

**Dawson City Council Minutes**  
**January 5, 2016**  
**5:30 p.m.**

The Dawson City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, January 5, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

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

Councilpersons absent: none.

Others present: Mayor Merlin Ellefson, City Manager Crystal Hansonl, City Clerk Treasurer Tami Schuelke-Sampson, City Attorney Rick Stulz, Dave Hickey, Lindee Olson, Sabrina Skold and Liquor Store Manager Garney Jager.

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

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

On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Schacherer to approve the December 1<sup>st</sup> Council minutes and the December bills paid. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Ellefson opened the 10 minute public forum. Hearing no comments Mayor Ellefson closed the public forum.

Mayor Ellefson asked Council if there should be any changes on the 2016 committee assignments. Jeff stated that maybe he and JT should switch between the Water/Wastewater and the Road and Bridge Committee because Jeff has been on the Water/Wastewater Committee for many years and maybe JT can see something he doesn't. JT agreed. Merlin asked if there should be two people on the Bond Refunding Committee and Dave stated he would do it. Merlin asked John about the Pioneerland Board and John stated he has been to two of the meetings since being assigned and the meetings are very well run and organized. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Lien to approve the committees

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with the stated changes. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Bothun to designate Dawson Co-op Credit Union and Minnwest Bank as the official depository and investment agencies for the City of Dawson funds. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Lien to designate Ehlers Investment Partners as the agency for managing the City of Dawson investment accounts. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries. Jeff asked Crystal how much was made in these investments and the cost. Crystal stated she would get back to Jeff and that there is a summary that will provide the asset allocation in the Council packet. Tami stated the cost each month is between \$120.00 and \$130.00.

On motion by Councilwoman Bothun seconded by Councilman Harker to designate the Dawson Sentinel as the official newspaper. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Olson to approve the fee schedule for the City of Dawson. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilwoman Bothun seconded by Councilwoman Myers to approve Casey's 3.2 beer license renewal. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Ellefson explained that the personnel committee met and visited with Crystal about the City Manager position and how it was going. The committee asked Crystal about her future plans and they are to remain. Mayor Ellefson stated that Crystal has a two-year contract and in this contract there is a \$5,000.00 increase for the two years so asked for a \$2,500.00 raise. The committee agreed to \$3,500.00 to bring the wage to be comparable with other area cities.

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Dave asked what the percentage increase was and Crystal stated that she is supposed to be on a step system as well as a COLA increase but this is approximately a five percent increase. On motion by Councilwoman Bothun seconded by Councilman Harker to approve the \$3,500.00 wage increase for City Manager Crystal. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Schacherer to approve the three gambling permit applications which include the Dawson-Boyd High School Trap League, Dawson Senior Citizens and the Dawson-Boyd Baseball Association. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Ellefson stated that the City of Madison and Lac qui Parle County are no longer going to help fund the Computer Commuter. It was stated that there are enough funds to run approximately a year. Rick stated the County EDA will contribute up to \$6,000.00 to help it run to the end of the year. When this is discontinued the County will get the assets. On motion by Councilman Lien seconded by Councilman Schacherer to continue to provide \$200.00 a month to the Computer Commuter until it is discontinued. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Lien to approve the County Attorney retainer agreement. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Ellefson explained the Mediacom item is informational only. There was discussion on the channel lineup.

On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Lien to approve the second reading for water/sewer rate increase, base fees increase and capital improvement fee increase. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries. John stated this was approved during the Water/Wastewater Committee and he agrees he just wanted to state that it seems like it is a perpetual habit that when the rates increase we lose usage by our big users. He would like us to look at what can be done to reduce this. Merlin stated that this may be done when the new rate study is complete.

