

Lanesboro City Council
Monday, February 6, 2012
Council Chambers at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Steve Rahn, Joe O'Connor, Keith Eide, Ceil Allen and Tom Dybing

Absent:

Visitors: Jade Wangen, Lisa Brainard, Robert Thompson, Mike and Norine Ask, Harriet and John Dollar, Bob Connelly and Andy Drake

REGULAR MEETING:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rahn.

O'Connor made the motion to approve the agenda, with the addition of Andy Drake to discuss replacement of the street sweeper, second by Dybing, motion carried.

The meeting minutes for the Regular Meeting of January 3, 2012 were approved with one addition. In paragraph A. Robert Thompson-Whittier Assessments, Allen asked that the words "per linear foot assessment for water main improvements" be added after \$17.33. Allen made the motion to approve the minutes as amended, Eide second, motion carried.

PERSONS WITH BUSINESS BEFORE THE COUNCIL:

- A. Robert Thompson-Whittier Assessment:** Thompson expressed concern about the "fairness" of the City's assessment policy. He stated that all street projects will be different especially in terms of the utilities work required. He doesn't believe the City can afford to replace water mains throughout the Brooklyn area. He also challenged the cost of Whittier street repairs versus Maple Drive. Dybing stated that water lines were in place when Maple Drive properties were purchased and included in the sale price. O'Connor stated that the City's engineer had responded that the scope of work required on Whittier exceeded the new street construction on Maple Drive. Allen and Rahn reminded Thompson and other Whittier residents that they were provided an opportunity to appeal their assessment to the Courts. Thompson responded that he had done so but was not satisfied with the process or outcome. Allen then asked Thompson what he wanted. He stated that he wants the \$17.33 assessment for water main improvements removed and \$10 for the storm sewer assessment because he did not have any storm sewer work done on his end of the street. He feels the City Assessment Policy is unfair and that these types of utility projects should be paid by all property owners. O'Connor stated he would review assessment policies from several cities and report back to the Council and concerned residents on his findings. Council members and residents in attendance agreed to his offer.
- B. Dave Henessey and Tara Johnson:** Henessey provided a summary of Library achievements for 2011. He praised Tara Johnson for her leadership in all areas especially in the recent Library renovation. Allen reiterated recognition of Johnson's accomplishments and presented her with a gift certificate on behalf of the City for her extraordinary leadership during the renovation project.

COMMITTEE/COMMISSION MEETINGS:

- A. Public Utilities Commission (PUC), February 6, 2012-O'Connor:** O'Connor reported on four major topics:
- a. **Automatic Metering:** PUC approved the acquisition of new water meters for Lanesboro properties as the first phase of the overall metering initiative. These meters will work with new electric meters. Both meters will be read from a remote location and are projected to result in more accurate metering, identification of water line leaks, and reduce man hours associated with obtaining readings on a monthly basis. Utility Department employees will work with Tri County Electric (TEC) to procure and install new electric meters.
 - b. **Water Quality.** A representative of the MN Rural Water Association conducted a site visit of the City water system in late January. It was recommended that a request for proposal (RFP) be issued for a preliminary engineering study of the entire system to determine the best course of action to provide quality drinking water for the long term. The study will determine if a new well, a water treatment facility, or other modifications are needed. The PUC approved release of an RFP as recommended. Water quality will continue to be monitored and reported to residents on a periodic basis.
 - c. **Dam Renovation.** O'Connor reviewed recent newspaper articles on the subject and read the bill Representative Greg Davids will introduce on 2.9.2012. The proposed legislation reads, "A renovation of the Lanesboro Dam in Fillmore County is not subject to the requirements of or review by the State Historic Preservation Office". O'Connor further stated that the PUC does not believe that Lanesboro can enter into a loan obligation for \$1.35M. City Administrator will be at the State Capitol on 2.9.2012 and testify on the issue if requested. U.S. Representative Tim Walz's office has contacted the City and is investigating options to assist in resolving the situation and also to identify additional funding.
 - d. **Tri County Electric Contract.** In response to public questions, O'Connor reviewed aspects of the new contract to include, the City is purchasing power from TEC rather than Dairyland Power; new services will be available such as group purchasing, economic development programs and a rate study; and, there is no reduction in the workload of current public utility employees.
- B. Library: January 10, 2012-Allen:** Allen reported that library use has increased since the renovation and was heartened by the families using the Rose Bell Room and teens doing homework on computers.
- C. HPC: January 26, 2012-O'Connor:** O'Connor reported that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) consultant had recently visited the City. A preliminary report with drawings and designs was reviewed. A final report is forthcoming.
- D. EDA: February 1, 2012-Eide:** Eide reported that Kim Fournier, Lanesboro Chamber of Commerce, attended the meeting to discuss the ongoing joint initiative to develop resources to answer the question, "How to Start a Business in Lanesboro?" The Chamber would like to add three members to this work group. Kieth Baker and Scott Taylor of the EDA agreed to share one position. The Grocery Store LLC approached the EDA asking if the City would be interested in

purchasing the vacant Village Food building. Mayor Rahn also met with this group on this issue. He feels the City has limited interest in the matter until the building is demolished and other uses identified. Other Council members expressed the same opinion on this matter. The LLC is also interested in the possibility of qualifying for a Small City Grant to assist with demolition.

- E. League of MN Cities Leadership Conference: January 27 & 28, 2012-Allen:** Allen reported key learning's from the conference. Navigating the New Normal: MN Local Government Innovation & Redesign Guide is a free online resource for finding new and better ways to deliver public services. She recommends Council members read this document and the Lanesboro 20/20 Plan in preparation for a special Council meeting to discuss new approaches to address the challenges cities of all sizes face. Council members agreed in principle with the recommendation.

HOUSEKEEPING:

- A. Paying of the Bills:** Dybing made a motion to pay bill as presented, second Eide, motion carried.
- B. Small Cities Grant for property in 2005:** O'Connor made a motion to table this agenda item until more detailed information is obtained from the interested party, Rahn second, motion carried.
- C. Library Board Appointment:** Allen made a motion to approve the appointment of Kay Wold to the Library Board, Dybing second, motion carried.
- D. Art Center Liquor Licenses for 2012:** Allen made a motion to approve liquor license requests for 2012, Dybing second, motion carried.
- E. Public Hearing for 2012 Small Cities Grant Application:** O'Connor reported a public hearing is required as part of the application process. Rahn made a motion to hold a public hearing on this subject at 5:30 p.m., March 5, 2012, second Eide, motion carried.
- F. Street Sweeper:** Andy Drake presented a review of the current street sweeper condition. It is a 1994 model and annual maintenance costs are rising. It has approximately 7400 hours of usage. He presented three options for leasing with payments for five years. Option 1 is a new NP Dual with annual payments of \$34,920. Option two is a 2010 NS Dual with 500 hours of use and annual payment of \$26,665. Third is a 2006 NP Dual with 1300 hours of use and annual payments of \$16,493. Option three was recommended because it is a hydraulic system and the lower cost. Allen inquired about equipment sharing with another city. Drake is not in favor of this option because small cities will likely need to use the equipment at the same time and the risk of using equipment from another city and being responsible for repairs if it fails. O'Connor reported that funds were available in the Street Department 2012 budget for the initial payment but that it will become a budget line item going forward. Eide made a motion to approve the purchase of a 2006 NP Dual street sweeper, O'Connor second, motion carried.

Adjourn Regular Meeting: Dybing made a motion to adjourn, second Eide, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe O'Connor
City Council Member