

The January 17, 2023 special Wahkon City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Ronda Bjornson at 6:01 pm and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Special meeting was called by the mayor due to lack of quorum for regularly scheduled 1/9 monthly meeting. Proper notice was posted for both special meeting and attendance of two councilmembers via interactive technology in accordance with Minn. Stat. 13D.02, at locations which are open and accessible to the public. Roll Call: Councilmembers physically present were: Chip Frederickson, Brenda Buck & Ronda Bjornson. Councilmembers present via interactive technology were: Tony Button and Rick Roberts. Both could hear and see all councilmembers in-house and were heard and seen by all in the community hall. Approval of Agenda: Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to approve agenda. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously. Agenda was posted as requirement of special meeting notice and per statute nothing can be added.

CITY GOVERNMENT ANNUAL REORGANIZATION: Oath of office were given to Frederickson on 1/3 and Bjornson on 1/6 at city hall. Councilmember Roberts had oath officiated in Alabama on 1/4. Members agreed to keep their commissioner positions from 2022. Motion by Buck, seconded by Frederickson to make the following 2023 commissioner appointments and designate city representatives as recommended by mayor: Tony Button, Acting Mayor; Ronda Bjornson, Weed Inspector; Jacob Weinreich, Assistant Weed Inspector; Chip Frederickson Wastewater Commissioner; Tony Button, Street & Sidewalk Commissioner; Brenda Buck, Municipal Buildings Commissioner; Rick Roberts, Park Commissioner; First National Bank of Milaca, Isle Branch, and League of MN Cities 4M Fund Minnesota Municipal Money Market Fund, Financial Depositories; Mille Lacs Messenger, Newspaper; Hoffman, Philipp, & Martell, PLLC, Accountants; Kennedy & Graven Chartered, Damien F. Toven & Assoc. and Mille Lacs County (MLC) Attorney's Office, Attorneys; Short Elliot Hendrickson (S.E.H), Engineers; Saehr Consulting, Zoning Administration; David Drown Associates Inc., Financial Advisers; and League of MN Cities Insurance Trust and Oberfeld Insurance, Insurance Company & Agency. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

Council Code of Ethics Forms were reviewed and signed by those physically present. Button and Roberts will review their forms upon return from winter residence.

CONSENT AGENDA: All items listed shall be approved by one motion, unless removed. Item D) Pay Equity Report wasn't completed in time. Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to approve consent agenda, less removal of Item D. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

- A) Meeting Minutes: 9/28 Special, 12/12 Special Planning Commission & 12/12 Council
- B) 2023 IRS Standard Mileage Rate 65.5 Cents from 62.5 Cents: New Wahkon Rate
- C) League of MN Cities (LMC) Dividend Announcement \$1,178
- D) Pay Equity Report Council Approval Required (Removed as report wasn't completed)
- E) Charitable Gambling Report: 11/2022 & 12/2022 Isle Lions Club Zero, 11/2020 Mille Lacs Drift Skippers (MLDS) \$19.85 and \$75 to WAVE Meat Raffle Volunteers
- F) Treasurer's Report 2022 Year End Unaudited Schedule 1 Report
- G) Treasurer's Report 12/31/2022 Ending Balance \$834,555.95
- H) Interim Financial Monthly Analysis Report
- I) Disbursement Register 1/17/2023 Date Range 12/13/2022 – 1/17/2023 Total \$131,948.86

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS & POLICIES: Resolution No. 2023-0117 Transportation Alternatives Project Maintenance: Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to adopt Resolution No. 2023-0117. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS: Initiative Foundation \$250 Donation Request: Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to donate \$250 to Initiative Foundation from Charitable Gambling Fund. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) Donation Request: Button has seen first-hand how they support homeless veterans. Motion by Buck, seconded by Frederickson to donate \$1000 to MACV from Charitable Gambling Fund. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

City of Onamia Ballfield Donation Request: Ballfield isn't correct, request is for park and recreation. Letter begins by thanking us for ballfield donation in the past. Motion by Buck, seconded by Frederickson to donate \$500 to City of Onamia from Charitable Gambling Fund. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

Snow Removal Policy: This issue arises when there is a lot of snow. Should business contractors be able to push snow to city property? Should city continue to clear sidewalks for commercial area? It isn't every year city must pay to remove large snow piles. It is against state statute to push snow across any right-of-way, city, county or state. Weinreich hit bank left by another and it spun him in the large plow truck. Can also create rough streets. Citizens have done this in the past or their contractors but no letters have been mailed. At minimum it should be cleaned up so as to leave nothing in the street. Education on how to properly do it is key. Mayor suggested Messenger do an article. Having Main Street sidewalk clean is nice for everyone. Two people came in last week stating how nice Wahkon looks after plowing. Council agreed to continue current snow policy of clearing sidewalks between 1st and 3rd Streets. Continue mailing businesses liability waiver to sign. Send nice letters to citizens if warranted. Button noted this is how Wahkon supports businesses since he began. We have one of the best maintained streets in MN!

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Greater Minnesota Transportation Alternatives Solicitation 2022/23 Full Application: MLC will be our financial sponsor as required for small cities and promptly supplied resolution. 2021 Bike & Ped application wasn't selected but this is a new category we are submitting under, Scenic Byway. This will benefit both the city and Lake Mille Lacs Scenic Byway. Funds would be used to offset city cost of 2026 MnDOT Main Street Project. Button mentioned it has been 10 years since cost estimate of this project thus costs have increased substantially.

Wahkon Purchasing Policy Revised: City Attorney David Anderson added "Change Orders" section, which City Engineer Dave Blommel thought would be useful relative to upcoming sewer project. Motion by Buck, seconded by Frederickson to approve revised Wahkon Purchasing Policy. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS: Wastewater: Weinreich: S.E.H representative took pictures of main lift station panel in prep of upcoming project. Installing a light would be great for safety reasons as this LS is barely off Hwy 27. Project bidding in February is the goal.

Zoning: Issued permit to Steiner for solar panels. Other activities included Wilson street vacation, Meshigun Point Townhomes variance, attendance at December meetings and file transfer of city records to Saehr Consulting, new zoning consultant for 2023.

MLC Sheriff's 4th Quarter Report: There were 37 calls. Buck asked if that is a lot? Unsure as we don't have quarterly comparisons but Clerk will compile data in the future.

Employee, Committee & Councilmember Updates: Weinreich: Received two bids, John's Floor Covering \$6710.56 and Ross Christensen \$6581.00. In order to compare them fairly, Christensen bid was lowered by \$150 dumpster fee as John's didn't include that. Difference of \$129.56 with Christensen being lowest. His actual bid with dumpster is \$6731. Both contractors will not put vinyl flooring over existing VCT tile as it could cause moisture and mold issues later on. Bjornson has used Christensen on two occasions and he does great work. Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to hire Ross Christensen to replace community hall tile flooring. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

Roeschlein has been attending yoga on Thurs. afternoons for several years with office closed at 3:30 pm. Instructor became a Mora school bus driver and class was changed to Thurs. at 10 am. Council agreed wellness is important. City hall hours will be M-F 9-4 with exception of Thurs. 12-4.

Assessment was made by Mille Lacs Island Resort (MLIR) for a resident's unpaid WW bill through MLC who paid the city instead of MLIR. City will reimburse MLIR as they have paid all fees owed to us and this is relative to them collecting from their resident.

Lake Stop has been without fuel since 12/31 as their system is out of date and inoperable. Clerk left message for owner, but no reply. Wanted to convey how important the gas and convenience store is to Wahkon. Lessee can't do the improvements. Can we do anything? Likely not. Hopefully pumps will soon be working again.

Frederickson asked about MLIR exhibits for the new contract, which is still in process. Would like this concluded by this year's annual meeting, which needs to be scheduled. Officially the contract was approved by council contingent on exhibits being finalized.

Buck asked about website. Clerk had virtual meeting with Digital crisis and SCI Cable. Afterward the WIX account was transferred to the city. City has sole control and website designer Danie Powell has capabilities to post and maintain as needed. SCI will likely reimburse us for the annual WIX fee as part of the cable franchise ordinance requirement to host the city website, but that hasn't been officially confirmed yet.

Button: Received three responses from Messenger article on Veterans Park WW I plaque. One was lengthy email with lots of details. Pavers are down at Braham and should be done by spring. North Star granite for the plaque has been ordered.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Buck, seconded by Frederickson to adjourn. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 pm.

Karrie Roeschlein, Clerk/Treasurer

The February 13, 2023 Wahkon Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Ronda Bjornson at 6:01 pm. Mayor read the following, asked necessary questions to confirm compliance for interactive councilmember attendance and required notice was properly posted. Per MN State Statutes 13D.02, Councilmembers Tony Button and Rick Roberts will be participating in tonight's open meeting via interactive television. Tony Button confirms he is located at Sunshine RV Resort, located at 303 SR 70 E, Lake Placid, Florida 33852 and is attending this meeting from the resort's public community room. Rick Roberts confirms he is located at The Lighthouse Condominiums, located at 455 E Beach Blvd, Gulf Shores, AL 36547 and is attending this meeting from the condo's public family room. Mayor confirmed that both Button and Roberts (1) can clearly hear and see, (2) can clearly hear and see the full council, and (3) they are in publicly accessible areas. All requirements of the Minnesota Open Meeting Law are satisfied and councilmembers Button and Roberts may participate during this open meeting. Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll Call: Councilmembers physically present were: Chip Frederickson, Brenda Buck, and Ronda Bjornson. Councilmembers present via interactive technology were: Tony Button and Rick Roberts. Approval of Agenda: Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to approve agenda. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA: All items listed shall be approved by one motion, unless removed. Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to approve agenda. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

A) Minutes: 1/17 Special Council Meeting

B) MN Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) Donation Thank You

C) Initiative Foundation Donation Thank You

D) Isle Fire Department Contract for Fire Service 3/1/23 Renewal \$10,312.54

E) Charitable Gambling Report: Isle Lions Club \$100.00 WAVE Meat Raffle & 12/2022 Mille Lacs Drift Skippers \$0

F) Treasurer's Report 10/31 Ending Balance \$725,227.61 & Receipts Register

G) Interim Financial Monthly Analysis Report

H) Disbursement Register 2/13 Date Range 1/18 – 2/13 Total \$66,877.42

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS & POLICIES: Resolution No. 2023-0213 Resolution Establishing Juneteenth as a City Holiday: State of MN adopted as a state holiday effective 8/1/2023, which won't interfere with existing holiday calendar and council meeting schedules. Holiday recognizes when slavery was abolished in the U.S. First official holiday would be 6/19/2024. Roberts asked if this is required? According to memo from League of MN Cities (LMC) no public business can be conducted. Clerk could check with LMC or city attorney. If adopted, this would be the twelfth paid holiday, including floating holiday. Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to adopt Resolution No. 2023-0213. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS: Nyquist Elementary "All Inclusive" Playground Equipment Donation Request: Isabel Honek, Sheldyn Pedersen & Addy Turgeon were present and handed out presentation. Current playground is at least 26 years old and isn't inclusive for everyone to enjoy; both for disabled and younger kids. Location isn't close to the school and vandalism has occurred. Missing parts can't be replaced. Plan included playground be closer to the school safety and surveillance. They are fund-raising by writing letters to organizations and businesses, as well as door to door campaign. At school their fund-raising thermometer is named "Moolah Monster" indicating \$25,000 in donations of their \$200,000 goal. After reading Messenger article, clerk extended invite to request city donation. If these

children are our future; it will be great! Motion by Button to donate \$500. Discussion ensued. Motion by Buck to donate \$1000. Motion died for lack of a second. Button's motion was brought up again. Motion by Button, seconded by Frederickson to donate \$500 to ISD #473 for playground equipment from Charitable Gambling Fund. Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, Roberts, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously. They can come back this fall for a possible second donation.

Mugg's of Mille Lacs Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Violation Letter: Owner Rob Dubbs couldn't attend but spoke to clerk and mayor separately. Due to heavy snow amounts the dumpsters have been left in parking area. Jasson Bauer was present and his frustration is they aren't following CUP conditions to keep them in an enclosed area. After city letter, they were moved to fence area but still visible from alley as there isn't a gate. Grease bin has been kept in parking area for at least a year now and attracting strays. When dumpsters are full, litter flies through the neighborhood. Original plan was for storage building in fence area, but due to state rules requiring liquor and food be stored separately, approval was given for a cooler instead. Trespassing on neighbor's property with a foot path was noted in letter as property owner called city hall and is worried about liability. As this is a civil matter, it must be dealt with between property owners and isn't something the city can enforce. Clerk has received many calls/texts on this since CUP was approved and has begun tracking them. Council agreed if snow must be removed, it is up to them to do so. Follow up with letter requiring Mugg's to provide plan of action to council at 3/13 meeting of properly storing garbage containers within an enclosed area with full implementation by 6/1.

Councilmember Roberts lost video, then audio, and as such is no longer compliant with Per MN State Statutes 13D.02 for interactive attendance.

Seasonal Maintenance Position 2023: Gary Kleen was hired in 2020 and worked through 2022. He moved out of the area so we need a new person to begin in May depending on weather. PT position without benefits for 10-15 hours a week. Must be 18 years of age and preferably have driver's license. Button suggested asking contractors to give us quotes? With fuel prices it would be expensive. Contract based on hours to mow streets, parks, etc? Council agreed to advertise with beginning hourly wage of \$14 - \$16 depending on qualifications and experience. Main job duty is mowing.

