

Dawson City Council Minutes
November 14th, 2023
5:30 pm

Councilpersons present: Charlie Prestholdt, JT Schacherer, Vince Adelman, Jeff Olson, David Hansen and Jake Bothun. Others present: Mayor Randy Tensen, City Manager Jill Kemen, City Clerk Kristin Daline, Public Works Superintendent Kurt Collins, City Attorney Rick Stulz, Dave Hickey, City Engineer Jeff Kuhn, Fire Chief Brian Hersom, Dave Falness and Steve O'Neil.

Mayor Tensen called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and everyone repeated the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Prestholdt motioned to approve the agenda with a second from Councilman Hansen. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

Councilman Olson motioned to approve the October 17th Council Minutes with a second from Councilman Schacherer. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

Mayor Tensen closed the Council meeting at 5:35 pm to open the public hearing on delinquent mowing and utilities against prospective properties. Hearing nothing, Mayor Tensen closed the public hearing at 5:36 pm.

10 Minute Public Forum

Mayor Tensen opened the 10-minute public forum at 5:36 pm, hearing nothing Mayor Tensen closed the public forum at 5:36 pm.

Reports of officers, boards and committees

The W/WW committee discussed the options Widseth presented to fix the drainage problem on 15th Street. The committee recommended to fix and pave the the street the way it was supposed to be paved eliminating the crown at no cost. Quotes for new pumps and meter at the water treatment plant were presented. Recommendation is later in the meeting with Municipal Services. The final pay estimate for DSG regarding sump pumps will be discussed later in the meeting. The utility rate increase was talked about as to when the Council would like the increase to be applied next year. Larry with Widseth has drafted a letter for the permit to the MPCA. Larry did respond to MPCA and MPCA responded in regards to the permit.

The Employee Volunteer committee talked about COLA that was tabled from the last meeting and keeping it at 4.25%. ESST will start in 2024. The committee discussed front loading hours or accruing hours by hours worked. Elected officials are not covered, same with EDA. Health insurance went up 2%, dental stayed the same. The city may be losing an officer. Andy will talk to AI at the County if the department goes back to a two-person department again, for the County to cover some weekends. Andy will also get in touch with Alexandria Tech to see if he can get some students here to do ride alongs and introduce them to the area. Jill has put a help wanted ad on a billboard in St. Boni for the police department. The Union contract meeting is on Thursday. Money is budgeted for Employment Plus to look for a new City Manager starting the 1st of the year. Raises were discussed in regards to testing for licenses and giving them an incentive to take them.

An Above Ground Construction committee was scheduled but nothing was discussed.

Public Works Superintendent Kurt Collin's Report

Sludge hauling was completed this week. All restrooms have been winterized and meters pulled for the winter. The guys will be finishing putting up banners and Christmas lights this week. The street sweeper was down for a couple weeks and is working again. The sweeper was sent to the cities for repairs which was \$13,400. The original conveyor belt was ripping and there were some wiring issues with toggle switches. The machine is 10 years old and their hasn't been much done to it. Kurt has been working with Widseth and the MPCA, getting the new permit finalized.

City Manager Jill Kemen's Report

Nick Vorvick is driving the new police pickup. Andy had written a USDA squad grant to pay 45% of it. The old jetter will be sold at the same time the old police car will be sold. Andy has been working with FEMA. The city will be receiving \$9,000 in FEMA money for last year's storm damage. The EDA is pursuing a MN housing grant. There will be Community meetings to discuss amenities for 5 duplexes. Colin will be going back to the R&B department. There will be two interviews this week to hire in the W/WW department. The funding committee will meet on the budget for 2024 later this month. An additional 3rd person for W/WW will be budgeted as the city may have someone retiring. There is also money being budgeted to hire Employment Plus to look for a new City Manager. There is no update on the Liquor Store. The calls Ben has received have become stagnant. The city has paid the invoice to HLS for softball field irrigation system. Payment will be reimbursed with money taken in from the Turkey Trot. Councilman Bothun said the field was seeded today and will be fertilized tomorrow. Banners of appreciation will come at a later date. Thank you to all who has made this project possible and the countless hours of donated time and equipment to make it happen. Jill has reached out to the DNR in hopes the city could sell hunting and fishing licenses through the Deputy Registrar. The office was denied because of the hours of operation not being sufficient.

Old Business

COLA was tabled from a few meetings ago. The Employee/Volunteer committee is recommending 4.25% for COLA to combat inflation. Inflation was higher last year than what the employees got. The committee discussed dollar amounts vs. a percentage. Jill had sent three RFP's for pay scales to the council again. The RFP's were brought back to the committee and they decided to wait until a new City Manager is hired. Councilman Hansen motioned to approve COLA at 4.25% with a second from Councilman Bothun. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: Councilman Adelman and Councilman Olson. Motion passed.

The contractor agreement for Phase 2 with completion dates was provided in the packet for information only. Completion date is scheduled October 1st, 2024.

New Business

A Water Tower/Space agreement with LqP County was presented. The County is asking to use space on top of the tower for paging ambulance and fire department equipment. The project is solely paid by the county. There have been issues with where it is now at the Fire Hall. The County is looking for Dawson to approve the project to get the antenna installed before winter.

