

**Regular City Council Meeting
Mountain Lake City Hall
Monday, August 17, 2020
6:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Mike Nelson, Darla Kruser, David Savage, Dana Kass, Andrew Ysker

Members Absent: None

City Staff Present: Michael Schulte, City Administrator/Clerk; Maryellen Suhrhoff, City Attorney, David Watkins, Ambulance Director; Andrew Kinnetz, Police Officer; Tim Coners, Fire Chief

Others Present: Rachel Yoder, Doug Regehr, Gloria McKissick

Call to Order

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

Approval of Agenda & Consent Agenda

Motion by Kass, seconded by Kruser to add 6.B – Discussion/Action – Transfers to/from General Fund to Street and Police Fund, 6.C – Discussion/Action – Marquis X Erickson, Architect Proposal, 6.D – Discussion/Action – CARES Act Funds, and 6.E – Discussion/Action – Emergency Scenes. Motion carried 5 – 0. Motion by Kass, seconded by Savage, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried 5 – 0.

Bills: Checks #23960 – 23998, 684E – 686E

Payroll: Checks #23960 – 23998

Approve July 13 Lake Commission Minutes

Approve July 23 Utilities Commission Minutes

Approve August 3 City Council Minutes

Public

No one spoke during this portion of the meeting.

Emergency Scenes

Councilmember Kruser asked to discuss crowd control at emergency scenes. At recent emergency scenes this summer, there have been occasions of crowds forming or individuals approaching closely to an emergency scene. Due to limited size of first responders and the type of emergency taking place, it is difficult to have enough manpower to keep individuals away from the scene. Fire Chief Tim Coners and Police Officer Andrew Kinnetz were in attendance to explain recent emergency scenes. Upon further discussion, direction was given to the administrator to set up a meeting between the department heads of police, ambulance, and fire to

discuss crowd control options and to also put information in the newsletter to stay away from emergency scenes and not interfere with the work being conducted by first responders.

2021 Budget

Packets of the budget and the summary levy sheet were distributed to the council. The administrator explained and reviewed each department's revenues and expenses for 2021, differences from 2020, and various factors that will impact the 2021 levy. Bond funds were reviewed and cash within those funds. The formula used to determine the amount of cash to use and what to levy was the projected cash at the end of 2020 divided by the years of remaining payments for each bond. Each year the cash can be reviewed to adjust the levy. Assessments, interest, and sales of commercial park lots are factors that will impact the amount of cash in each fund. The largest factor of the 2021 levy will be the status of the Pop'd Kerns property which is owned by the EDA. Pop'd Kerns has been delinquent on lease payments and property tax payments. The company is currently on a payment plan to catch up on their payments and to pay back the EDA which paid the first half portion of property taxes. Lease payments are used to cover the debt service. If the company cannot make adequate payments or is evicted, the city has an obligation to continue to pay the debt service, property taxes, and other associated costs. Without knowing how the rest of 2020 will play out and what the status of payments will be in 2021, it makes budgeting a levy difficult. The account needs adequate funds to ensure principal and interest payments are made on time. Without knowing how much to prepare for essentially effects the rest of the budget if it can stay as is or if changes need to be made. Dave Watkins, Ambulance Director, discussed with the council that this past March the council approved to change on-call wages from \$2.00/hour to \$3.50/hour. The \$3.50/hour for the whole year of 2021 has been budgeted for with a slight levy increase and utilizing current ambulance service revenue. It is desired to raise the on-call wages again. Revenues that exceed budgeted amounts are saved to make large equipment purchases as needed. If the same amounts that have been put into savings the past few years is desired to continue, the levy will need to be raised to fill the gap of paying more wages in 2021. Levies of similar sized cities were reviewed along with the capital improvement plan. The status of Pop'd Kerns and various scenarios of the levy will be discussed at the next meeting.

Councilmember Kruser left the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

City Attorney

A letter was received from the greenhouse property owners' attorney and will be reviewed by the administrator and police chief and discussed further with the city attorney.

One-Way on 4th Avenue

Before the Mountain Lake Public School project started, it was approved to make 4th Avenue from 15th Street to the alleyway a one-way street and to review the one-way street near the end of

construction. As the project is near completion, the administrator asked if the council desired to keep 4th Avenue permanently a one-way street. Motion by Savage, seconded by Kass, to designate 4th Avenue from 15th Street North to 12th Street North a permanent one-way street and purchase appropriate street signs. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Police and Street Fund Transfers.

Each year the police and various funds under the street department are calculated and a transfer is approved, whether it is from the department's savings account to the general fund or from the general fund to the department's savings account depending if revenues exceeded budgeted numbers or expenses were lower than budgeted numbers. Motion by Savage, seconded by Ysker, to transfer \$60,312.50 from street department savings to the general fund and to transfer \$47,596.17 from the general fund to the police department savings. Motion carried 4 – 0.

City Hall Renovation – Architect Proposal

As discussed from a previous meeting, direction was given to look into the possibility of renovating the interior office space at city hall to create better social distancing, provide better privacy for utility customers, and maximize efficiency of space. Marquis X Erickson, an architect from South Dakota, was recommended by another city to approach. A proposal was submitted to provide work of a layout of the floor plan, wall elevations, a building code analysis, a statement of probable construction costs, among other items for a cost of \$3,550. If the renovation project will better enhance social distancing and employee and public safety, CARES Act funds may be utilized to pay for the project if paid before November 15th. If the project cannot be paid for before November 15th or would not be a justified use of CARES Act funds, the project can either be budgeted for in future years or other sources of funds may be used, depending on costs. Motion by Savage, seconded by Ysker, to approve the proposal of Marquis X Erickson for a total cost of \$3,550. Motion carried 4 – 0.

CARES Act Funds

The funds have been discussed at previous meetings. The EDA is interested in using a similar grant application process as the county for Mountain Lake businesses to apply for funds received by the city. It is understood that Mountain Lake businesses may apply for county funds as well and the amounts distributed will depend on availability and need both at the city and county levels. Discussion ensued on who could apply and it was directed to allow Mountain Lake businesses and nonprofits to apply. The administrator will work with the county of obtaining documents to provide to the EDA.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

ATTEST:

Michael Schulte, Administrator/Clerk