

Lanesboro City Council
Regular Meeting
Monday, December 1st, 2014
5:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers

Present: Keith Eide, Steve Rahn, Ceil Allen, Tom Dybing and Tom Smith

Absent: None

Visitors: Tom Manion, City Attorney

Regular Meeting:

Mayor Rahn called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

- A. Agenda:** Mayor Rahn asked if there were any additional items to be added to the agenda. Administrator Todd advised the Council that he would like to add the DNR Dam Inspection report, Eric Sutter Childhood Cancer Awareness Month request, and a request from the Street Superintendent to replace a flex wing, rotary mower to the agenda under miscellaneous. Council Member Smith indicated that he wished to add discussion of the fire department budget. Council Member Eide made a motion to adopt the agenda with the additions to be discussed under miscellaneous. The motion was seconded by Council Member Dybing. Motion carried all in favor.
- B. Minutes:** Council Member Allen moved to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting from November 3rd, 2014. Motion seconded by Council Member Dybing. Motion carried all in favor.
- C. Special Meeting Minutes:** Council Member Dybing moved to approve the minutes from the Canvassing Board meeting that took place on November 13th, 2014. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allen. Motion carried all in favor.

Committee/Commission Reports:

- A. Library:** Library Board Chair David Hennessey and Board Member Keith Eckstrom were on hand to brief the Council on Library activities for the month of November. Hennessey stated that the mural was nearing completion and 75 people showed up to paint a portion of it. He deemed it a public relations success. Hennessey also stated that the board conducted an employee evaluation on Library Director Tara Johnson. He also indicated that there was a need to fill a vacant position on the Library Board and that Angie Taylor was willing to fill it. Administrator Todd advised Hennessey to have her contact City Hall to acquire a committee application prior to being appointed to the board.
- B. Ambulance:** Ambulance Director Lee Peterson was unable to attend the Council meeting and indicated to the City Administrator that he had nothing to report.

- C. **Public Utilities:** PUC Member Theresa Coleman was on hand to advise the Council regarding the meeting on November 17th, 2014. Coleman stated that the PUC was looking at possible sewer rate adjustments and other options to bring the sewer utility into a positive fund balance. Coleman also indicated that the PUC, in conjunction with the City Administrator was working on finalizing the budget for 2015. Coleman also stated the Utilities Commission was working through the latest DNR Dam Assessment document.
- D. **HPC:** Administrator Todd advised the Council that the HPC approved a permit for window repair and replacement for Mrs. B's Inn at their meeting on November 6th, 2014.
- E. **Planning and Zoning:** Council Member Dybing indicated that the Planning and Zoning Commission also approved the permit for window replacement for Mrs. B's Inn via e-meeting on November 19th, 2014
- F. **Park Board:** The Park Board made a recommendation to move forward with the Bunny Trail project and pursue a grant from the DNR to that end. Likewise, the Board approved the expenditure for the repair of the chair lift and dumbwaiter at their meeting on November 25th, 2014.
- G. **Lanesboro Chamber of Commerce:** Executive Director Dee Slinde provided the monthly update of Chamber Activities to the Council. She indicated that the Winter Windows Live event was a success and that the event was covered by KTTC News.
- H. **Fire Department:** Chief Rob Wagner was not available to attend this meeting and there was no report provided.

Mayor Steve Rahn Closed the Regular Meeting at 5:59 p.m.

Truth and Taxation Meeting (Mayor Rahn Called to Order at 6:00 p.m.)

- A. **Property Tax Levy and Budget Discussion:** Administrator Todd advised the Council that the current budget proposal percentage increase was reduced from 1.9% to 1.4% after finding a way to cut back a few line items. Todd advised that the items requested to be increased included over-time budget for winter snow removal operations so that the City did not have to use reserve funds should this winter season see large amounts of snowfall. Likewise, Administrator Todd was seeking merit increases for City staff, citing the hard work and dedication of the City employees and the last time they were provided a merit increase was nearly six years ago. Todd advised the Council that the final tax levy for the City of Lanesboro would be at \$509,463.00 which represented 98.857% of the taxable tax base. Lanesboro, compared to other jurisdictions around the area ranked fourth from the top in terms of 2015 tax rate. Total revenues for 2015 are \$696,304 which includes other sources of revenue other than tax levy.
- B. **Public Invited to Speak and Ask Questions Regarding Budget and Levy:** No public input was generated and no one was present from the public.
- C. **Answer Questions about the Budget and Levy:** No questions were generated about the budget and levy.
- D. **Final Council Comments and Discussion:** Council Member Tom Smith stated that the employees have been afforded cost of living increases (COLA) in the past six years and he questioned why a merit increase was needed. Todd advised that the COLA increases were generally a 2% or 2.5% increase and often did not compare to the actual cost of inflation as the national average for inflation was nearly 7%. Council Member Dybing stated that after taxes, a COLA increase often is reduced to a percentage well below

