

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
September 13, 2022

The regular meeting of the Kettle River City Council was held in the meeting room of City Hall, Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 7:00 PM.

Members Present: Mayor David Lucas, Councilor Guy Collier, Councilor Elizabeth Mascarenas, Councilor Miya Kohmetscher.

Absent: Councilor Monique Doward

Staff Attending: Kathryn Lake, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Robert Tschida, Building Inspector; Jerry Peterson, Utilities Superintendent

Absent: Jamie Dobosenski, Account Clerk

Others attending: Michele Caron, Ike Miller, Judy Collier, Marcia Sarvela, Calen Eschenbach, Judy Marsyla, Gary Marsyla, Tina Tollgaard, Laura Simi, John Peura, Kevin Peura, John Mikrot, Dan Reed, Kyle Riel Fire Chief.

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

Motion by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Kohmetscher to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Minutes, August 8, 2022, regular council meeting. With the corrections of Jerry's training dates being changed to September 19-21, 2022. Councilor Collier was absent from the Aug. 30, 2022, budget meeting. During the recess of the Aug. 8, 2022, meeting Mayor Lucas called 911 due to the unruly behavior of Councilor Doward.
- Claims (6563-6567,6571-6582=\$4969.45)
- Cash control statement, receipts, disbursement registers

- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:** 0.
- **Motion carries.**

Michele Caron discussed her opinions and feeling on the Ordinances for the campground.

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Dan Reed representing the Ma & Pa Kettle Committee wanting to put an outside electrical box on the front of the Legion Building and install a permanent base for the city's Christmas Tree by installing a cement pad and drilling 3-4 holes then securing metal stand with bolts. To be paid for by the Ma & Pa committee.

- Motion for the outdoor electrical box made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:** 0.
- **Motion carries.**
- Motion for the Christmas Tree base made Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Kohmetscher.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:** 0.
- **Motion carries.**

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

- Election filing has been completed and filed with Carlton County
- Daily, weekly, monthly has been completed
- Began organizing office at water treatment plant
- Well head protection at State level now
- City truck is paid off
- Would like council to consider using part of covid money to pay off the tractor
- Jerry is scheduled for his exam
- 6 shut off letters sent, only 1 shut off
- Would like to order a new office desk under \$500- council recommends waiting until Nov. or Dec. to see what is left in the office budget.
- Bob from Hoffmans Hardware will change the tumblers on the deadbolts and doorknob on the office and give new keys.
- Silver Township has signed their fire service contract for 2023
- Talked to insurance company and there is no open claim against Mr. Tschida
- Update on Mr. Kasden's claim he is now breaking his claim down into pieces. His biggest issue is the storage fees on the motor home. Insurance adjuster says it is on him. There will be multiple claims from him.

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- Will need to investigate Ordinances for slumlords. Person who lives in rented property will be moving because of living conditions. Would like to get Ordinances in place, if possible, to prevent disrepair in rental situations.
- Motion to pay off tractor with covid money that needs to be spent by October 19, 2022, made by Councilor Kohmetscher, and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:** 0.
- **Motion carries.**
- Mayor Lucas would like Kathy to look into raising water and sewer hook up rates from the \$50 fee for each.
- DMR's are sent off to state

Utilities Department:

- Water pumped in August was 190,000 gallons. 36,000 of those gallons were from flushing hydrants.
- Jerry attended the lead and copper workshop in Two Harbors on August 17, 2022. From main water line shut off to outside of house is homeowners' responsibility. If lead and copper are present in water, it would be in the galvanized pipe. Our city does not need to worry about the deadline in 2024 for replacing these water lines as it is not the city's responsibility. The water samples that were done were rejected because one of the samples spilled in the container and the samples were not received by the deadline. Is it John Mikrot's responsibility to send off/ deliver water samples or the cities. The lead testing is done every five years unless your city is on the red flag list then it is every year.
- Water quality test was done and needs to be received within twelve hours. Jerry brought the samples to the Cloquet pack and mail and sent them out.
- SCI should be done on Friday September 16, 2022
- Secondary pond discharge planed for September 25, 2022
- Back washing filters every Monday
- People asking about lawnmower and tractor going up for bids- maybe post in newspaper
- County asked for permission to plow up to Kasden's property but not in front of, then going around to Mascarenas, because of all the junk he has in front of the building. Need to worry about fire calls and mutual aid not knowing it's not plowed. Letter was sent to city attorney and waiting for response. He will have until October 1 to move his stuff which is the deadline for street parking anyway, or his things will be removed and held for 30 days then hauled away. Waiting to

