

GRAND MEADOW COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA
DECEMBER 11, 2023 @ 6:00 PM
GRAND MEADOW COMMUNITY CENTER

Present: Mayor Ryan Queensland, Councilor Blayne Stejskal, Councilor Aaron Myhre, Councilor Christy Benson, Councilor Isaac Tangen, City Administrator James Christian, Clerk Chris Hyrkas, Librarian Sarah Burmeister, and Police Chief Jim Richardson, Officer Domanic Merkel, Officer Mason Geier, Fire Chief-elect Joe Gehling, Derek Olinger (Bolton & Menk).

Visitors: Dan, Julie and Megan Geier.

1. TRUTH IN TAXATION HEARING: Mayor Queensland called the public hearing to order at 6:00 pm. Nobody requested to speak, and there were no questions. Queensland asked for a motion to close the hearing and begin the regular Council meeting. Motion by Benson, 2nd by Tangen. Motion carried unanimously. The time was 6:01 pm.
2. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Queensland called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance
3. CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to approve the Consent Agenda by Tangen, 2nd by Myhre. Motion carried unanimously.
 - A. Approve additions & corrections to agenda - None
 - B. Approve November regular meeting minutes
 - C. Approve General Fund bills: \$1,160,913.10
4. OPEN FORUM – None
5. REPORTS
 - A. Library – S. Burmeister reported that she had submitted her revised budget. Burmeister also stated that she had been asked if the library paid full price for materials, and she answered that they do not; they buy at a substantial discount. Burmeister also stated that she is about 25% of the way finished with her Master's, and Council congratulated her.
 - B. Ambulance – Written report submitted. No questions from Council.
 - C. Public Works – Written report submitted. Stejskal inquired about the fire hydrant that had been hit on the corner of 1st Ave NE and 2nd St NE. Christian reported that after a long search, one had been found to replace it (it is a very old model), which will be rebuilt and installed.
 - D. Police – Written report submitted. Chief Richardson discussed the winter parking policy briefly. Richardson then swore in new Grand Meadow Police Officer Mason Geier, whose family was in attendance. Council congratulated Officer Geier and welcomed him aboard.
 - E. Fire – Written report submitted. J. Gehling asked for approval to buy 10 sets of turnout gear, 5 of which would be billed to the city, at \$5,275 each. Gehling stated that it was a budgeted item, Christian verified. Queensland asked for a motion to approve the purchase, motion by Stejskal, 2nd by Benson. Motion carried unanimously. Gehling also discussed the updated fire fees, to be approved under the schedule of fees.
 - F. City Clerk – Hyrkas discussed the issue with December utility billing, where a computer issue double-billed customers. The software company fixed the glitch, and customers would not be charged the extra. Stejskal asked if the city should be billing bulk water more than once per year, or perhaps earlier in the year. It was decided to bill bulk water in September. A brief discussion of the billing software followed, and it was confirmed that the ACH withdrawals would be correct.
 - G. City Administrator – Written report submitted. Queensland noted that Christian had met with the auditors and inquired if everything was on track to run ahead of schedule and Christian confirmed that it was.
6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Street/Lift projects

- i. General update: Olinger gave a general update on the project. Some seeding remains to be done in the upcoming week. Some driveway paving remains to be done next season due to the asphalt plant closing for the season. Some concrete work remains on some alley approaches and sidewalk replacements, and all areas have been temporarily filled with gravel until next season. Olinger stated that the contractor has an extensive punch list and will be very busy next spring. Queensland noted that the areas that they had hydroseeded on the south end were poorly graded, and Olinger replied that it had to be covered for the winter, and they will regrade that in the spring before final seeding, as well as miscellaneous sodding repairs. Stejskal asked once the weather is decent in the spring, what the projected timeframe for completion was. Olinger stated that they should be able to get it done within a month, but the performance in the last two months could leave that in doubt. Olinger stated that June 15, 2024, is the deadline for substantial completion, including all driveways, sidewalks, and final paving, and final completion is about a month later, and that mostly involves paperwork, reporting, and closing out the project, as well as punch list items. Olinger stated that the contractor had not yet met the second milestone, which was to be completed at the end of October, and work was suspended for the season on November 30th. The new season restarts on May 15 of 2024. A brief discussion of liquidated damages followed. Olinger then discussed the Lift Station project, and this was originally supposed to be the final pay application, but there is some ongoing negotiation regarding a piece of sampling equipment that was deleted from the project earlier. Olinger stated that he expects that project to finish right on budget.
 - ii. Street - Pay application #11: Motion by Myhre, 2nd by Tangen to approve Pay Application # 11 in the amount of \$205,670.88. Motion carried unanimously.
 - iii. Lift - Pay application #13: Motion by Benson, 2nd by Stejskal to approve Pay Application #13 in the amount of \$18,487.14. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. 2024 Property Tax Levy: Christian verified that the amount in the resolution was the same as what was discussed at the November budget workshop, and this agenda item was for any further discussion. There were no further questions.
- C. Employment Policy Update- Christian stated that there had been no changes to the proposed policy since the first reading in the month prior. Queensland asked if Councilors had a chance to go over it previously, and if there were any questions. There were no questions, and Queensland asked for a motion to approve the changes to the Employment Policy to take effect January 1, 2024. Motion by Myhre, 2nd by Benson. Motion carried unanimously.
- D. Delinquent Utility Bill Assessments: Stejskal stated that the number of people who paid off their delinquent bills since the November meeting was lower than he expected. Christian stated that some customers had made partial payments, and they had been given until the end of the day on the 12th of December to pay before the list was submitted to the County to be assessed against the property. Tangen asked if delinquent customers had been given a final notice, Christian stated that it was the just the letter, and Queensland pointed out that they also received monthly bills showing the amount owed. Stejskal asked when the city would receive the money from the county, Hyrkas replied that the city would be paid in June and December.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- A. 2024 Schedule of Fees: Christian presented the proposed schedule of fees for 2024, highlighting a 2% increase to the base rates and usage fees for water and sewer, an increase in the late fee from 1.5% per month to 5% per month. The license fee for Edible Cannabinoids was removed due to changes in state law, and a Cannabis Retail Registration fee was added, in accordance with the new law. A fence permit fee was added, as well as an "After-the-fact" building permit fee of \$75.00, with per-square-foot fees tripled, modeled after the Mower County policy. Fire fees for a Class 1 fire increased from \$1,750.00 to \$2,000, Class 2 from \$1,000 to \$1,250.00, motor vehicle accident from \$750.00 to \$1,000.00, and foam per gallon from \$50.00 to \$100.00. Christian submitted a spreadsheet showing the utility fees over the last 6 years, and the proposed increase. Discussion was held regarding the increase in the late fee and whether it should be higher than 5%, and it was decided to leave it at 5% for 2024. Stejskal motioned to adopt the 2024 fee schedule as submitted, 2nd by Myhre. Motion carried unanimously. Gehling asked for approval of 2024 Fire Dept. officer salaries of \$2500/year for

Chief, \$500/year for each Assistant Chief (3), \$750/year each for Secretary, Billing, Relief President, and Training Officer. The City pays half of the salaries, except for Relief President. Motion by Stejskal, 2nd by Myhre to approve 2024 GMFD salaries as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 2024 Council meeting dates

i. Columbus Day – October 14, Veteran’s Day - November 11: October 2024 meeting date moved to October 7th, November meeting to November 4th due to holiday conflicts.

C. PSS Properties- PID 25.003.0080 Split: PSS Properties LLC requested a property split to move a house (building permit previously approved). Motion by Myhre, 2nd by Benson. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Vacation Carryover- Motion by Myhre, 2nd by Tangen to approve unused employee vacation rollover to be used by the end of the 1st quarter of 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

8. RESOLUTIONS

A. 009 - Adopting the Final Property Tax Levy: Motion by Tangen, 2nd by Benson to approve the final 2024 levy at \$706,097.19. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 010 – Approving Parcel Split PID 25.003.0080: Motion by Myhre, 2nd by Stejskal to approve the parcel split. Motion carried unanimously.

C. 011 – Approving the purchase of Real Estate: Motion by Benson, 2nd by Stejskal to purchase 113 Main St. N to repurpose as the new City Hall for \$120,000.00. Motion carried unanimously.

D. 012 – Certifying Unpaid Charges: Motion by Tangen, 2nd by Myhre to approve. Motion carried unanimously.

9. ADJOURN: Motion by Stejskal, 2nd by Tangen. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:48.