

**MINUTES
LAKE CRYSTAL CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2022
CITY HALL BUILDING COMMUNITY ROOM
100 E ROBINSON STREET**

Mayor Todd Wiens called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Members present: Councilors Brett Hanson, Gina Cooper, Michael Turgeon, and Susan Gengler.

Staff members present: Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator; Sara Raisbeck, Office Assistant; Megan Hutchens, Administrative Assistant; Christopher Kennedy, City Attorney; Joe Flavin, Blue Earth County Police Department; Jeff Becker, Lake Crystal Fire Department; Rhonda Ingebritson, Lake Crystal Ambulance Department; Austin Smith, Police Department; and Brian Sarff, City Engineer.

Others present: Grace Kranz, Lake Crystal Tribune; Gary Reed, Lake Crystal Fire Department; Madison Smith and Audrey Smith, the wife and daughter of Officer Smith.

Staff Reports

Ambulance Department Update:

Ingebritson reported EMR Charlie Frable has now begun his driving training. Rhonda Ingebritson attended a meeting with Mayo to discuss employment turnover and staffing capacity in the area. As of right now, Mayo is at about 42% employment capacity. Council needs to approve the job description so the position opening can be posted to the public. Attorney Kennedy suggested to keep this moving forward, council should motion to allow approval by Grafstrom.

Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to allow Administrator Grafstrom approve the Lake Crystal Ambulance job description, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

Fire Department Update:

Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education (MBFTE) issued the department a training reimbursement grant of \$8,100.00 for approved training from July 01, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The training reimbursement covers 27 firefighters at \$300.00 each. All new door locks throughout the fire hall have been installed. A hose bed cover is requested to reduce safety concerns of hoses coming loose off the truck during transportation; potentially causing damage, injury, or loss of the hose. The truck was built before hose bed covers were required. Cost estimate is \$970.00. Approval is not needed from the Council since the cost is under \$1,000.00.

Police Department Update:

Lieutenant Joe Flavin presented Officer Smith with a letter commendation and Mayor Todd Wiens presented a certificate for his life-saving efforts on September 26, 2022. There were no other reports for the department.

Street & Parks Department Update:

Street Superintendent Dean Tibbetts was not present at the meeting and provided a written report in packet. The written report noted the crew is continuing fall cleanup and prepping for the winter. W W Blacktopping, Inc replaced manholes after digging and will finish blacktopping work. CenterPoint Energy will soon be adding a new gas main down the alley by The Lakes Bar and Grill. This will provide new services to the Lakes Bar and Grill, Police Department, and Electric Department. Barga Inc. will be finishing the crack sealing on several streets and the Lake Crystal Area Recreational Center.

City Attorney Update:

No report.

City Administrator Update:

City Administrator Angela Grafstrom provided a written report. The written report included an introduction to the Comprehensive Sidewalk Plan and Capital Improvement Plan City Engineer Brian Sarff will present. The SW Street Project will be soon be complete. The project will have leftover funds of approximately \$600,000.00. This money can be applied toward the existing bond, spent on another qualified project or utility improvements. It was presented to the council that a future decision on the funds will need to be made once the project officially closes. Grafstrom addressed several action items on the agenda including dates for the Truth in Taxation meeting, Fire and Ambulance work sessions, and the Canvas of elections. She also addressed additional actions items: the updates to the employee handbook, participation in the Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area, ambulance pay frequency, Fire Department Travel Request, and fire department staffing.

The Ambulance salary study was completed by David Drown Associates. Angela and Ambulance Director Rhonda Ingebritson will review and develop a better payment schedule for 2024. The rough draft will be presented during the Ambulance Work Session with City Attorney Chris Kennedy and City Auditor Greg Burkhardt. Once all details have been finalized, the ambulance salary will be presented to the council for approval.

Grafstrom provided information from her attendance at the launch of the Minnesota Southwest Regional Hub. Grafstrom recommends continued participation in the group as it provides access to different pools of funding and resources for economic development among the several member counties. The group also encourages growth of new and current businesses in communities. Meetings are scheduled every other month with the upcoming December meeting being held in Hutchinson, MN and the

February meeting to be held in New Ulm, MN.

City Engineer Update:

Brian Sarff presented the Council with the Comprehensive Sidewalk Plan from Bolton & Menk. The evaluation included comprehensive research of sidewalk areas that needed improvements, a guideline to prioritize projects, and maps of city and county sidewalk's current conditions. The estimated cost for reconstruction is \$487,000.00 of non-compliant sidewalk areas, including ramps, barriers, excessive cracking. The comprehensive study reviewed 9.7 miles of sidewalk

The Capital Improvement Plan was originally presented to Council on August 15, 2022. Sarff noted there were not changes. The City has 8 current projects in need of funding. How to fund each project will be discussed at a later date. Crystal Gardens Sub #8 originally started with a private developer. The city purchased the land and is in phase 1 of development. Development concepts have been presented to the EDA. Next steps include preliminary engineering and construction documentation. It has been discussed to potentially use leftover funds from the SW Street Project for Crystal Gardens. Grafstrom will follow up with the bond council to make sure the timeline is met. The goal is to present the project and funding options to the Planning Commission at the beginning of January.

Consent Agenda:

(The following agenda items are considered to be non-controversial and routine in nature. They will be handled with one motion of the City Council. Councilors may request that specific items be removed from the Consent Agenda and be acted upon separately)

1. Minutes October 3, 2022 Regular Meeting
2. Payment of bills totaling \$496,199.13
 - Payments reviewed by Councilor Cooper and Councilor Hanson prior to the meeting.
3. Resolution 2232: Accepting Donations of \$1,500.00 from Crystal Waters Project for the Watershed sign
4. Schedule Special Council Meeting to Canvas on Election (between afternoon of 16 thru the 18th)
 - This item was moved to Action Items.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve items 1 through 3 on the consent agenda, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Action Items:

Approve Capital Improvement Plan

Council reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan. There was no further discussion.

Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to approve the Capital Improvement Plan, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

Approve Sidewalk Plan

Brian Sarff, City Engineer presented the council with the 2022 Comprehensive Sidewalk Evaluation from Bolton & Menk.

Motion made by Councilor Gengler to approve the Sidewalk Plan, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Ordinance 2022-04 Amending Title IX, Chapter 90.04 Relative to Farm Animals by Allowing Chickens-Keeping, Transporting, Treatment and Housing (2nd)

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve Ordinance 2022-04 Amending Title IX, Chapter 90.04 Relative to Farm Animals by Allowing Chickens-Keeping, Transporting, Treatment and Housing, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and passed with 4 ayes and 1 nay by Councilor Turgeon.

As part of the discussion of Ordinance 2022-04, Attorney Kennedy stated the council needs to establish the fee. The suggested fee is \$75.00. Kennedy presented Resolution 2233 Establishing a Chicken Permit Application fee.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve Resolution 2233 Establishing a Chicken Permit Application Fee of \$75.00, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

Set Truth in Taxation Meeting

The Truth in Taxation meeting will be scheduled for December, 5th at 7:30 P.M. as a special public meeting and the City Council meeting will follow. There was no further discussion from council.

Motion made by Councilor Gengler to approve setting the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing for December 5th at 7:30 pm, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Approve Update Employee Handbook: (Personnel Policy Manual)

Council was presented with an updated copy of the Personnel Policy Manual. City Administrator Angela Grafstrom and City Attorney Chris Kennedy reviewed the handbook and updated language and terminology to policies to make them consistent between departments and to comply with current laws. Policies that were previously separate from the handbook have been integrated into the handbook to eliminate extra paperwork and signatures. The updated Personnel Policy Manual will be sent to all current employees to sign.

Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to approve the updated Personnel Policy Manual, motion seconded by Councilor Gengler and carried unanimously.

Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA) Level of Participation

As part of the State of Minnesota One Watershed, One Plan Program, RCRCA has reached out to the City of Lake Crystal to ask the level of participation they would like to have in their water planning efforts as the City of Lake Crystal is affected by the RCRCA. Administrator Grafstrom recommended to the Council that the city should be an active participant of the program. Council decided to participate in the program and attend necessary meetings.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve active participation in Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Set Canvassing Board Meeting

The election canvassing must be held between the afternoon of November 16 and end of day November 18. They must have a quorum. Mayor Todd Wiens, Councilors Gengler and Hanson stated they would be able to attend a meeting on November 16 at 4 pm. The date was chosen to meet the time frame for canvassing of the election and to coincide with the Fire and Ambulance Work Sessions. There was no further discussion from council.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to schedule Election Canvassing Meeting for November 16, 2022 at 4 pm, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Recognition of Officer Austin Smith for Lifesaving Procedure

No motion needed for recognition of Officer Austin Smith. Letter of Commendation was presented by Lieutenant Joe Flavin and Mayor Todd Wiens presented Officer Smith

a certificate from the City of Lake Crystal.

Delta Cleaning Bid Proposal

The council was presented with two bids for the sediment delta cleaning along the channel into Crystal Lake. The bids received were from Rickert Excavating for \$122,000 and Holtmeier Construction for \$63,930.00. Once city council has approved, the proposal will move on to the Blue Earth County Board meeting on October 25, 2022 for approval.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve the bid from Holtmeier Construction of \$63,930 for the Delta Cleaning, motion seconded by Councilor Gengler and carried unanimously.

New fiscal year Ambulance Paid Monthly

In an effort to retain staff, Ambulance Director Ingebritson had discussed with Administrator Grafstrom the idea of paying ambulance volunteers monthly. Grafstrom met Finance Director Teri Thompson-Hobart to see what would work for her. To accommodate City Hall staff, ambulance monthly pay will run from the 1st to the 31st each month beginning in December. Ingebritson must submit ambulance payroll to the finance director no later than the first Thursday of each month and pay will be issued on the second Thursday of every month. For 2022, the ambulance is paid twice a year. Prior to 2022, the ambulance was paid once per year. There was no further discussion from council.

Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to approve paying the ambulance department monthly for the new fiscal year, motion seconded by Councilor Gengler and carried unanimously.

Ambulance Resignation of Kelly VanRooyen Schultz

Kelly VanRooyen Schultz submitted her resignation to the ambulance department on October 6, 2022 effective immediately. Kelly began her service in 2019 and has enjoyed working for the department and the opportunities given to her. There was no further discussion from council.

Motion made by Councilor Gengler to approve Kelly VanRooyen Schultz's resignation from the Ambulance Department, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

Approve New Ambulance Officers

The ambulance department would like council to approve the following officers for ambulance: Chief: Michael Giles (Term 11/22-10/24), Secretary: Aaron Mumford (Term 11/22-10/24), and Safety/Training Officer: Nicki Mays (Term 11/22-10/23: special election to fill a vacated seat).

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve ambulance officers: Michael Giles as Chief, Aaron Mumford as Secretary, Nicki Mays as Safety/Training Officer , motion seconded by Councilor Turgeon and carried unanimously.

Fire Dept Travel Request over \$1000

Fire Chief Jeff Becker presented the council with a travel request form for himself and fire fighter Gary Reed to attend the Fire Chief Conference on October 19, 2022 through October 22, 2022 in Duluth, MN. Total estimated costs are \$2,272.00 for lodging, transportation, meals, and registration.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve the Fire Department travel of \$2,272.00, motion seconded by Councilor Turgeon and carried unanimously.

Fire Dept Resignation of Tim Smith

Firefighter Tim Smith submitted an email to Fire Chief Jeff Becker on October 13, 2022 discussing his upcoming resignation to the Lake Crystal Fire Department effective January 12, 2023. Tim has provided 33 years of service to the fire department. Official paperwork has not been provided at this time and a motion will be made at a future meeting.

No Motion needed from council at this time due to missing paperwork.

Information/Discussion Items

Income and Expense Statements:

Income and expense statements were not provided at this meeting. Going forward, they will be provided and discussed quarterly.

Additional Fire Dept Staff

Chief Becker would like council to approve Jeremiah Colon and Austin Watkins as the 26th and 27th fireperson. It will help fill the roster with the upcoming resignation of Tim

Smith in the beginning of 2023. Becker does not want to wait as training begins again in November. Council began the discussion of approving the two firefighters and the current fire department roster; however, the meeting was interrupted by an update from the Ambulance Department. Council had intentions of moving forward with the motion of approving the two firefighters, but due to the interruption, the meeting continued with the scheduled agenda and adjourned for the evening. The Fire Department roster is currently set at 25 permanent firefighters. 26 and 27 were temporary positions. Grafstrom noted for clarification she would like the motion to state the roster is permanently moved from 25 to 27.

Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to approve permanently setting the fire department roster at 27, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Set Council Work Sessions with Fire and Ambulance

Grafstrom provided the dates that worked for Kennedy and Burkhardt. Council is planning to set the meeting to start at 4:30 with Ambulance from 4:30 to 5:15 and Fire at 5:15 to 6 pm.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to set a council work session regarding fire and ambulance for November 16, 2022 at 4:30 pm, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Ambulance Salary Study

Grafstrom and Ingebritson were planning to simplify the ambulance salary schedule for inclusion in the 2024 budget. Council asked if it could be ready for the work session. Ingebritson will have something ready for review and discussion at the work session set for November 16 at 4:30 pm.

Upcoming meetings and events:

- Regular Meeting for November 7 Cancelled for Election Prep
- Election Canvas date scheduled for November 16, 2022 at 7:30 pm
- Council Work Session scheduled for November 16, 2022 at 4:30 pm
 - Meet with Ambulance Director at 4:30 pm.
 - Meet with Fire Chief at 5:15 pm.
- Regular meeting of City Council Monday, November 21, 7:30 pm.
- Truth in Taxation Meeting, scheduled for December 5, 7:30 pm.

Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Lake Crystal City Council, Councilor Hanson motioned to adjourn the regular meeting of October 17, 2022, motion seconded by Councilor Turgeon and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Todd Wiens, Mayor

Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator