



**City of Newport
City Council Minutes
December 15, 2011**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tim Geraghty called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL -

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

Council Absent – None

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

Staff Absent – John Stewart, City Engineer

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Mayor Geraghty – An item regarding interns for a Market Study Research project will be added under “New/Old Business”

Motion by Ingemann, seconded by Rahm, to adopt the Agenda as amended. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays the motion carried.

5. ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA

Councilman Gallagher – I would like to pull item B from the consent agenda so that Brian can explain why there is a check to Washington County Tax Services for \$635,599.

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

A. Minutes of the December 1, 2011 Regular City Council Meeting

C. Kennel Permit for Linda Ratay

With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.

Admin. Anderson – The City wrote a check to Washington County Tax Services for \$635,599. As you know, the City decertified its TIF district last year and as such the City takes what’s left in that taxing increment and sends a check for that amount to the County. The County will then distribute the amount between the City, County, School District and any other taxing district. The reason we did it now is because we can get our portion back in January, which is approximately half of the amount.

Motion by Gallagher, seconded Ingemann, to approve the list of bills in the amount of \$635,599. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.

6. VISITORS PRESENTATIONS/PETITIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

7. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Geraghty – The City hosted a volunteer appreciation dinner on December 6 where we thanked all of the individuals who volunteer for the City on Advisory Boards and Committees. We also named Emily White as the volunteer of the year for all the work she does in many areas. Yesterday, we had the holiday staff luncheon. I would like to thank all of the employees and consultants.

8. COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilman Rahm – I also attended the volunteer banquet and would like to thank Emily for all of her work. I also attended a South Washington County Cable Commission meeting and South Washington County will be putting a new website up in January.

Councilman Ingemann – Last Thursday, I attended the Planning Commission, we'll be going over an item that was presented at that meeting.

Councilman Gallagher – I attended the Holiday Train which was fun. I also attended the volunteer dinner.

Councilman Sumner – I also attended the Holiday Train and I would like to wish everyone in the City the best for the holidays.

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Admin. Anderson – Before I begin I would like to update you on a couple items. I did sit on an interview panel today for the Transit Station at the Knox Site. The interviews were for site plans, three firms were interviewed. We're hoping to have the bid specs ready by June or July. Also, the City does have an individual lined up to take over as staff at the Library beginning January 3. He's fine with the hours that I am proposing. Additionally, Newport on the Move would like to do some volunteer hours at the Library. I would like to propose the new hours to the Library Board and City Council in January 2012.

Mayor Geraghty – The Library Board would like to have an informal meeting at the Library on December 26. I would also like to propose that the City Council have its first meeting of 2012 at the Library to kick it off. It won't be streamed live but they can record it. The first meeting will be there.

A. Employee Recognition

Chief Montgomery recognized Sean McArdell for five years of service.

Admin. Anderson recognized the following employees from the Fire Department:

- Darl Schossow – 35 Years
- Ernest Lloyd – 25 Years
- Steven Wiley – 25 Years
- Todd Ward – 5 Years
- Davie Bailey – 5 Years
- Matt Aune – 5 Years
- Steve Lanz – 5 Years
- Neil Wood – 5 Years

B. Social Media Policy

Admin. Anderson presented on the proposed Social Media Policy as outlined in the December 15, 2011 City Council packet.

Attorney Knaak – I’ve seen a number of these and I believe this is one of the best that I’ve seen.

Councilman Sumner – What is the definition of “Officials?” Is that everyone on the Council and other Commissions?

Admin. Anderson – Yes

Attorney Knaak – Consultants should be on there as well.

Councilman Sumner – What about all employees?

Admin. Anderson – Yes

Councilman Rahm – Is there any type of approval cycle for the official social media sites? They do change a lot.

Admin. Anderson – I would inform the Council on what I would recommend for sites. The City tried Twitter but didn’t have a lot of followers.

Councilman Rahm – I just find that when companies do this they have an approval cycle for what their official sites are.

Admin. Anderson – We can add that into the policy. I would recommend Facebook and Twitter right now.

Councilman Sumner – Should it be included in the annual review of policies?

Councilman Rahm – That’s what I’m recommending.

Attorney Knaak – One of the hot issues is council members with blogs and to what extent they should be reviewed. People do pay attention to blogs and social media sites so it is good to have a policy.

Councilman Gallagher – When you say City staff does that include Council? