



**City of Newport
City Council Minutes
March 7, 2013**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Ingemann called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL -

Council Present – Tom Ingemann, Bill Sumner, Tracy Rahm, Steven Gallagher

Council Absent – Tim Geraghty

Staff Present – Deb Hill, City Administrator; Bruce Hanson, Supt. of Public Works; Curt Montgomery, Police Chief; Mark Mailand, Fire Chief; Renee Helm, Executive Analyst; Fritz Knaak, City Attorney; John Stewart, City Engineer;

Staff Absent –

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion by Rahm, seconded by Gallagher, to adopt the Agenda as presented. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent the motion carried.

5. ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Sumner, seconded by Gallagher, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, which includes the following items:

- A. Minutes of the February 21, 2013 Regular City Council Meeting
- B. Minutes of the February 21, 2013 City Council Workshop Meeting
- C. List of Bills in the Amount of \$166,779.34

With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent the motion carried.

6. VISITORS PRESENTATIONS/PETITIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

Tom Aguilar-Downing, 1550 Wild Ridge Ct N – I just wanted to know if the public has chance for input during the Communities of Distinction discussion.

Councilman Ingemann – Yes.

7. MAYOR'S REPORT – Nothing to report

8. COUNCIL REPORTS –

Councilman Gallagher – I attended a Met Council TAB meeting. The Department of Transportation Commissioner was there and spoke about the changes in the Metro area. The Met Council Transportation Chairperson also spoke about Governor Dayton's proposal to increase sales tax and where those funds would go. The Red Rock Corridor is on the list, among other light rails. I also participated in the Communities of Distinction conference call on Tuesday. I reached out to members of the community on their thoughts about it.

Councilman Sumner – I attended yesterday’s HPC meeting. I found out that the Federal Government uses the Newport Heritage Preservation Comp Plan as a national model for small cities. I asked the consultant what he thought the most interesting building in Newport was. He thought the log cabin, which is up by the Methodist Church. He thought it is the oldest building in Minnesota. He said the logs were harvested in downtown St. Paul. They hope to evaluate their goals in the future.

Councilman Ingemann – I also attended the conference call for Communities of Distinction.

Councilman Rahm – Nothing to report.

**9. ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT –
A. Hiring for the Accountant Position**

Admin. Hill presented on this item as outlined in the March 7, 2013 City Council packet. Admin. Hill is recommending the City Council hire Deb McDonald for the Accountant position. Ms. McDonald will start on March 18, 2013.

Motion by Ingemann, seconded by Rahm to hire Deb McDonald as Accountant for the City of Newport. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent, the motion carried.

B. Resolution No. 2013-7 – Establishing Water and Sewer Rates for May 2013 through 2017

Admin. Hill presented on this item as outlined in the March 7, 2013 City Council packet.

Councilman Gallagher – With this resolution, we’re saying that we’ll be raising water and sewer rates through 2017, correct? I think, it’d be better to raise the rates through 2014 and then re-evaluate our cash flow at that time.

Admin. Hill – Stacey had mentioned that it might be prudent in a couple of years to re-evaluate the rates.

Councilman Sumner – Let’s ask the City Engineer how realistic he thinks these rates are looking at the projects ahead.

Engineer Stewart – We did the same process about four years ago. I think Councilman Gallagher’s idea of re-evaluating in 2014 is a good idea. There are several projects in the CIP for utilities.

Councilman Gallagher – I’ll make an amendment to approve the water rates through 2014. Otherwise, we’re looking at a 30% increase over the next four years. I think we should know whether or not we need to do that.

Councilman Sumner – We have a long-term proposal to do the streets and the City watermain improvements.

Engineer Stewart – If you take a look at the development for the transit station, there will be a lot of improvements to that to make water and sewer available, so we’ll need to think very hard on how to generate that money.

Councilman Gallagher – If it’s over \$1,000,000, you pretty much have to bond it.

Engineer Stewart – My thought there was that you would do that as an enterprise bond, which you would need the income to make the annual payments. I would suggest that you implement the amendment and re-evaluate the rates when the 2014 audit is complete.

Admin. Hill – A lot of the capital improvements with the street improvements were built into the proposed rates.

Motion by Sumner, seconded by Gallagher to approve Resolution No. 2013-7 as amended. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent, the motion carried.

C. Ordinance No. 2013-3 – Amending Chapter 2, Administration and Chapter 4, Licensing

Admin. Hill presented on this item as outlined in the March 7, 2013 City Council packet.