Councilman Schacherer motioned to approve the water tower/space agreement with LqP County with a second from Councilman Prestholdt. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

West Central Fire Department Association Mutual Aid Agreement was presented. Chief Brian Hersom said the mutual aid agreement is updating the current pay schedule. On motion from Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Prestholdt to approve the mutual aid agreement. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

Chief Hersom is asking Council for permission to apply for the FEMA grant again for an aerial truck. The grant submitted last year was denied. Karin Anderson would write the grant again and update the years financials for \$700. The current aerial truck is old and out of service. Aerial will have a pump on it. Councilman Olson disagrees with the department getting another aerial because of the cost of maintenance, he would like a new pumper truck instead. Hersom said that they would not be able to get a grant for a pumper truck. The aerial is 90% paid by FEMA, and the last 10% would be paid out of the equipment fund. Initially there were concerns that it would not fit in the fire hall, but it can be built low enough that it would fit. Councilman Hansen motioned to approved to move forward with the grant with a second from Councilman Prestholdt. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: Councilman Olson. Motion passed.

Pay Estimate #15 for Ryan Contracting was presented. The pay estimate of \$85,935.86 does not include any of the paving that was just done. Change orders included additional work behind the grocery store, addition of a gas main, removing an existing man hole and work by the post office. Councilman Prestholdt expressed his disappointment about the paving in the new addition that wasn't done this year after being promised it would be. City Engineer Jeff Kuhn said that with the underground being done last year, it won't be an issue to put both lifts on next year. Councilman Adelman asked about the 5-6-week lull in the late summer early fall, and why Ryan was not in town. Kuhn discussed the timeline and contractors being on additional projects. Ryan Contracting will be back to do some punch list items tomorrow. Councilman Olson motioned to approve pay estimate #15 for Ryan Contracting with a second from Councilman Hansen. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman and Councilman Schacherer. Against: Councilman Prestholdt. Motion passed.

Pay Estimate #3 for DSG was presented for \$20,507.82. This is the final pay estimate from the meter project. Councilman Olson motioned to approve the pay estimate for DSG with a second from Councilman Bothun. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

An invoice from BNSF was presented for the 5th Street crossing. Jill did mention that the debris by the railroad tracks will be taken care of by the railroad. Sam from the County will reach out to

the road master. On motion from Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Hansen to approve the invoice as presented. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed. Kuhn mentioned that he will be having the new planks surveyed as the elevation is different on 6th street crossing.

The city received three bids for new pumps and a water meter at the Water plant to fill our water tower. The meters were included in our water meter project. Low bid was Municipal Services with a quote total of \$172,400. Municipal Services offered to reduce the bid if the city choose the Patterson pump by \$35,000 for a final quote of \$137,400. There is \$26,000 left from the meter project, money from the State that the city will receive in December will be set aside. Remaining balance will come out the Water fund. On motion from Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Hansen to award the bid to Municipal Services. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

The W/WW committee recommended raising the utility rate in January 2024. Utility bills will go a minimum of \$14.34/mo. based on usage for residential. The clean-up fee coming off will be coming off which is \$21 a year. The increase will be on the January 20th billing. The 1st and 2nd readings will be in December. On motion from Councilman Adelman with a second from Councilman Prestholdt to approve the utility rate increase for January 2024. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

Heather Nursery provided quotes for different options for hanging baskets. \$5,000 is put in the budget every year. Duane with Heather Nursery said the current baskets are shot. After reviewing the options, Councilman Hansen motioned to table the decision with a second from Councilman Adelman. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

The city office will be closed the day after Thanksgiving. On motion by Councilman Hansen with a second from Councilman Bothun. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

Ordinances and Resolutions

A resolution authorizing Farmers Mutual donation for the fire department was presented. Farmers Mutual donates every year to the fire department. On motion from Councilman Hansen with a second from Councilman Olson. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

A Resolution re-establishing the polling precinct and precinct location for the city was presented. On motion from Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Hansen. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

A resolution certifying delinquent mowing and clean-up services against prospective properties was presented. On motion from Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Prestholdt. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

A resolution certifying delinquent utilities against prospective properties was presented. On motion from Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Bothun. Voting in favor, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Olson, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Schacherer. Against: none. Motion passed.

Miscellaneous Announcements

The next Council meeting is Tuesday, December 5th at 6:00 pm due to truth and taxation. Council will approve the budget for 2024.

Light your way Gnome is scheduled for Sunday, December 3rd from 4-7 pm. No city funds will be used towards this event. Jill wrote a grant and received \$2,500 from the Dawson Community Foundation and the Greater Community Credit Union donated \$500. J&J Athletics donated a light feature. Schommer's Food truck will be there this year. The Chamber will be helping the kids with a craft. The lights will be put up on Thursday at 1pm. Please donate your time if able.

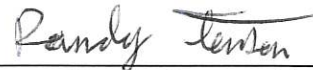
Upcoming committee meetings: Employee/Volunteer Thursday, November 16th at 10 am and Funding, Wednesday, November 22nd at 9 am.

With nothing more to discuss, Councilman Hansen motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second from Councilman Bothun. Voting in favor, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Schacherer, Councilman Bothun, Councilman Hansen and Councilman Olson. Against: none. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.



Kristin Daline, City Clerk



Randy Tensen, Mayor