

**City of Mountain Lake
Regular City Council Meeting
Mountain Lake City Hall – 930 Third Ave
Monday, June 7, 2021
6:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Dean Janzen, Mike Nelson, Darla Kruser, Dana Kass

Members Absent: Andrew Ysker

City Staff Present: Michael Schulte, City Administrator/Clerk; Maryellen Suhrhoff, City Attorney; Andrew Kinnetz, Police Officer; Daron Friesen, Street Superintendent

Others Present: Doug Regehr; Tom Appel, County Commissioner

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nelson at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda & Consent Agenda

Motion by Kruser, seconded by Janzen, to add 2.O Approve Street Closure for The Den on 2nd Avenue June 18-21 and add 2.P Approve Street Closure Request for Curt Fast Memorial Service on 15th Street from 3rd to 4th Avenue on August 21 to the consent agenda. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Motion by Kass, seconded by Kruser, to approve the agenda and consent agenda as amended.

Motion carried 4 – 0.

Bills: Checks #24948 – 25007, 726E – 727E

Payroll: Checks #66014 – 66045

Approve April 19 EDA Board Minutes

Approve May 13 Utilities Commission Minutes

Approve May 17 City Council Minutes

Approve Change of Start Date to June 7, 2021 – Karin Stoesz, Part-Time Library Assistant/Aide

Approve Resolution #12-21 Accepting Donation to Utility

Approve Submission of Mountain Lake Area Foundation Grant on Behalf of Mountain Lake Chamber

Approve Submission of Cottonwood County Aquatic Invasive Species Grant Application

Approve Resignation of Daron Friesen, Fire Department, effective June 1, 2021

Approve On-Sale Liquor License for the Botanist LLC – 302 North 10th Street

Hire Chelsea Thompson, Weed Harvester Operator, effective May 20, 2021

Hire Dru Larson, Weed Harvester Operator, effective May 24, 2021

Approve Street Closure for The Den

Approve Street Closure for Curt Fast Memorial

Public

Tom Appel discussed with the Council that 2 more dumpsters were added by the can bin to have a total of 4 dumpsters for cardboard in this area. Appel is also working on solving some of the customer service issues with Waste Management that were mentioned at a previous meeting. The contract is through 2022. Appel explained that the last time the county went out for bids, another company who sent in a bid wanted the county to purchase and own all the bins and dumpsters which was not feasible for the county.

2020 City Audit

Sara Oberloh, the city's auditor, presented the 2020 city audit. Oberloh reviewed and explained various components of the audit including revenues, expenses, budgeted amounts for various departments, and various funds. Various graphs and line items of revenues and expenses were presented and explained. The city's financial position remains strong and no issues or causes of concern were found. Oberloh will present to the Utilities Commission on Thursday. Motion by Kruser, seconded by Kass, to approve the 2020 city audit. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Tax Forfeited Properties in Mountain Lake

The County Auditor/Treasurer posted for-sale signs on existing tax forfeited properties in city limits. The signs sparked interest and multiple individuals called the city administrator wondering if the city council would reassess or waive the assessments listed on the properties. The administrator stated to the individuals that wanted to have the council waive the assessments that they would need to come to tonight's council meeting or submit in writing their request. One individual was interested in purchasing the lots before the meeting in which the administrator informed the individual that anything purchased before the meeting that the assessments would be reassessed. The administrator was informed that two parcels were purchased today and that two were remaining. No individuals attended the meeting. The administrator recommended to the council to pass a resolution next meeting reassessing the amounts to the purchased properties and wait to see if the remaining two properties would be purchased.

Street Department Report

Daron Friesen, Street Superintendent, reported completed items in the month of May. The department have been digging and closing graves at a higher rate compared to last year. Gap crack sealing, mowing, opening storm drains, and patching roads were all completed in May. Friesen asked if the seasonal summer position could have a higher hourly wage due to only having 1 seasonal worker this year and the current employee has returned for the third year with a strong work ethic that is valuable to the department. Mayor Nelson said they would discuss it further when they discuss the other seasonal and part-time positions later in the agenda.

Electric Superintendent Position

Per union contract, a 30-day review is required when a union employee is promoted or transferred to a new union position. David Watkins has been in the Electric Superintendent position for 30 days and wishes to remain in the position. Motion by Kruser, seconded by Kass, to continue to keep David Watkins in the Electric Superintendent position. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Electric Lineman Position

With the last motion to keep Watkins in the Electric Superintendent position, there is now a vacancy for the Electric Lineman position. Motion by Kruser, seconded by Kass, to approve the job description, to post the position internally per union contract, and post externally if needed to fill the position. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Active Living Committee

The Active Living Committee is interested in starting a community garden in city limits. There is a property owner in town with a bare lot that may donate the parcel to the city to establish a community garden. The administrator stated community gardens are not listed as a permitted or a conditional use in all the zoning districts so city ordinance states that the use should be considered by the Planning & Zoning Commission to review and recommend where community gardens should be listed. Other items to consider include maintenance, tillage, establishing plots, costs, water availability, rules, etc. Direction was given to bring the matter to the Planning & Zoning Commission to review.

City Attorney

The city attorney provided updates on various public nuisances with junk vehicles and items. An update was provided from a Zoom meeting with the owners of the greenhouses.

Ordinance #2-21 Amending Flood Plain Ordinance

A second reading was held of Ordinance #2-21. No changes were made from the first reading.

Accessory Structures

Direction from a previous meeting was to review visible accessory structures in poor condition and writing letters from the Building Inspector to repair or raze the structures. The administrator stated there are around 10 or so properties with structures in different conditions from structures that likely need to be demolished to structures that might be repairable. The administrator asked the council if no action were taken from the property owners, what action the council would want to take to address the issues. Direction was given from the Council to work with the Building Inspector or writing and mailing the letters, and depending on circumstances, focus on the structures needing to be taken down for health and safety reasons first and potentially assessing the costs to the property if not paid.

Seasonal & Part-Time Positions

The administrator provided an update on seasonal and part-time positions. The part-time library aide position was filled and two aquatic weed harvester operators were hired. The electric summer help had one applicant but the applicant accepted another position before being contacted by the city. The street department decided to only keep the returning summer help and not hire a second hired help. The city hall – community center custodian position was discussed on whether the rate should remain at an hourly rate or have a minimum number of hours paid to check both buildings periodically and continue routine cleaning and maintenance items. Direction was given to keep the same hourly rate in the same format. Discussion continued regarding the seasonal street department position from earlier in the meeting. Motion by Kruser, seconded by Janzen, to raise the hourly seasonal street worker position to \$15/hour effective starting on the start of the next pay period and to review the rate again in December when wages are discussed for 2022. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Resignation of the City Administrator Michael Schulte

The city administrator submitted his 4-week notice of his resignation to Mayor Nelson on June 3 and informed staff and council on June 4. The city administrator's last day will be July 2 and will start as the city administrator for the city of Volga, SD on July 6. The city administrator stated there were multiple factors in the decision but the primary reason was to be closer to family, primarily on his wife's side. The city administrator thanked the City Council for the opportunity to serve the city the past 3 years and stated he is willing to help in any way possible before and after July 2. Discussion continued on the next steps to filling the city administrator position such as finding an interim city administrator and whether to do the search as a council or to hire a hiring firm. Motion by Kruser, seconded by Kass, to accept City Administrator Michael Schulte's resignation effective July 2, 2021 and to schedule a Special City Council meeting for 5:30pm on Tuesday, June 15 to discuss options of filling the city administrator position. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Approved June 23, 2021

ATTEST:

Michael Schulte, Administrator/Clerk