

Mayor Edwards called the Board of Appeal and Equalization to order at 5:30 p.m. Present were: Mayor Connie Edwards, Matt Schutte, Kevin Knutson, and Cheryl Sanden. Also present were: Larry Jerviss, Chris Peterson, Randy Thesing, Ed Jacobs, Audrey Hegland, Marlene Schultz, Carol Meeks, Ellyn Baumann, Karla and Hein Bloem, Larry Graf, Cindy Cresswell of the Auditor's Office, Margaret Carlson, Ethan Scheck and Angie Rodenburg of the Fillmore County Journal.

Cindy Cresswell provided an overview of the property valuation for townships and cities, as well as the appeal process available to all property owners. Included in the report were current land values, property sales and building permits, assessed values, tax capacity summary, etc. Cresswell stated that average values of properties decreased 11%. One individual questioned the assessment on their property; Cresswell will follow up on this. A complete report is available at City Hall.

Mayor Edwards called the Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance; there were no corrections or additions to the agenda and no public comment.

Hometown Pride – Planters: Margaret Carlson expressed her thanks to Larry Jerviss for all his years of service to the City and also to Kevin Knutson for mentioning the Hometown Pride group in his address at the Ace Annual Meeting. She said the group will be purchasing six 27" round cement aggregate flower planters to be placed on Cedar and Grant Streets, and requested permission to place these at the sites selected. The cost of the planters is \$250 each and some have already been paid for by individuals or businesses. They would be placed nearer to buildings to avoid snow plows, etc. Carlson will check to see if liners for the planters are advisable.

The City will be again placing flower baskets on the light poles; this year there will be two baskets per pole along the same route as last year.

Lions Club request for access road to band shell: The Lions would like to build a paved road down to the band shell for ease in walking, handicapped accessibility and transporting equipment, etc., possibly using asphalt or cement as a material. Council felt that the road must be created in such a way that does not detract from the aesthetics of the park. It was suggested the architects for the International Owl Center be asked to share their expertise and recommendations. Also suggested was that a cart path be considered instead of a full road. The City would hire a contractor to oversee the project. Jerviss was asked to inform the Lions that while the Council is interested in their suggestion, more information is needed. Schutte, Sanden and Peterson volunteered to help with this project.

Park and Recreation Board composition: The Minnesota Basic Code (Section 31.50) calls for five committee members from the resident population of the city. After discussion at the March 2014 meeting, the Board recommends the language be changed to "The Board shall consist of 5-7 members, with at least half from the resident population of the city, to be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council." MOTION BY SANDEN, SECONDED BY KNUTSON TO CHANGE THE LANGUAGE OF THE PARK AND RECREATION BOARD COMPOSITION TO READ "THE BOARD SHALL CONSIST OF 5-7 MEMBERS, WITH AT LEAST HALF FROM THE RESIDENT POPULATION OF THE CITY, TO BE APPOINTED BY THE MAYOR WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE CITY COUNCIL"; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

When new members join the Park and Rec Board, they are often unknown to the Council. To provide background information prior to their appointment, a form will be developed for them to complete and shared with the Council. In addition, they will be asked to attend a Council meeting and be introduced. The newest Park and Rec Board member for Council appointment is Angie Weisbrod who is replacing Chrissy Feller. MOTION MADE BY KNUTSON, SECONDED BY SANDEN TO APPOINT ANGIE WEISBROD TO THE PARK & REC BOARD; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Summer Rec Update: Ethan Scheck presented an overview of the program so far, stating it's going well; there are enough youth registered now for boys and girls 14-Under Softball Teams, and will be also offering tennis camps. The

family cap has been increased from \$125 to \$135. The response for workers for Summer Rec has been very good, with 30 applying for work. The class descriptions have been posted on the web, which has reduced the amount of copying necessary. Registration will be held on April 23.

Water Supply – Radium notice: The City has received notice from the Mn Dept. of Health regarding higher than acceptable radium readings (combined radium 226+228; City's level was 6.1 picoCuries per liter of water at Well 1 and 7.3 pCi/L at Well #3). The City will need to come up with a plan of action within 90 days. The City will hire an engineering consultant experienced in this field to determine the best method to address these levels. The City will check with other cities as to what they have done. Some options may be to build a new filtration system or drill to a different aquifer. The levels reported are not an emergency situation; residents need not be concerned and should be assured that the City is addressing the issue. Names of consultants will be available at the next Council meeting for their consideration.

Resolution – Special Assessment Deferment Policy: Peterson stated that the current deferment policy needed to be changed to reflect the recent state law; she has updated the policy and reviewed the resolution for deferment of special assessments. MOTION MADE BY KNUTSON, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE TO PASS RESOLUTION NO. 2014-2 POLICY ON DEFERMENT OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. A letter requesting a deferment has been received from a resident stating that the assessment has caused his property taxes to increase to a point where it has caused a hardship. Peterson pointed out that even if the assessment is deferred, the interest and the deferment must be paid. After further discussion, including a review of required deferment criteria MOTION MADE BY KNUTSON, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE TO PASS RESOLUTION NO. 2014-3 TO DEFER SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR PARCEL 24.0408.000; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Transfer to Nature Center Fund: A shortfall of \$14,255.91 has occurred in the Nature Center operational budget due to fewer contributions received; therefore a transfer of funds from the General Fund will be necessary. MOTION BY SCHUTTE, SECONDED BY KNUTSON TO TRANSFER \$14,255.91 FROM CITY FUNDS TO THE NATURE CENTER OPERATIONAL FUND; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OHV Resolution – Reset Grant Funds: The Grant-In Aid Agreement for Off Highway Vehicle Trails needs to be renewed with the DNR. MOTION BY KNUTSON, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE TO PASS RESOLUTION NO. 2014-4 TO SPONSOR THE OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE TRAIL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ordinances – Order Public Hearing for May 2014: Peterson presented drafts of six updated ordinances for Council review. Ordinances presented were: Trees, Fences, Weeds, Firearms, Maximum Impervious and Nonconforming Uses. Peterson will finalize the ordinances and have them available for the required public hearing which will be held on May 12, 5:30 p.m, prior to the regularly scheduled Council meeting.

Community Clean-Up Weekend: Last year's similar event went very well and is worth doing again. Cost for two roll-offs was \$800 from Richards Sanitation for two days. The Planning Commission will be coordinate this project. Included with notification of the Clean-Up Day, will be a reminder of the Paint Pick-Up Day on May 21.

Minutes: MOTION TO APPROVE THE MARCH 10 MINUTES MADE BY SCHUTTE, SECONDED BY KNUTSON; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Department Reports:

Police: Emergency Center: Knutson and Chief Breault will be meeting on this and report back to Council. The new squad car has arrived and will be lettered and new equipment installed.

Maintenance: One pump needs to be replaced by fall. New truck has not come yet. Summer help is needed and Peterson/Thesing will be bringing a recommendation to the Council at the May meeting.

Library: Gibson-Gasset distributed the monthly report which included information on SELCO's new online public catalog, Enterprise. Houston County librarians met with SELCO representatives to discuss strategies for

renegotiating their contract with the County Commissioners. Gasset is working with HARC to establish a permanent Owl Prowl around town. Other portions of her report, including circulation statistics, are available at City Hall.

Nature Center: Monthly report included in packet. Total cash income was \$388.03 with other non-cash donations being made. International Festival of Owls had 1,700 people attend this year, and had visitors from throughout the US and Israel/Finland with good media coverage. Also provided was an update on the International Owl Center and other activities performed by Bloem, including her application for the Bush Community Innovations grant.

Planning Commission: Meeting minutes were included in packet for review, including an update on the Community Center funding, a report on the hazardous or substandard building inspection that was done by CMS, and information on revisions of zoning and ordinances. Also included were minutes from the April 7 meeting where discussion focused on a possible site for a new business that is interested in starting up in Houston.

Financial Report/Review of Bills: No reimbursement has as yet been received from the DNR for the purchase of the Houge property. MOTION MADE BY SANDEN, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE, TO PAY THE BILLS; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. A second MOTION WAS MADE BY SCHUTTE, SECONDED BY KNUTSON TO PAY THE FLOW-RITE BILL FOR JETTING FROZEN SEWER LINES; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 8:30 PM MADE BY SANDEN, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.