January 10, 2012

Regular Council Meeting

Pledge:

Mayor and all Council Members were present.

Minutes: The minutes of the December 13, 2011 meeting were accepted with a change of an acronym from EMR to DMR. The minutes from December 13, 2011 Truth in Taxation were accepted with a correction in spelling of Meszaros. Motion to accept the minutes made by Alex, seconded by Alice, all in favor motion carried.

Financial Reports: Darlene questioned why we were still paying a water bill for the Senior Center. It was because they had still been using the facility part of the time so Aaron had not shut off the water yet. He will be doing that this week but they will still have one more water bill with the January readings. Alex questioned the amount of the Minnesota Power bill. Alex questioned what the MCFOA payments. They were the dues for the clerk and payment of the conference in March. Barbara also asked about if she should commute or stay in a motel for the conference. Janet from Bertha has offered to share a room if she would like to do that and that would save money for both cities. The council determined that she could decide to do whichever would be best for her. Alex made a motion to refer to audit, seconded by Alice, all in favor motion carried.

Council liked the color coding on the water/sewer collection reports. Only 4 past due letters needed to go out this week. There are 3 customers that are in default on their contracts and they will be shut off on Friday if not brought back up to date. The 2 customers that we sent the letter to stating we would turn them over to the attorney for collection had not responded. It was determined that we should just continue to send them bills due to the cost of the attorney doing a collection on these. If they do not pay we will end up having to write them off as they are not able to be turned into the County Auditor for assessments as they no longer own the homes. Requiring a deposit for all new water customers was discussed.

Moving money from the checking account to a CD or money market account was discussed to replace the CD that was cashed to cover expenses while we waited for the LGA money. It was determined to wait until the first half of 2012 LGA money arrives and then decide what to do with the money.

Darlene questioned why we have a balance in the water funds. We discussed we no longer put a percentage into the debt service fund. The final two payments from the debt service fund were discussed, there is one due in February and the last payment is due in August. Alex questioned why we can’t take the monies back out of the debt service account. Barbara will contact Katie to see if there is a statute regarding the limitations of these funds.

Alex questioned the two old checks. Barbara stated that we could turn them into the state if they are valid. She will research these to determine what to with these.

Alex made a motion to refer to audit, seconded by Darlene, all in favor motion carried.

Presenters: Michael Dagen made a request for permission to submit an inquiry to apply for a $5,000.00 grant for a project make the area known as Mount Nebo into a park. The current owner of this property is considering gifting it to the City of Hewitt to make this area into a park that would be named for her. The $5,000.00 grant could be used for planning of the park. There may be other funding available through Legacy Trail Amendment for parks and trails later to help with construction of the project. The deadline for these funds is October 31, 2012. Funding is available from $20,000 to $500,000 with a 10% match for these funds. The city would possibly have costs for legal fees for the transfer of the property and also may have to contribute to the cost of the planning. He estimated that the planning would run between $5000.00 and $10,000.00. In order to apply for the Legacy funds the city would have to cover the cost of an archaeological inspection as there is a written history of this being Indian land. He did not know the cost of the inspection but will research this area. He feels that if it is found to be Indian land that it would be very beneficial to the park. Michael felt that we could reopen the railroad beds for a trail to the park for hiking and biking. The Legacy Trail money can only be used for non-motorized trails. The current owner of the land and most of the land owners that would be affected by the trail agree that they would like it to be a non-motorized trail. There is one land owner that would like it to be a motorized trail. Alex made a motion to approve that Michael send the letter to pursue the possibility of funding for the planning of this project. If the funding is approved he will need to return to the council and present the options available to us at that time. The motion was seconded by Jim, all in favor motion carried.

A Legacy workshop is coming up in February. Michael requested permission to attend this workshop. Alex and Alice both feel that they will also attend this workshop in Little Falls on the 13th of February also.

Michael also has been in discussion with members of the Verndale Farmer’s Market about having another sight in Hewitt at the River Park. A motion was made by Alex to have the Farmer’s Market, seconded by Darlene. All in favor, motion carried.

Maintenance Report: Aaron had purchase order for approval for the water plant for a new pump and supplies. He also had a purchase order for new flags. Jim made a motion to approve these expenditures, seconded by Darlene, all in favor, motion carried.

The water plant has been having problems with the thermal relays and the main well pump has been tripping off. Aaron has talked with the electrician and will be replacing these to see if that will correct the problem.

Aaron has been in contact with the Department of Health regarding the pump issue to be sure that he has been handling everything correctly.

The Christmas decorations are down already.

Clerk’s Report: Resolution to pay bills prior to the council meeting was completed. This resulted in savings of $40.00 over the late payment from the prior month.

Coding has been completed of the disbursements for the audit and entries have been made.

Workman’s Comp refund has been received in the amount of $1152.00.

The dividends check from the League of Minnesota was also received in the amount of $2105.00.

Letter were sent to Denim and Diamonds declining their request for a reduction in license fees, and DJ Tack & Treasure declining their request to be changed from commercial rates to residential rates for their water/sewer service.

December’s reconciliation has been completed.

All the information requested by Katie prior to the audit has been transmitted to her. The letter from LarsonAllen, LLP approving the completion of the audit was returned to their office. Katie will be here January 25-26 to begin the audit.