Motion by Gallagher, seconded by Sumner to approve Ordinance No. 2013-3 as presented. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent, the motion carried.

D. Communities of Distinction

Admin. Hill – We had a conference call on this proposal March 5. They did send us a participation agreement if we choose to participate in it. I'll turn it over to you for discussion.

Councilman Gallagher – This is a tough one for me. Here we're balancing how we're going to advertise the City, where we'll advertise, and what is our return on investment with it. Something that comes to mind when thinking about this is those books of distinction where you have to send in \$20 or so to be listed in a book. It seems like the same thing and it just doesn't feel right to me.

Councilman Ingemann – When they were talking, they were saying how great everything is but they're selling it. You called other cities to see what they thought, some liked it, and some didn't.

Councilman Gallagher – The ones that liked it were bigger cities. An interesting point someone made is would you ever think about moving somewhere because of a five-minute commercial? Probably not. I think we need to have a market analysis done to see where we should advertise and who we should advertise to.

Tom Aguilar-Downing, 1550 Wild Ridge Ct N – Were we planning to do this before they approached us?

Councilman Ingemann – No.

Councilman Rahm – In my opinion, this is the cart before the horse. We need to figure out who we want to market first.

Councilman Gallagher – Most of the cities that were debating this, were like ours and looking for a piece to spark development. I called some of the cities that didn't do it and asked if they were disappointed in not doing it and they said no. Some of the ones who did it were disappointed that they spent money on it based on the return on investment.

Councilman Ingemann – You're broadcasting to a national audience and they aren't going to know where Newport is.

Mr. Aguilar-Downing – Have we looked at comparisons and shopped it out?

Councilman Gallagher – No.

Councilman Ingemann – I don't think we've done enough research on it.

Mr. Aguilar-Downing – I think we could probably do it locally for less than \$20,000.

Councilman Sumner – How many cities have done this?

Councilman Gallagher – They're looking for 75 this year.

Councilman Rahm – I don't think we're ready for it yet.

Motion by Ingemann, seconded by Gallagher to not move forward with Communities of Distinction. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent, the motion carried.

Councilman Gallagher – Can I ask that we look at doing a marketing study or plan at the next EDA meeting?

Councilman Ingemann – Can we have someone here from the SWCTC to talk about making a video for us?

Councilman Rahm – I've started conversations with them already.

10. ATTORNEY'S REPORT –

Attorney Knaak – You have before you the prosecution report. Two cases are scheduled for hearings in March so I will have a report on those coming up. I also provided you with materials on open meeting laws. I'd be happy to present on it anytime.

Councilman Ingemann – Could you send this out to the other commissions?

Executive Analyst Helm – Yes.

11. POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT –

A. 2012 Year-End Summary

Chief Montgomery presented on this item as outlined in the March 7, 2013 City Council packet.

Councilman Rahm – Thank you for your presentation. In regards to training, are there areas that you need to have people cross-trained? For example, data practices.

Chief Montgomery – I'm in the process of training someone for data practices.

Councilman Gallagher – Don't you want all of your officers to be breath-test certified?

Chief Montgomery – Yes, however the BCA's training on the new equipment is fully booked and I can't get the remaining officers into the training. I'm hoping we can get them trained next year. We're able to do testing other ways.

12. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – Chief Mailand reported on the number of calls in the past few weeks, which include: CO Alarm, gas order and mutual aid call to St. Paul Park. He also thanked Public Works for fixing his items and residents for adopting fire hydrants and keeping them clear of snow.

12. ENGINEER'S REPORT –

A. 2013-2015 Street Improvement Projects

Engineer Stewart presented on this item as outlined in the March 7, 2013 City Council packet. The City Council will have a workshop on Thursday, March 14 at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the feasibility report and special benefit appraisal report. There will be neighborhood meetings for the street improvement projects on March 19 at City Hall.

Councilman Ingemann – We just received these reports in the last couple days and the resolutions are just saying that we've received them.

Motion by Ingemann, seconded by Sumner to approve Resolution No. 2013-8. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1

Absent, the motion carried.

Motion by Ingemann, seconded by Sumner to approve Resolution No. 2013-9. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent, the motion carried.

**13. SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT –
Superintendent Hanson – The rinks are now closed.**

15. NEW/OLD BUSINESS

16. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Gallagher, seconded by Sumner, to adjourn the regular Council Meeting at 6:25 P.M. With 4 Ayes, 0 Nays, 1 Absent, the motion carried.

Signed: _____

Tim Geraghty, Mayor

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee Helm
Executive Analyst