City of Hewitt

509 East Third Ave

Hewitt, Minnesota 56453

City Council Minutes July 9th, 2013

Regular Meeting City Hall, 7:00 p.m.

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**CALL TO ORDER**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Hewitt City Council met in regular session. Mayor Juanita Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The City Council and all present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Council present: Juanita Mitchell, Mayor

 Jim Opelia, Council Member

 Donald Fitzgerald, Council Member

 Alice Melzer, Council Member

 Alex Weego, Council Member

Staff present: Luke Mitchell Maintenance

 Aaron Fore Maintenance

 Michael Dagen, Clerk/Treasurer

Guests: Karen Ackerman, Diana Chromey, Michael Stokes, Carolynne Bisel

Alex made a motion to **except the June 11th Council meeting minutes**, Fitz 2nd, Jim, Fitz, Alice, All in favor, motion carried.

There was a discussion about the new Husqvarna mower purchased from Merickel’s in Wadena that has already been returned for repairs two times. Councilman Alex Weego stated that he searched the title for the Hewitt Church of the Nazarene; parcel #35-0021100 at the County records and the property came out all clear.

**MAINTENANCE REPORT:**

**CLERK’S REPORT:**

Jim Opelia made a motion to **refer to audit and pay checks number 13468 to 13492**, Alex 2nd, all in favor motion carried.

Alex shared that he felt the repairs to 5th Ave have been holding up well. Maintenance lead Luke Mitchell referred to his notes that state a proper repair to 5th Ave. between Front and Pickle Street will cost around $800.

Alex made a motion **to install the volleyball court at the Museum park**, Donald Fitzgerald 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Fitz made a motion **to approve the purchase orders for the Sensaphone 400, flags and flag hardware and tether ball**, Jim 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Fitz made a motion **to purchase stain for the pavilion with leftovers being used for the memorial**, Alex 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Fitz made a motion **to paint four crosswalks across highway 210 with a $250 cap**, Alex 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

There was a discussion about the external hard drive mentioned in Clerk Michael Dagen’s notes. Fitz stated that he would bring the hard drive into “The Computer Guy” in Wadena to be cleared. There was a discussion about the interest rate on the City’s CD dropping from 1% to .5%. The Council requested that Michael look for other options for the CD and report his findings at the next meeting.

**KEN BLASKE DONATION REQUEST FOR HEWITT CEMETERY**

**MILL REMOVAL**

**LEAGUE of MN CITIES ACCIDENT PLAN FOR VOLUNTEERS RENEWAL**

**NUISANCE COMPLAINT 224 FRONT STREET NORTH**

**CRAIG POMERENKE WATER SEWER COMPLAINT**

**\*UNFINISHED BUSINESS\***

Fitz made a motion **to donate $400 out of the general fund to the Hewitt Cemetery Association**, Mayor Juanita Mitchell 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Alex informed that there are no new developments with the removal of the old mill.

 **\*New Business\***

Fitz made a motion **to renew the accident plan for volunteers**, Jim 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Donald Fitzgerald referenced his complaint against 224 Front Street North. Mr. Fitzgerald explained that he doesn’t believe that anyone is living there since the water is shut off, but garbage is piled up in the three unlicensed vehicles; which have been on the property since at least 2008. Fitz explained that he has received a lot of complaints about this property and he feels that the exposed garbage is a health hazard. Fitz made a motion **to send a certified letter to Nicole Canfield giving 30 days to remove the unlicensed vehicles and trash from her property**, Jim 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Michael explained that he took a complaint from Mr. Pomerenke over the phone. Clerk Dagen informed that Craig had a leaking hose in his back yard for about a week, so Mr. Pomerenke would like to be credited for the extra sewer charge for the leaking water. Michael shared that he figured out that the sewer charge for Craig’s gallons used over his average, would come to $25.71.

