

City of Hewitt  
509 East Third Ave  
Hewitt, Minnesota 56453

City Council Minutes  
Regular Meeting

September 9th, 2014  
City Hall, 7:00 p.m.

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**CALL TO ORDER**            The Hewitt City Council met in regular session. Acting Mayor Jim Opelia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**        The City Council and all present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Council present:    Jim Opelia, Acting Mayor  
                             Donald Fitzgerald, Councilmember  
                             Alice Melzer, Councilmember  
                             Alex Weego, Councilmember

Staff present:        Luke Mitchell, Maintenance  
                             Michael Dagen, Clerk/Treasurer

Guests:                Diana & Gerald Chromey, Karen Raskie,  
                             Trinity Gruenberg, Rebecca Hendrickson  
                             Mondry, Allen Mondry

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Alex Weego requested adding “Hewitt Relief Fund Committee” to the old business section of the meeting agenda. Acting Mayor Jim Opelia stated that Rebecca Hendrickson’s land use permit application will be added to the new business portion of the agenda. Jim Opelia pointed out that on page three of the regular minutes Jim Opelia’s name should be added to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the motion.

**MINUTES  
CONT...**

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to approve the minutes from the August 13<sup>th</sup> regular meeting and the minutes from the August 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> special meetings**, Alice Melzer 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**FINANCIAL  
REPORTS**

Alex Weego asked what the WEX bill was for and Clerk Dagen stated that it is the city's new fuel card for fire department and city fuel expenses. Donald Fitzgerald asked about water account #1 and Dagen shared that a payment was made to this account yesterday. Alex Weego asked if the Carrot Top Industries bill was for the new city flags and Lead Maintenance Luke Mitchell said yes. Alice Melzer asked about water & sewer account #1048 and Dagen said that a payment was made today, so the water has been turned back on. Alex Weego made a motion **to pay checks #14007-14026**, Donald Fitzgerald 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**MAINTENANCE  
REPORT**

Lead maintenance Luke Mitchell said that he would like to get the plow truck DOT'd. Donald Fitzgerald asked if anything was going to be done with the dirt piles and weeds at the tractor pull track. Alice Melzer said that her husband should be working on the tractor pull track this weekend. Karen Raskie asked when her curb stop would be repaired. Luke said that he just asked Aaron Fore about this matter and will look into it further. Luke said that Braaten Aggregate added gravel and bladed a couple roads in town, but there are still more to be done.

**CLERKS  
REPORT**

Clerk Michael Dagen pointed out that a bid for M-State to install a sealed combustion gas furnace in the water plant is included in the council packets.

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to approve M-State's bid for the water plant furnace with a cap of \$2000**, Jim Opelia 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**CLERKS  
REPORT  
CONT...**

Clerk Michael Dagen shared that the cities in Todd County are considering submitting for a grant to cover a feasibility study on a County wide trail project. Dagen said that the City of Long Prairie is heading the grant application and a draft letter of support for the project is located on the back of his report. Michael explained that he has been asked to give a presentation with Brenda Thomas from Long Prairie, on the trail project at the NJPA's Innovation summit on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to send a letter of commitment on behalf of the City of Hewitt supporting the trail project and to allow the clerk to attend the NJPA meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup>**, Jim Opelia 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

Alex asked if the Clerk was planning to attend the NJPA/Region Five Summit on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Michael said that he would attend if the council would like him to. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **for Clerk Michael Dagen and Councilmember Alex Weego to attend the Region Five meeting on Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>**, Alice Melzer 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**MAYOR'S  
REPORT**

Jim Opelia asked if there are any questions on the fire department minutes. Alice Melzer said that fire department would like to be kept in the loop in regards to random drug testing. Mrs. Melzer stated that the fire department is looking into options for anti slip measures for their work boots. Donald Fitzgerald said that the fire department needs to work with the city on updating the city's personnel and drug test policy. Alex asked if the NJPA purchasing contract lists any company that carry fire department gear and Clerk Dagen said yes.

**\*Old Business\***

**SENIOR  
CENTER**

Carol Carroll explained that Alex Weego invited her to speak on behalf of her offer for the senior center building and to set some things straight. Carol said that her proposal for the senior center still stands and that she would like to bring her bakery and tea room to town. Ms. Carroll explained that for 11 years she has made her payments on time to Ted Merickel for the Miracle Mansion in Wadena. Alex Weego explained that he will be meeting with Carol and Rick Utech from the Todd County Development Commission tomorrow. Donald Fitzgerald said that he thinks bringing a bakery to town is a great idea, but doesn't feel the city should go with a payment plan. Alex said that with the council's permission he would like to continue to work with Carol Carroll. Clerk Michael Dagen asked if the council would like to extend Carol's deadline for purchasing the senior center. Alex Weego stated that he would like to extend Carol's deadline 45 days. There was a discussion about the duration of time to extend the deadline. Alex Weego made a **motion to extend Carol Carroll's deadline to purchase the senior center to 45 days**, Jim Opelia 2<sup>nd</sup>, Alex, Jim, Alice in favor, Fitz no. motion carried.

**EMPLOYEE  
PERSONNEL  
& DRUG TEST  
POLICY**

Clerk Dagen said that there are no new developments with the city's personnel and drug test policies.

**ORGANIZED  
GARBAGE**

Donald Fitzgerald asked if Prairie Sanitary will be sending out a letter to Hewitt Citizens in regards to the different dumpster size options that will be available with organized garbage service. Clerk Dagen said that the city's attorney is working on updating the contract between the city and Prairie Sanitary and once that is complete the process will proceed.

**MILL  
REMOVAL**

Donald Fitzgerald stated that the old mill building is still there.

**LOOSE DOG  
COMPLAINT**

Clerk Michael Dagen said that today he tried to contact the person who filed the loose dog complaint, but was unable to reach them. Michael said that the dog owners still haven't licensed their animals with the city. Jim Opelia asked if there have been any further complaints and Dagen said no. Jim stated that if there are any further complaints, the council will have to take action.

**HEWITT  
FLOOD  
RELIEF  
COMMITTEE**

Alex Weego explained that the Hewitt Flood Relief Fund agreement with the Initiative Foundation says that the city needs to form a committee that will decide on how to disburse the relief funds. Alex said that the committee will be comprised of a member of the public, school board, county, a local business and the city. Mr. Weego said that himself, Jerry Hasse from the school board and Holly Knutson have volunteered for the committee so far.

**\*\*New Business\*\***

**REBECCA  
HENDRICKSON  
MONDRY LAND  
USE PERMIT**

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to approve Rebecca Hendrickson Mondry's land use permit**, Jim Opelia 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor motion carried.

**RESOLUTION  
#14-014  
PRELIMINARY  
TAX LEVY**

Alex Weego explained that once the preliminary tax levy is set the council can lower but not raise the levy. Alex said that he has learned that the county's portion of the property tax will be going up in 2015.

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to approve resolution #14-014 setting the preliminary Tax Levy for 2015 at \$70,620**, Alice Melzer 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**RESOLUTION  
#14-012  
APPROVING  
SPONSORSHIP  
FOR  
COMMUNITY  
CONCERN FOR  
YOUTH**

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to approve resolution #14-012 sponsoring the Community Concern for Youth program in 2015**, Alex Weego 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**UPDATED  
COMMUNITY  
CENTER &  
MUSEUM  
APPRAISEL**

Clerk Michael Dagen explained that the League of MN Cities appraisal for the Museum came in roughly \$30,000 higher and the Community Center \$900 higher than the previous appraisal. Alex asked what the city is currently paying for property insurance and clerk Dagen said that the city pays roughly a \$1000 a year in property insurance for the Museum. Michael said that before the budget workshop meeting, he can find out how much this appraisal will affect the city's 2015 property insurance.

**LEAGUE OF  
MN CITIES  
REGIONAL  
MEETING**

Donald Fitzgerald made a **motion to permit any city councilmember who wants to attend the October 29<sup>th</sup> League of MN Cities meeting in Vergus for \$40**, Jim Opelia 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**NJPA  
INNOVATION  
PROGRAM**

Clerk Michael Dagen explained that the NJPA Innovation Program is what the Todd County cities will apply to for covering a feasibility study for the County wide trail project. Alex asked if the trail project is only for Todd County. Michael said that the feasibility study would look at creating a multi use trail from Sauk Centre to Itasca State Park.

**FLETSCHOCK  
& DAGEN  
FENCE  
PERMIT  
APPLICATION**

There was a discussion about the height and style of the Fletschock/Dagen fence. Michael Dagen stated that they would like to build six foot fence around their yard, including the front of their property. Dagen said that he was concerned that his dogs could jump a 4 ft fence in the front of his yard.

**FLETSCHOCK  
/DAGEN  
FENCE  
PERMITT  
CONT...**

Alice Melzer and Donald Fitzgerald stated that since the fence will run from the front of the house to the other building, a 6 ft fence would be allowed. Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to approve the Fletschock/Dagen fence permit**, Jim Opelia 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, motion carried.

**2014 FLOOD  
RELIEF  
UPDATE**

Alex Weego shared that he attended a FEMA information meeting in Long Prairie. Alex stated that FEMA would be contacting the city to set up a “kick off” meeting to get the application for assistance started. Clerk Dagen stated that he spoke with Jerry Bennett from FEMA. Michael said that he asked Jerry about the city’s damaged culvert and he learned that it doesn’t matter if the culvert is repaired before FEMA visits the city.

**OPEN  
FORUM**

Karen Raskie asked about the tree limb blocking the stop sign by Ellen Peter’s house. Luke shared that he will be contacting Mike Allen about trimming this branch, along with others in the road right of way around town.

Alex Weego made a motion **to adjourn the meeting**, Donald Fitzgerald 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, except Fitz, motion carried.

**MEETING  
AJOURNED**

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to open the meeting**, Jim Opelia 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor motion carried.

Alex Weego made a motion **to schedule a budget workshop meeting for October 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm**, Donald Fitzgerald 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor motion carried.

There was a discussion about the senior center building.

Donald Fitzgerald made a motion **to adjourn the meeting**, Alex Weego 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, except Fitz, motion carried.

Mayor \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk \_\_\_\_\_

