

Dawson City Council Minutes
December 1, 2015
6:00 p.m.

The Dawson City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, December 1, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Councilpersons present: John Harker, Becky Bothun, Jeff Olson, Heather Myers and J.T. Schacherer.

Councilpersons absent: Dave Lien.

Others present: City Manager Crystal Hansonl, City Clerk Treasurer Tami Schuelke-Sampson, City Attorney Rick Stulz, City Maintenance Superintendent Brent Powers, and Police Officer Sabrina Skold.

Declaring a quorum present acting Mayor Councilman Olson called the meeting to order and the group repeated the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Acting Mayor Olson asked for approval of the agenda with no changes or additions. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Bothun to approve the agenda as printed. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: Lien. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Myers to approve the November 17th Council minutes and November bills paid. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: Lien. Motion carries.

Acting Mayor Olson opened the 10 minute public forum. Hearing no comments the public forum was closed.

Crystal explained that for the 2016/2017 Union Contract for the police there was expressed concerns about the scheduling. That has been removed. On motion by Councilman Harker seconded by Councilwoman Bothun to approve the 2016/2017 Union Contract as presented. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, and Myers; voting against: none; absent: Lien; abstaining: Schacherer. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilwoman Bothun seconded by Councilwoman Myers to approve the updated personnel policy. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: Lien. Motion carries. John asked Crystal to add something about what the clothing allowance covers and what it does not. Crystal stated language will be added.

Acting Mayor Olson explained the reasons for the increase of the water/sewer rates, base fees and capital improvement fees. The City continues to run in the red and this will help cover the shortage in the fund. JT stated he has no problem with the increase in capital improvements but we need to figure out a long term fix for the water and sewer rates. There have been such large increases to the Cities water and sewer rates compared to other area cities. Crystal stated that Canby charges more for water and their base fees but less for sewer. JT thinks our rates are not completely out of line but still thinks they are on the high end. The City has changed its billing from quarterly to monthly to help citizens afford this bill but it is still going up and is not profitable. Crystal explained a memo from Rebecca Kurtz with Ehlers that was included in the Council packet. Crystal recommended to the Council to have a rate study done. John stated that he is on the Water/Wastewater Committee and thinks that more input is needed from the Council when making the decisions on rates. JT thinks that we have been increasing the rates 3% for so many years. Employee wages haven't gone up as much as the rate increases have. JT believes a lot of citizens treat this bill as a tax because of all the fees which is approximately \$30.00 a month. Crystal stated the largest user has decreased their usage by 90% if not more. Brent explained some of the increase is because the costs of chemicals have increased and the limits with the MPCA have changed and it is not cheap to maintain the requirements. Jeff asked Crystal what the cost would be to get an updated rate study and she said she will get estimates. JT stated he is ok with getting estimates but in the past the study has been done but had to be redone. Council agreed with having Crystal get estimates for having a rate study completed. On motion by Councilman Harker seconded by Councilman Schacherer to approve the first reading of the ordinance for water/sewer rate increase, base fee increase and capital improvement fee increase. Voting in favor: Harker, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: Bothun; absent: Lien. Motion carries.

Crystal explained the conditional use permit request for 293 Walnut Street. There was already a public hearing with no concerns. JT stated the City needs to look at the conditional use permit process because there are a lot of grey areas. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Bothun to approve the conditional use permit for 293 Walnut

Street. Voting in favor: Bothun, Myers, and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: Lien; abstaining: Harker. Motion carries.

Acting Mayor Olson asked Crystal to present the 2016 budget review. Crystal explained all areas that she included in the budget book. Final approval will be at the December 15th Council meeting.

City Mtn Supt. Brent Powers' report.

Brent explained the handout from DSG. The handheld that is used to read meters was purchased in 2003 and there is no longer technical support or parts available. John stated this is a necessary item and asked what the life expectancy of a meter is. Brent stated a meter's life expectancy is approximately 20 years. Crystal explained this handheld will be compatible with other meters also. On motion by Councilman Harker seconded by Councilman Schacherer to approve the purchase of the new handheld. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: Lien. Motion carries.

Snow removal went well for the first time out. There was trouble finding drivers so Jeff and JT stated they could be called to help out if needed.

City Manager Crystal's report.

1. Crystal explained that effective January 1, 2016 Gayle Lindquist will no longer be providing the management services for Heritage Court Apartments. A request for proposal has been published in the paper and a copy of the request can be found on the City's website.
2. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Myers to approve the resolution adopting the proposed 2016 levy. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: Lien. Motion carries.
3. Crystal explained the information in the Council packet from DSI with an update dated October 1st from them on the Small Cities Grant.
4. Crystal has been informed by Lac qui Parle County Auditor Treasurer Jake Sieg that the agriculture base in 2016 will decrease by 8.5% so people will be seeing an increase in their taxes. If anyone has questions please have them call the Auditor Treasurer Office.

5. Crystal stated there will be a ditch meeting on December 17th with the County and that the Water/Wastewater Committee members will be invited to attend. During this meeting the County will explain why they are looking into doing a redetermination and get the input of those attending.

On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Myers to adjourn the meeting. Motion carries and the meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

City Clerk Treasurer Tami Schuelke-Sampson

Acting Mayor Jeff Olson