North Star Fireworks: Does city continue this or WAVE? Newly organized WAVE committee isn't ready for this. City signs necessary permit and pays for additional insurance as it is on city property. Buck wondered if Pickle Ball group was interested in organizing this event and/or Wahkon Days? Clerk hasn't contacted them. Button believes city should always have fireworks. Eventually WAVE may have the ability but not at this time. It takes volunteers to get city pontoon ready and onsite. Button has done it for many years along with Roberts and would appreciate new volunteers stepping forward. Last year pontoon couldn't be pushed out so display was from beach. Best viewing from city parks would be having pontoon out from shore about 300 feet. Council agreed to have fireworks on 7/4 with \$6000 contract for fireworks including operators.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Newly Organized WAVE Committee: Christine Bjornson was present to discuss how they are moving forward with reorganizing. Their plan is not to replace the current group but to expand their ability to do things. They obtained EIN number from IRS and will open a bank account. They plan on becoming a non-profit, which would allow fundraising enabling WAVE to break away city as recommended by city attorney and auditor. Future plans include doing July 4th and Wahkon Days. Wahkon Inn agreed to host Chili Cook Off 3/18 and Adult Prom 4/29. These events will generate excitement and membership.

Clerk included memo formally stating the cook-off and adult prom are no longer city sponsored. Last city events were held prior to COVID. Council agreed previously that currently held WAVE funds could be transferred once they are recognized by the IRS as a non-profit. Button formally announced he is stepping aside as WAVE chair. Original volunteers are getting older and it is great there is new enthusiasm. Button will continue doing Walk to Honor along with Park Commissioner Roberts. Danie Powell will be asked to hand over WAVE Facebook administration to Bjornson and Paula Maxson. Please post explanation how this is a newly organized committee and thank past WAVE volunteers. WAVE may continue using the hall for meetings at no charge as a community organization; key will be provided to Bjornson.

MnDOT 2026 Main Street Project Landscaping Committee: Button and Bjornson are willing to be involved. Send email to all Wahkon businesses for possible participants.

City Truck Repair 4/2020 Unpaid Mille Lacs Auto Body Invoice: Tree branch damaged city truck when Chris Weinreich was plowing, which was repaired by Mille Lacs Auto Body. City was reimbursed by LMCIT less deductible. Per owner Andrew Rogers, usually check is written to both parties to ensure payment is made to auto body. He admits sending an invoice was overlooked until now. Council agreed to pay for repairs done in 2020.

REPORTS: Wastewater: Weinreich: Project bidding will be soon which won't be required to adhere to new American made law per City Engineer Dave Blommel.

Employee, Committee & Councilmember Updates: Weinreich: Ross Christensen will begin new floor in hall this week with plans to be finished by 3/13 council meeting.

Roeschlein: Lynn Gallice from Soil & Water Conservation District will submit grant application on our behalf. Virtual meeting was held with City Engineer Blommel to decide which projects to include. Gallice will forward two projects on our behalf. Wet pond likely won't occur as it includes six lots of private property. Owners thought project would mostly be in street right-of-way. Main project will be 2nd Street community parking area. Per Blommel, usually engineering fees are in addition to our cost for such projects, but this grant allows it as part of our 25% cost share.

Digital phone service was installed at city hall 2/7 with same phone number by SCI Cable. Safety Committee training will be through LMC to include all three cities, Isle, Onamia and Wahkon. Cities without an administrator must have one elected official on their committee; Button agreed. Ehlers & Associates can give clients both investment and debt/finance advice. They are better fit for WW project finances and investment of city funds, as David Drown and Associates can't advise on investments. Will have more details soon.

Digital Crisis renewed cityofwahkon.com emails 10/2022 originally created by DMDS, who was contracted by Savage Communication/SCI Cable per cable franchise ordinance requirement. Digital Crisis took over and now SCI wants nothing to do with them after helping Wahkon get control of our website from them. Using the cloud for council to view agendas no longer functions due to subscription problem. Requested Digital Crisis make clerk email a business one in order to have the cloud but that hasn't occurred yet. We obviously had it before without issue through DMDS. Having two IT companies, Digital Crisis and MCSI is causing major issues and delays. MCSI, our contracted IT service in St. Cloud, will be transferring cityofwahkon.com emails to the city on 2/28, thereafter, we won't be dealing with Digital Crisis.

Violation letter was mailed by City Attorney Damien Toven to Monson, as she is advertising for short term rental. Anyone with proof of STRs renting less than 30 days, please inform the city. Frederickson stated he reviewed STR violation letter which outlines fines as well.

Bjornson: Thanked past WAVE Chair Button and volunteers again for all their years of community support since 2006. As there are no more city committees, remove “committee” from reports relative to agenda outline.

Zoning: No permits issued. Roeschlein noted Meshigun Point Townhomes submitted their single unit application but we must first finish up approvals granted in 2022 by obtaining necessary signatures and recording applicable documents.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Frederickson, seconded by Buck to adjourn. Ayes: Ayes: Frederickson, Buck, Button, and Bjornson. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Karrie Roeschlein, Clerk/Treasurer