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- hear if Attorney is okay with this, the only thing he could have, is his vehicle next to his building. A letter has been sent already notifying him to remove his belongs from the street. This is for plowing and emergency response safety.
- Drinking water revolving fund through MRWA for meters, standpipes, etc. Kathy will check into if it can be retroactive.
 - Some of the curb stops for water shut offs need to be replaced cost is \$40-\$80 each
 - Quote to fix lift station was \$3,536.64
 - Quote for calcium permanganate pump that down is \$1,395 for 1 the other \$975. John Mikrot recommends checking with Hawkins Chemical into switching to a sodium permanganate pump.
 - Water meter prices range from \$136-\$185.90 each, 2 had a 20-year warranty the cheapest one had no warranty information. 25 water meters will need to be replaced; they try to replace 25 meters every 5 years. The last time was in 2017 and after this about half of them will have been replaced. Council suggests going with the more expensive meters because of the 20-year warranty. The cost to change out 25 meters at \$185.90 will be \$4647.50 + shipping. Remaining covid money can also be used to cover this cost.
 - On going issue with ditch drainage on birch street, culvert was checked out and Jerry cleaned out 3-inch rise with tractor. Kevin Peura recommends the culvert be replaced. City will have to check with the Minnesota League of Cities to see if the homeowner or the city is responsible for the replacement. Culvert is believed to be 20-24 feet long. Mr. Peura believes it would be around \$500 + the cost of the culvert to be fixed, whether that responsibility is the City's or Michele Carons is to be determined. Michele Caron asked if digging the ditch would help but Kevin does not believe it would solve the issue.
 - Locks were changed on the gates at the lift station
 - Department of Health has not been here to test wells. Used to be Quarterly will now be bi-annually.

Fire Department:

- Runs: Aug. 6-Fire, 7-Medical; September 1-Fire, 0-Medical
- Tanker needed more work after last meeting the pump transmission was leaking. Emergency Apparatus came and replaced gasket and a solenoid gasket that needed replacing. Bill has not yet come.
- Interviewed 2 people for fire fighter positions. Bob Kohmetscher and Bradley Stone. Interviews went well. Chief Riehl would like to offer them probationary membership to the fire department with city council approval if they pass the background check and physical.

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- Motion to accept Bob Kohmetscher made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:** 0.
- **Motion carries.**
- Motion to accept Bradley Stone made by Councilor Kohmetscher and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:** 0.
- **Motion carries.**
- May be one other person interested
- 1 fire fighter needs training and will be finished by spring. Will need to pay upfront but the state will reimburse.
- Gear was tested, everything looked good. Waiting on official results.
- Last meeting everyone was showed on how to engage and disengage pumper. Tanker will be next
- This winter will be OSHA required training
- Citizen wanted to know why Fire Department didn't do anything to recognize 9/11. Mayor Lucas suggested planning something for next year's 9/11

City Council:

- David Fossum with OSHA came- Councilor Doward never cancelled the appointment with him and told him she worked at the office, so he was expecting her to be here, and she didn't show. Mr. Fossum works on the side of OSHA that comes in and gives you a list of what need to be fixed and a deadline to fix it by and if that deadline isn't met, he then turns his report over to the side of OSHA that will fine you. He said it could be thousands of dollars and most small cities opt. out of it because of the cost, this is not required by OSHA. Mr. Fossum was upset that his time was wasted, and the appointment wasn't cancelled as the council requested.
- Mayor Lucas contacted Game Time- the grant is not 100% funded it is up to 100% matched so the information given by Councilor Doward about the playground equipment grant was incorrect.
- Mayor Lucas brought up the newsletter circulating that was dated August 12 and wanted to address that the letter was false and how the property taxes in the city are too high. The city hasn't raised taxes in the last four years the increases in

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taxes are coming from the county and school levee. A citizen brought up that the taxes should be raised by the city every year even a little because of raising taxes. Mayor Lucas acknowledged the need but said because of the raising taxes and living expenses he didn't want to create an issue with residents, and it will be revisited next year. Mayor Lucas reiterated that Councilor Doward's actions of circulating false information is appalling. Also voicing that Kathy Lake does not make \$51,000 dollars a year, last year she made \$27,492.00 with FICA and insurance. Mayor Lucas provided documentation to prove this. Councilor Doward still has not returned the Audit Book. The city attorney says there is not much to be done a bout that issue because the employee guidelines were not in place at the time, and they do not know where the audit book is because she will not tell them.

Committees:

Planning and Zoning Commission:

- Talked about the campground with Michele Caron and recommended her to come to the City Council Meeting.
- Councilor Collier has not heard from Terry Oleary lately but assumes he is still planning on building duplexes on the property he bought from the city.

Personnel Committee:

- Discussed Jamie Dobosenski's raise. The step structure has been figured out and does not need to be changed because it is already above the states minimum wage. Since the current step structure would be an almost \$2 dollar raise, it was recommended to split that and give a .90 cent raise. Then the next step will be raised a full dollar. Raise will be retroactive to when probationary period was finished.
- Motion made by Councilor Collier to approve Jamie's raise to \$12.90 and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:**0
- **Motion carries.**
- Suggested that an add should be put in the paper for a utilities superintendent so there is some one in place when Jerry is ready to retire. They wouldn't be hired until Jerry was done. Decided to table and wait for Jerry to get his licenses and see how long he wants to stay in the position.

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Building Committee:

- Had a meeting with the State, due to unfounded accusations. The meeting went well. No recommendations have come in yet besides the way the paper is done and filled. Building permits need to be adjusted. Money amount should be removed. There is a surcharge that needs to be added. No reprimands were given. Just guidelines on improving.
- Browns house, what can be done is still unknown. It was brought up during the meeting with the State, but they had no recommendations on what to do. There is a property maintenance code that could be adopted. However, the city does not have the funds to clean up said property

Old Business:

- Levy for Carlton County water tower project 2018A. Last year it was \$13,314 and this year it is \$13,426.
- Motion to approve made by Councilor Kohmetscher and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:**0
- **Motion carries.**
- Quote from MN Pump Works. For the ponds. Do some research and see if there is a grant for water meters available, then use the remaining covid money for the lift station pump. Tabled until next meeting.
- Potassium Permanganate pump possibly switch to sodium permanganate. Will need to talk to Hawkins Chemical. Tabled until next meeting.

New Business:

- Waiver for Insurance Company. Every year it is done as does not waive which limits it to \$500,000 on any claim to which the statutory limits apply and for a single occurrence the limit is \$1,500,000.
- Motion to accept the waiver for liability insurance as does not waive made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas and Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:**0
- **Motion carries.**

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- Placing an ad for bids on old lawn mower and old tractor. In newspaper. Sealed bid to be opened at the next council meeting. Run the ads for 2 weeks, deadline October 10,2022. Next meeting will have a closed session to review bids. Will also be advertised on city office door, post office, Facebook, City's website, and tower Tap.
- Motion to advertise sealed bids for lawn mower and tractor made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Kohmetscher.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas and Mayor Lucas.
- **Nays:**0
- **Motion carries.**
- Cancellation of Mr. Mikrot's contract upon notification of Jerry passing his licensure test. Mr. Entner will be coming in once a month until Jerry is able to take the sewer licensure test to take care of the sewer operations. Mr. Entner has volunteered to do this free of charge. Mr. Mikrot needs 60 days' notice according to the contract. Tabled for next meeting until more information on Jerry's test is available.
- Email received for a tree survey. A certified tree inspector offered to come in and look at the trees in the city limits to see if they are diseased. Tabled for next meeting for review.
- Proposed budget finalization tabled for next meeting for review.
- Jim and Mary Sanders are putting corn stalks on the city lamp posts on main street and are offering them to city residents to decorate.

Motion by Councilor Mascarenas and seconded by Councilor Kohmetscher to adjourn at 9:04 p.m.

Ayes: Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.

Nays: 0

Motion carries.

The next City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at 7 p.m. at the City Hall.

Submitted by,
Jamie Dobosenski
Account Clerk