

GRAND MEADOW COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 10, 2025 @ 6:00 PM
GRAND MEADOW CITY HALL

Present: Mayor Tim Fenton, Councilor Blayne Stejskal, Councilor Isaac Tangen, Councilor Thomas Oehlke, Councilor Caden Fruth, City Administrator James Christian, Fire Chief Joe Gehling, Ambulance Director Lori Brogan, Police Chief Jim Richardson. Also present: Jake Pichelmann (BMI), Justin Garrison (BMI), Derek Olinger (BMI), Linda Kreutzman, Carmen Ament, Ron Young, Christene Liefkort

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Fenton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. WASTEWATER FACILITY PLAN PUBLIC HEARING: Mayor Fenton suspended the regular meeting and opened the public hearing. Derek Olinger, Jake Pichelmann, and Justin Garrison with Bolton & Menk presented the updated Wastewater Facility Plan. There were no questions from the attendees. Tangen motioned to close the public hearing, Fruth 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. The regular meeting resumed at 6:52 PM.
3. CONSENT AGENDA: Mayor Fenton added Resolution 2025-002 as item “D” under New Business. Motion by Fruth to approve the consent agenda with the addition, 2nd by Oehlke.
 - A. Approve additions & corrections to the agenda:
 - B. Approve February regular meeting minutes
 - C. Approve General Fund payments in the amount of \$173,368.11
4. OPEN FORUM: Carmen Ament asked about truck parking, and where the City was on that. Fenton replied that it would be discussed under “New Business.”
5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS
 - A. Library – No meeting
 - B. Ambulance – Brogan asked for approval for to send Josalynn Holst to the RN to EMT Bridge Course. Tangen motioned to approve, 2nd by Oehlke. Motion passed unanimously.
 - C. Public Works – Report provided. Christian described a service line leak on 1st St SW, covered by warranty.
 - D. Police – Report provided. No questions from Council.
 - E. Fire – Report provided. Gehling reported that the truck chassis that used to be the tanker had been sold (Rural). Gehling also reported that a garage door opener on the Fire side of the Emergency Services building had failed and been replaced. He is getting a bid on having all of the tensioners inspected and repaired/replaced as needed, but suspects that the building is at the age where it will begin needing these repairs more often. Gehling also mentioned that they would be getting some electrical work done in the building. Gehling asked Council to approve Dalton Pischke’s appointment to the Fire Department; Stejskal motioned for approval, Tangen 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Gehling stated that Pischke’s appointment brings the department up to 23 firefighters.
 - F. City Clerk – Report provided. Christian stated that he and Hyrkas were still working on the audit, but the field visit portion was finished. Stejskal asked if the auditors would be at the May meeting, Christian replied that they would present the draft in April, and the summary at the May regular meeting.
 - G. City Administrator – Report provided. Christian stated that he had attended the Mower County Comprehensive Planning meeting and the Mower County Hazard Mitigation Planning meeting in February. Tangen asked if the MPFA, State Aid, and budget reports were for prior years or 2025, Christian responded that the State Auditor budget reports were for 2025, but the others were for 2024. Stejskal asked if there had been any interest in the sander unit from the plow truck. Christian

replied that there hadn't been any serious interest, but that it was worth too much to send it to auction, and he would re-advertise it beginning in late summer.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION NO. 2025-001: Resolution Receiving and Accepting the Facility Plan Phase 2 Wastewater Treatment and Collection System Improvements – Tangen motioned to approve Resolution 2025-001, Oehlke 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Ordinance 71.05 Amendment Introduction and 1st Reading – Parking of Semis in Residential Zoning- Christian stated that he had been discussing the issue of residential truck parking with the City attorney for a few months. He stated that when the City adopted the MN Basic Code in 2004, it did not modify the ordinance. Christian stated that many cities have removed the “except when the vehicle is parked in a completely enclosed garage” language from their ordinances, and the attorney suggested that if the City’s intent is to prevent semis from parking in residential areas, it should be removed from the ordinance. Fenton read the current ordinance 71.05, then read the proposed language to replace 71.05. Christian explained that the next step would be to hold a public hearing, then vote. Carmen Ament from the audience asked why the ordinance was being changed, and discussed trucks parked in other areas of town. Ament asked what started the whole trouble, and Christian responded that it was noise complaints about her trucks that started the whole issue. Ament asked about Keim Trucking at the south end of 4th St SE, and Christian responded that the Keim location was a truck shop before the ordinance was enacted in 2004 and was therefore “grandfathered” in as a nonconforming permitted use. Christian stated that the discussion should be taken up at the public hearing, as it was not an open forum. Stejskal motioned to hold the public hearing for the ordinance on April 14 at the regular Council meeting, Tangen 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

B. MPCA Stormwater and Wastewater Planning Grant – Olinger discussed the grant the City had been awarded for planning wastewater improvements (televising sanitary sewers and a floodplain study near the treatment ponds). The city had applied for a 90% grant on the approximately \$75,000 project but was only awarded approximately \$36,000. Christian contacted the MPCA to see if the project could be scaled back because of the lower award and was told that the scope could be scaled back. Bolton & Menk scaled the project back to the minimum by not doing the detailed review of the televising, and scaling back the flood study, reducing the cost of the City’s portion by approximately \$17,000. Fruth asked if the grant was available every year and whether the City should wait a year to see if they could get the full amount next year, and Olinger responded that if the City was planning on moving forward with the wastewater facility plan, the work needed to be done now. Stejskal suggested that the \$20,000 City portion of the project be paid out of the Capital Improvement Fund. Tangen motioned to accept the MPCA grant and use CIP funds to cover the City’s \$20,000 portion of the project, Stejskal 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Vacation Policy – Christian presented that he is looking at changes to the Employment Policy, specifically at vacation time, and gave examples of other government organizations in the area. Christian stated that he was not looking for action to be taken at this time; he was bringing it to Council’s attention as part of other changes that will need to be made due to state laws taking effect in 2026.

D. Resolution 2025-002: Resolution Accepting A Donation To The City – Christian presented donations made in the name of Shirley Davis to be used for the Fire Department and the Grand Meadow Area Ambulance Service. Motion by Tangen to accept the donations, 2nd by Stejskal. Motion passed unanimously.

8. ADJOURN: Motion to adjourn by Stejskal, 2nd by Fruth. Motion passed unanimously. The time was 7:34 PM.