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On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Schacherer for final approval of the 2016 budget. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Ellefson provided information to Council regarding the 1/3 payment for the home removal at 1265 Pine Street. Rick explained that the County will match up to what the City pays but no more than 75% of the remaining balance. There was discussion about the amount that the City will pay if adjoining homeowners demolish the home versus a hazardous home. Rick stated the County paid out approximately \$28,000.00 last year to take down homes. Crystal explained where in the budget these expenses have come out in the past. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Harker to pay 1/3 of the original estimated price. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Crystal explained the two proposals for a new utility rate study and recommended going with James Bullert of Liesch Associates/Terracon. JT stated that the City went with James last time and would like a fresh set of eyes looking at the information but not for double the price. Jeff explained that James has been the engineer on our water/wastewater projects in the past and has a history with us and would understand the City's future needs. Crystal stated that because of the history James has that could be why the proposal is so much less and thinks Rebecca from Ehlers could look the rate study over once completed. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Lien to approve having a new rate study completed by Liesch Associates/Terracon. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Ellefson stated that in the past the City of Dawson has made an annual commitment for \$3,500.00 to the Western Minnesota Prairie Water Regional Tourism Program. Crystal stated they have a new website and Dawson has a page on it. Jeff and JT agree that we do get our money's worth from this donation. John asked if we can make recommendations on what is on this website and Crystal stated she is on their board and will present ideas and suggestions. Crystal explained she can ask Prairie Waters to come and present to Council and John said he would like that. On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Schacherer to approve the \$3,500.00 annual commitment for Western Minnesota Prairie Water Regional

Tourism Program. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

City Mtn Supt. Brent Powers' report. Brent was not present.

1. Crystal stated that the visit for the wastewater treatment plant inspection went well. The report was included in the Council packet.
2. Merlin asked if Council has any concerns and John stated the snow removal has been awesome but has concerns with people not moving cars. JT stated that some of the difficulty with people not moving cars was that one of the significant snow falls was during the holidays. Active enforcement was not done because of the holidays with more people at homes or on vacation due to this. This concern has been addressed.

City Manager Crystal's report.

1. Crystal informed Council that the EDA received three proposals for Apartment Manager and they selected Margaret Zacharias. She is currently working with Gayle and Crystal is working on getting a signed contract.
2. DSI has informed Crystal that we are doing great with the Small Cities Grant and we are over what is expected at this time for applications and getting bids.
3. Crystal explained the attachment with the cost information of the last project. We have a little over \$17,000.00 extra which we will keep to help offset costs and pay back the loan.
4. Crystal informed Council that the liquor store is showing a profit of approximately \$9,000.00 but this is an estimate before the auditors make their adjustments. Crystal asked Garney if there was anything he would like to add and he stated that he thought his part-time employees should get raises because the store did so well and they should be rewarded. One employee did leave employment at the liquor store and it is hard to get employees that are able to pass the background checks. Last time there was a part-time opening four backgrounds checks were performed and three were not able to pass this. Becky asked what they are currently getting and Garney stated \$10.30 and one employee at \$10.50 and he would like to see it at \$10.50 and \$10.75. Crystal asked for Council thoughts and explained that the minimum wage is increasing in August. John asked if part-time people get any special benefits and Garney stated no except for New Year's Day when they do

inventory and get time and a half. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Lien to have Garney and Crystal work it out and no need to bring the information back to Council. Voting in favor: Harker, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

5. Crystal explained the Ditch #4 redetermination that is being done by the County because they have authority of the ditch. There will be a public hearing about this and Crystal will notify Council of when this is and she would like to see as many councilmembers attend this meeting as possible. Rick stated that all the ditches in the County will be having this redetermination completed and other Counties are doing this also.
6. Crystal has a meeting with the RDC on an emergency siren grant. Appleton and other area cities are looking into this grant. Jeff stated to look into this because you cannot hear the siren all the time. JT also said to look into it and maybe suggest to look at this at a county level since this is what Chippewa County did about five years ago.
7. Crystal wanted to inform Council that she has responded to a request for information for a light industrial user within 200 miles of New Ulm and with twenty to forty acres of land.
8. Crystal has set up a new City of Dawson Facebook page. This was recommended by the League of Minnesota Cities after a Data Security Survey was conducted. There is nothing wrong with the previous Facebook page it just needs to be run by City staff.

Mayor Ellefson informed Council that Carmen Beninga accepted a full time position with the Montevideo Police Department and interviews will be completed next week.

On motion by Councilman Lien seconded by Councilman Harker to adjourn the meeting. Motion carries and the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

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City Clerk Treasurer Tami Schuelke-Sampson

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Mayor Merlin Ellefson