**HEWITT EVENT COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR PICKLE FEST DONATION**

**SHEILA & MICK STOKES SEWER COMPLAINT**

Jim made a motion **to credit Mr. Pomerenke for the extra sewer charge due to his water leak in the amount of $25.71**, Fitz 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Fitz made a motion **to donate $400 to the Hewitt Event Committee for the Pickle Fest from the charitable gambling fund**, Jim 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Michael Stokes explained that he has discovered that his property’s upstairs bathroom isn’t connected to the City sewer. Mick shared that he thinks that his bathroom is connected to a septic tank which must be full, because sewage has started to back up in his basement. There was a discussion about the fact that assessments were still on the property for the water and sewer installation when the Stokes purchased the house in 1997. It was stated that the two sewer pipes are about eight feet apart in the basement, but the one running to the upstairs bathroom is cast iron, so there is a concern of how easy it will be to tee off to the City sewer. Councilman Alex Weego stated that as far as he is concerned, the issue is: was the City responsible for hooking up the sewer or did the previous owner pay a private contractor to hook up the sewer to the City system. Mr. Weego said that he felt if the City hooked up the sewer; they would be responsible for the sewer issue, but if the owner paid someone for the hookup, the owner of the house would be responsible for the sewer hookup. Mr. Stokes explained that he can’t answer who connected the house to the sewer, but he does know that he has been over charged for sewer service for 15 years. Mayor Juanita Mitchell expressed that she thinks this is a health issue and shouldn’t wait a month to be decided. Alex made a motion **that the water and sewer committee have the authority to approve up to $500 to repair the Stokes sewer**, Fitz 2nd, all in favor motion carried.

**DONALD ZUEHLKE LETTER**

**CITY INSURANCE SUMMARY & LIABILITY COVERAGE WAIVER**

**DIANA CHROMEY PRESENTATION ON CLUSTER MAILBOXES**

**DUANE ZIEMKOWSKI RESIGNATION LETTER**

**REQUEST TO USE 2ND AVE FOR ACCESS TO FIELD**

Juanita explained that the City received a letter from Donald Zuehlke giving permission to mow and assess the charges to the Bonnie Hanson property at 402 Power Ave.

Clerk Michael Dagen explained that the City needs to decide to waive or not to waive the monetary limits on their tort liability established by Minnesota Statutes 466.04. Mr. Dagen stated that in the past, the City has chosen to waive the monetary limit which raises the cost of their insurance by 3.5%. Jim made a **motion to waive the monetary limits on tort liability**, Fitz 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Diana Chromey shared that she, along with her husband Gerald, replaced the board that the mailboxes on her block are located on. Mrs. Chromey explained that she learned from the post master in Wadena that the community there is switching to a cluster mailbox system that requires a key for access. Diana requested that the City of Hewitt purchase cluster boxes for the citizens here. The Council explained to Mrs. Chromey that the property owners who have their mail delivered to mailboxes would need to chip in together if they would like a new cluster mailbox.

Fitz made a motion **to except Duane Ziemkowski’s resignation letter**, Jim 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

Luke Mitchell requested that a part-time snow plow driver be hired in the next couple of months.

Jim Opelia brought up that the roads and bridges committee has a received a request from Thomas Meszaros to use 2nd Ave E to access his field on the south side of highway 210.

**2ND AVE REQUEST CONTINUED**

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

Mr. Opelia explained that this portion of 2nd Ave is currently not accessible due to the fact that it is over grown up with trees. Jim presented a map and photographs showing other access routes to the field via highway 210. Councilman Opelia presented his recommendation that unless someone where to build a house on the Meszaros property; he doesn’t feel that the 2nd Ave E access route should be opened up. Fitz made a motion **to deny the Thomas Meszaros request to open the 2nd Ave E as an access route and to recommend using the approach off of 210 to access the Meszaros field**, Alex 2nd, all in favor, motion carried.

**\*OPEN FORUM\***

Juanita brought up that the Council needs to discuss the tractor pull track. Alice Melzer stated that her husband Terry grated and leveled the track and that it is ready for clay. Luke asked if the clay truck had showed up and Alice said yes, but the track wasn’t ready for the clay, so the truck was sent away. There was a discussion about if the clay installed this year could be used for a new track across the road next year and it was pointed out that it couldn’t be reused because it would be mixed with sand and gravel. Juanita brought up that the City has paid for the clay and gravel for the tractor pull the past seven years. Fitz made a motion **to give permission for two loads of clay for the tractor pull track**, Alex 2nd, Alex, Juanita, Jim and Alice in favor, Fitz NO, motion carried.

Fitz made a motion **to adjourn the meeting**, Alex 2nd, Alex, Fitz, Jim and Alice in favor, Juanita NO, motion carried.