2.5%. Todd stated that a merit increase is just that: Based on merit and that the Council had a chance to show their appreciation for the dedication and performance of the Lanesboro staff.

Mayor Steve Rahn Closed the Truth and Taxation Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Steve Rahn Called the Regular Meeting of the City Council to Order at 6:31 p.m.

Regular Business:

- A. Adoption of the 2015 Lanesboro City Budget:** Council Member Dybing made a motion to approve the Lanesboro City Budget as presented. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allen. Motion carried 4-1 with Council Member Tom Smith voting no.
- B. Resolution 2014-16 Certifying Final 2015 Tax Levy to County Auditor/Treasurer:** Council Member Tom Dybing made a motion to approve the resolution certifying the 2015 final tax levy. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allen. Motion carried 4-1 with Council Member Tom Smith voting no.
- C. Accounts Payable:** Mayor Steve Rahn made a motion to approve the payables as presented. Motion was seconded by Council Member Dybing. Motion carried all in favor.
- D. Ken Graner-Lot Split-Lot C, Circle Drive Subdivision:** Ken Graner was on hand to ask the Council to approve a simple lot split between he and Rick Lamon in the Circle Drive Subdivision. Mr. Graner provided a map and legal description of the lot in question and it was provided to the Council. Mr. Graner stated that the lot in question would not be developed by either party and would simply be divided equally between adjoining land owners. Motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve the request for a simple lot split predicated on the fact that the lot would not be developed in the future. Motion was seconded by Council Member Eide. Motion carried all in favor.
- E. Autumn Johnson-DNR Grant for Trail System in Sylvan Park:** Autumn Johnson was on hand to request approval for proceeding with a grant to develop and repair the Bunny Trail system in Sylvan Park. Johnson stated that the DNR had a grant which provided up to \$150,000 for a trail system within a municipally owned park. The grant stipulated a 50% matching contribution from the municipality; however, the match could be in-kind or labor donations from volunteers. The Council advised that the issues of land ownership and municipal liability should be addressed before proceeding. City Attorney Manion stated that there was a state statute that would provide recreational immunity for the City should we decide to proceed. Manion did advise that perhaps the City could look into easements from the landowners on which the trail may encroach. Motion was made by Council Member Dybing to proceed with the grant as long as the liability issue was resolved and the adjoining land owners agree to an easement. Motion was seconded by Council Member Allen. Motion carried all in favor.
- F. Ordinance-Title V Chapter 505-Garbage and Refuse Rates-Adjustment:** Administrator Todd advised the Council that the City's contracted trash service had increased the recycling rates they charged the City. Todd indicated that the rates went up by \$.25. Todd advised that the discrepancy in the budget would result in a loss to the City of approximately \$3,000. Todd recommended that the Council approve a \$.25 increase to \$.85 per month of the recycling rates to shore up the difference. Motion was made by

Council Member Dybing to allow the increase in recycling rates of \$.25 to \$8.05 per month. Motion was seconded by Mayor Rahn. Motion carried all in favor.

