- Motion carries

Motion by Councilor Collier seconded by Councilor Mascarenas and carried unanimously to adjourn at 9:03 p.m.

The next City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, February 1, 2021, at 7 p.m. at the City Hall.

Submitted by,

Kathryn Lake  
City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer