

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
November 17, 2022

Kettle River City Council meeting was held in the meeting room of City Hall, Monday, November 17, 2022.

Members Present: Mayor Lucas, Councilor Collier, Councilor Mascarenas, Councilor Kohmetscher.

Members Absent: Councilor Doward

Staff Attending: Kathryn Lake, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Jerry Peterson, Utilities Superintendent; Kyle Riehl, Fire Chief

Staff Absent: Robert Tschida, Building Inspector

Others attending, Gary Marsyla, Judy Marsyla, Laura Simi, Marcia Sarvela, Cindy Bruski, Dee Smerud

Guest: Michele Caron

Mayor Lucas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Michele Caron wanted to discuss an issue with the water/sewer, however she did not attend the meeting.

Motion to Accept agenda made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Kohmetscher. Ayes: Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas. Mayor Lucas. Nays: 0. Motion carries to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Minutes of the October 11, 2022, regular meeting.
- Claims (6598 – 6609 = \$7,513.81)
- Cash control statement, receipts, and disbursement registers.

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

- Regular daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly work.
- Company that relined the water tower in 2018 said the warranty was for 2 years. Kathy called KLM and spoke to Ben Feldman, who said to start with and evaluation on the inside of the tower. This is not an immediate need but should be done in the next few years.

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
November 17, 2022

- 18 letters were sent out to residents to remind them of needing pet licenses. All but 4 people came and purchased them.
- 7 past due water/sewer letters were sent out, all were paid except for the usual 4 which will be accessed to their property taxes.
- St. Croix Management will send out letters to their residents to notify them of need pet licenses.
- Kathy purchased Halloween candy that was passed out to area children during the Trunk or Treat event at the Veterans Building. Money from the lawful gambling fund was used to purchase said candy.
- Kathy talked to the insurance adjuster who said the only reason the claim against the city made by Mr. Kasden was paid out was because the city didn't have a court order to remove the junk from his private property and to do so in the future.
- Canvased the election
- It has come to Kathy's attention that someone has been posting listings on multiple sites for positions with the city. She has gotten phone calls and emails about the job listings. One listing was for a police records specialist, one was for a police records clerk, and another was for a maintenance worker to clean the bathrooms. Mayor Lucas would like to let it be known that if the city finds out who the person doing this is, they will be charged for posting fraudulent positions and that this was done without Kathy's knowledge and without approval from the City Council.
- Kathy spoke with Carlton County, and they said that the homeowners are responsible for replacing culverts unless the city has an in-place ordinance stating they are responsible for up-keep of culverts. Kettle River has no such ordinance. Kathy will be sending a letter to Michele Caron to let her know it is her responsibility to replace the culvert if she wishes to.
- Kathy and Mayor Lucas have been having issues with sending emails and have made the recommendation to switch to a different provider called Proton. The cost would be \$3.99 per month for up to 10 email addresses. This would be cheaper than the current provider's price. The city's website would stay the same. Kathy ordered two external hard drives to back up the computers in the city office.
- Kathy received a call from Nicole at the State Auditors office asking if the city has a fire service contract with the fire department. When told yes because of extenuating circumstances, she responded that the city should not have a contract with a city department and asked for copies of all the fire service contracts so she could go over them. In the future the city will not have written fire service contract, it will just be voted on by the city council.

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
November 17, 2022

- Kathy would like to know if or when the city can have someone install stops on the roof to prevent snow and ice from sliding off.
- The water treatment plant was turned into OSHA for no respirator protection, no hazard communication or reporting, no chemical hazard control, lack of continuing education. Kathy informed OSHA the respirator protection is not needed, there are data reports and Jerry is in continuing education courses. No further contact has been made by OSHA.
- Softline Data has merged with G Works. The only change being made is the company name.

Utilities Department:

- Jerry informed the council he was turned into Minnesota Department of Health for operating without a license. He has his drinking water license and the people he spoke with at the state said if he needs anything to let them know and they can tell him who made the complaint because it is not confidential information. The complaint also said the city has been operating for months without a license, however they are still under contract with Mr. Mikrot.
- 222,500 gallons of water pumped
- 45,300 gallons of that total were pumped to flush hydrants
- Ponds were discharged October 10
- Jerry filled potholes on Cedar Street, but it is too late to tar them.
- Back washed filters
- Jerry put orange cones over the horseshoe stakes at the ball field, so snowmobiles do not run over them and on Callen Eschenbach's water shut off.
- Drinking water report was completed
- Issues at Michael Browns property- Jerry notice a garden hose leading from the house to the camper, so he and Kathy went to check the water shut off. Someone had removed the curb stop and it was missing. Jerry and Bob replaced the curb-stop and tightened it. Rob Tschida went there to talk to the person working on the house to let them know they need a building permit and noticed a homemade wrench for turning on the water. The curb stop was checked again and it looked like someone had tried to remove it, so Jerry placed silicone around it, and it doesn't seem to have been tampered with so far. The water meter at the property is broken and the homeowner will not allow anyone to fix it.
- Jerry inspected water shutoffs while flushing hydrants and does not think a shop vac will work to clean them out.
- The new pump has not come yet for the sodium permanganate

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
November 17, 2022

- January is the soonest Jerry can take the sewer license, there is also another in March
- Resident brought up questions about problems at the apartment building. It is privately owned, and the sewer and water heater issues need to be taken care of by the property management company and there is nothing the city can do. The residents have been given the phone numbers to the Minnesota Department of Health and the Attorney Generals office, also a Carlton County Social Worker is involved.

Fire and First Responder Department:

- 3 fire and 4 E.M.S. calls in October
- 3 fire and 0 E.M.S. calls in November
- Emergency Apparatus came for the annual rig inspection. The brakes will need work as they are rusty from not being used regularly. They also fixed the battery connections on the tanker and recommend a battery tender. Chief Riehl will work the tender into the budget for 2024.
- 1 firefighter is currently attending Fire 1 & 2 training in Hinkley. 1 of the 2 new applicants has completed the application process and a time will be scheduled for him to come in for gear and a pager.
- No new information on if or when Chief Riehl made need to move out of area.
- Fire Department is looking into different ideas besides having a steak fry.

City Council:

- Gives Thanks to Jim and Mary Sanders for putting cornstalks on the lamp posts and getting residents to decorate them and Thanks to the people who decorated.
- Ma and Pa Committee- Outlet will be installed on the exterior of the Veterans Building and the permanent tree stand during the week of November 21. Unknown when tree is coming and working on getting lights. Christmas Celebration is on Dec. 10 at the Veterans building from 4-7 with tree lighting at 6. Vendors will be indoors. May look into having a fire ring outdoors.

Committees-

Planning and Zoning Commission:

Personnel Committee:

- An application was received for any light maintenance position that may be available, personnel has not had time to review it yet.
- Mayor Lucas brought up an email that was sent to city council members that possibly qualifies as age discrimination. Council wishes to speak with person email is about before making said email public, to make sure the issue is properly handled.

Building Inspector:

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
November 17, 2022

- Rob Tschida asked Kathy to notify the council he tried to inspect the Brown property but was told he needed permission from the homeowner, who was not present. He went back and they still would not allow him in. He has notified them if he is not allowed in soon the electricity will be turned off. Deliberation on whether or not to the city should obtain a court order to allow Inspector Tschida in the house. If the house is condemned by the city there would be a deadline on when it would need to be razed by and the city does not have the money to do so. Also, the homeowner could fight it in court which could be drug out for years. The city will continue to access fines to the property for non-compliance on multiple ordinances.

Correspondence:

- Letter from county about not snowplowing in front of Kasden's property unless his stuff is moved out of the way.
- Motion to get a court order stating Mr. Kasden has 14 days to move all his property except his garbage cans from in front of his building on Cedar Street, made by Councilor Kohmetscher and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Motion carries.**

New Business:

- Motion to accept Audit engagement letter from CarlsonSV made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Motion carries.**
- A claim has been filed by Mr. Kasden over the removal of his motorhome.
- Reminder that from November 15, 2022, to April 15, 2023, there is no street parking allowed between the hours of Midnight and 8 am. Due to snow removal.
- Water and Sewer connection fees on new construction should be updated. The going rates for Barnum and Sturgeon Lake are much higher at \$500- \$800 each for residential and \$600- \$900 each for commercial. Kettle Rivers is currently \$50 each for residential and commercial. Ordinances will need to be updated.
- Motion to raise costs to \$300 each for residential and \$400 each for commercial, made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Motion carries.**

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
November 17, 2022

- A need to look into landowners in town who are not paying debt service fees for water. If they own a lot in town that has water available, they should be paying the debit service rate, even if it's an empty lot. Some people are being charged but not everyone.
- Approval of the water and sewer debt service fee budget.
- Motion to approve sewer, made by Councilor Kohmetscher and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Motion carries.**
- Motion to approve sewer budget of \$93,675 made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Motion carries.**
- Quote from KLM to access the water tower is for \$3,300. Recommendation is to wait until the current water tower loan is paid off as it is not an issue that needs to be taken care of immediately but should work the inspection fee into the next budget plan.
- Resolution 2022-13, Canvassing the votes from the November 8, 2022, election. There are 96 registered voters of which 70 voted.
- Motion to accept Resolution 2022-13 made by Councilor Kohmetscher and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Motion carries.**
- Sealed bids:
For tractor: Mr. Frank Menart \$1,500, Mr. Bob Kisler- \$101, Mr. Dave Isaacson- \$510, Mr. Ken Kasden- \$1,010.
- Motion to accept Mr. Frank Menart's bid of \$1,500 made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.
- **Motion carries.**
For lawn tractor: Mr. Mark Johnson-\$255.
- Motion to accept bid for lawn tractor made by Mr. Mark Johnson made by Councilor Kohmetscher and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas.

CITY OF KETTLE RIVER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
November 17, 2022

- **Motion carries.**
- A Special Meeting will be held on November 22, 2022, at 6 pm. This is a closed meeting to discuss legal matters brought against the city.
- Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Councilor Collier and seconded by Councilor Mascarenas.
- **Ayes:** Councilor Collier, Councilor Kohmetscher, Councilor Mascarenas, Mayor Lucas. **Nays:** 0.
- **Motion carries to adjourn meeting at 9:16 pm**

The next regular city council meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at 7 pm. in the meeting room of City Hall.

Submitted by,
Jamie Dobosenski
Account Clerk