2011 CTAS offsite storage – It was determined that we should check into getting a larger safety deposit box for the offsite storage. Barbara will check into it when she goes to the bank. A motion was made by Alex to check into a larger safety deposit box for offsite storage, seconded by Jim, all in favor, motion carried.

Both liquor licenses have been sent into the state. We have not yet received the approvals back. Licenses will be issued as soon as they are returned.

Mayor’s Report: There is a grant available from the Minnesota DNR Forestry to replace trees in the area. This was given to Aaron to pursue.

David Coffey has been working on the AED (defibrillator fund). There are additional units that will be purchased at the same time by others so that we may be able to get a better price on each unit. One will be placed at City Hall, one in each bar and one at the café. Alex questioned if training would be needed for these units. It was determined that the directions are very clear and anyone should be able to operate them following the instructions.

New Business: Fire Department Relief Association – 8% payment: This is the payment from the Fire Department funds to the Fire Relief Fund at 8% of the total Standby Fees. Alex made a motion to have the funds released to the Fire Department, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried. This check can be issued prior to the next council meeting. This year we will issue these funds as soon as all the Standby Fees are received.

Ambulance Service Contract: Alex made a motion to enter into the contract, seconded by Darlene, all in favor, motion carried.

Receipts by Fund/Account 2009/2010/2011: Alex questioned the amount received in 2011 from licenses. It was determined that one liquor license had not been paid on time in 2009, and 2010 therefore in 2011 there were funds received from 2010 as all as the 2011 license fees. Alex questioned the change in the water/sewer funds. This was due to the change in the percentage put into these funds versus the Debt Service Fund. Alex noted that we will no longer be receiving the Market Value Homestead Credit. Alex questioned what the refunds were from. It was determined that the council would also like to see a similar comparison of expenditures. Barbara will complete this task as soon as there is time.

Handbook of Minnesota Cities: Should we purchase the new edition or use the free on-line addition? It was determined that we should order the new edition. Jim recommended that this be done every two years or so.

Designation of Official Newspaper, Bank and Attorney: A resolution 12-001 will be issued keeping all items the same as last year. Jim made a motion to approve Resolution 12-001 keeping everything the same as last year, seconded by Darlene, all in favor, motion carried.

Certification of municipal election hours: Hours were determined to be from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Jim made the motion to set the hours from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried.

Desk – Star Bank: Star Bank has an extra desk; credenza and chair that they have offered to donate to the city clerk’s office. The desk currently in the clerk’s office would then go into the shop for their use as a workbench. Aaron said he could pick it up at the bank on Wednesday. The council approved getting the new office furniture.

Committee Members 2012: Changes from 2011: Civil Defense and Emergency Management Committee – City Staff Member change from Adam Templin to Aaron Fore; All city clerk positions to be changed to Barbara Holmes; No other changes to be made.

City of Hewitt 2012 Fee Schedule: Water connection will increase to $400.00; Water Re-Connection will be changed to $50.00 during regular business hours and $100.00 during off hours (only for water turned off for nonpayment, no fee charged for individuals who turn off their water for seasonal reasons), Sewer connection Fee will increase to $400.00, Dog License Renewal fee will be changed to $5.00, Fire Call, First Hour will change to $400.00; Labor and Tractor Rate will increase to $100.00; Labor and Lawnmower Rate will increase to $100.00, Returned Check Fee increased to $40.00. Barbara will complete Resolution 12-002 for the 2012 Fee Schedule. Darlene made the motion to accept the changes for the 2012 Fee Schedule, seconded by Alice, all in favor, motion carried.

Unfinished Business: League of MN Cities - Claim # PC000931 – Bond: This is still unresolved.

Kathy Sletto Housing Update: Hewitt has construction jobs completed, 1 in progress, 2 households are on the waiting list.

Property at 308 E 3rd Ave.: No new information on status.

City Clerk 3 Month Review: Alex questioned closing the meeting and Barbara said she didn’t care if it was closed or not. Darlene questioned how Barbara felt things were going. Barbara feels that it is going well, good progress in getting things cleaned up. Juanita questioned how she feels about dealing with everyone. Barbara feels everyone is easy to work with and enjoys working with everyone. Darlene questioned how it was going with the hours Barbara works. Barbara stated that with the holidays it has been difficult to get everything done. Darlene feels that Barbara is doing well getting things cleaned up. She appreciates what she does including the reminders to stop and sign checks etc. Jim appreciates the quality of the minutes Barbara has been completing. Alice commented that she has not heard any citizens complain about anything the city clerk has done. Alex said he was glad Barbara is here. Juanita commented that if Barbara has any problems to be sure that she lets them know and not just throw up her hands and leave. Barbara said she doesn’t give up that easy. Barbara asked for anything that they had noticed that needed to be improved on and the council stated that at this time there were no areas that they could find to comment on.

Requests & Complaints: Friendly Rider Schedule has been received and is available to the public. We need to ride the bus to keep it so everyone needs to ride the bus at least once.

Alice said that Dennis was questioning if the is any way we can limit parking on Hwy. 210. Darlene said that the Highway Patrol should be having them towed if they were there very long and Alice said that the vehicle in question had been there for a month and had not been towed. Since it is on the highway we are limited to what we can enforce on a state highway.

A motion was made by Alex to close the meeting, seconded by Darlene. All in favor, motion carried.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Mayor, Juanita Mitchell

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 City Clerk/Treasurer, Barbara Holmes