- G. Community Center-Dumbwaiter Repair:** The Council was advised of the cost to repair the dumbwaiter that had been damaged during a scheduled event hosted in the Community Center. During a wedding over the summer months, someone had utilized the dumbwaiter and had caused significant damage to the system. The final bill for repair was \$2,618.00. Administrator Todd advised the Council that the Park Board had approved the expenditure for the repair and was recommending the Council approve the repair as well. Motion was made by Council Member Dybing to approve the repair to the dumbwaiter. Motion was seconded by Mayor Rahn. Motion carried all in favor.
- H. Community Center Chair Lift/Elevator Repair and Compliance:** Administrator Todd advised the Council that another repair to the Community Center was approved by the Park Board. The switch that users of the chair lift engage to move the lift up and down was broken and the lift could only be utilized intermittently. Todd advised the Council that the same company who repaired the dumbwaiter (Access Lifts of Eagan, Minnesota) also repaired the elevator/chair lift. The company did not charge the City to repair the chair lift. However, the company advised that the lift will need some items to insure the lift is in compliance with state code. Todd advised that the lift is in need of a battery back-up pack, a load bearing plaque, and an emergency telephone. Total cost to the City would be around \$500.00. Motion was made by Council Member Dybing to approve the expenditure to insure the elevator/chair lift remains in compliance with state code and to purchase the battery pack, load bearing plaque, and emergency telephone. Motion was seconded by Mayor Rahn. Motion carried all in favor.
- I. Special Request-Childhood Cancer Awareness Month-Erik Sutter:** Administrator Todd advised the City Council that a very special citizen was on hand to make a special request of the Council. Erik Sutter addressed the Council and advised them that September was National Childhood Cancer Awareness month. Mr. Sutter requested the council allow him to place gold ribbon on the light posts, placing gold ribbon on the fence by the football field, and asking business owners to place gold ribbon by their cash registers to show their support for this cause. The Council thanked Mr. Sutter for his contribution to the community and for his ideas regarding this very special cause. Mr. Sutter also informed the Council that he is a survivor of leukemia and that this cause was very important to him. The Council provided him a letter of appreciation officially endorsing his ideas for the month of September and invited him back to a City Council meeting on September 7th, 2015 where an official proclamation will be read in his honor declaring September as Childhood Council Awareness Month. Council Member Eide made a motion to endorse Mr. Sutter's ideas for placing gold ribbon around town and to officially invite him back in September to a subsequent Council meeting to have an honorary proclamation read in his name. Motion was seconded by Council Member Dybing. Motion carried all in favor.
- J. Miscellaneous:** Administrator Todd advised the Council regarding the DNR annual dam inspection report that was delivered to the City Office. Todd advised the Council that the DNR has concluded that the Lanesboro Dam is deteriorating at a rapid rate and that the level of deterioration is worse than was reported in 2014. A copy of the report was provided in the Council packets submitted for this meeting which showed photographs of the areas in which the most damage was recorded. Todd advised that he has delivered a copy of the report to both Senator Jeremy Miller and State Representative Greg Davids along with an e-mail reaffirming their support for this project in the upcoming legislative session. Todd also advised that he will be reaching out to both the

EDA and Chamber to try and publicize this issue to raise awareness to try and move it forward.

Administrator Todd advised the Council that Street Superintendent Drake indicated that there was a need to replace the mower that is pulled behind the tractor. He provided an estimate to replace the mower from Hammell Equipment from Rushford, MN. The quote received for the mower is approximately \$12,000 which included a trade-in allowance of \$1,500. The Council indicated that they would prefer to see more than one quote. No action was taken at this meeting.

Council Member Tom Smith wanted to discuss the fire fund and address the budget shortfall. After some discussion, it was decided to involve the fire department, members of the Council, and perhaps some members of the townships to discuss an increase in the contributions that could have a profound effect on the elimination of the deficit in the fire budget. No action taken at this meeting.

A concerned citizen was on hand to discuss the issue of seasonal maintenance on the hill of County Road 8. The citizen was concerned about the driving conditions of the road and that the City seemingly neglected to do anything about the issue. Administrator Todd attempted to address her concerns earlier in the month and advised her that the road in question was outside of the City of Lanesboro's jurisdiction. Further, the City maintains the roads within the city limits of Lanesboro first and foremost and that any other roads would need to be contracted for, such as the case with Parkway Ave also known as State Highway 250. The contract is necessary due to liability issues and without the contract in place, the City is not willing to accept the liability of maintaining another jurisdiction's roads. The Council advised her to contact her County Commissioner David Bakke to express her concerns. Council offered to have the City Administrator call Mr. Bakke for her in order to address the issue.

Next Meeting: Monday, January 5th, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURN: Council Member Smith moved to adjourn at 6:45 p.m. Motion seconded by Council Member Eide. Motion carried all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Todd
City Administrator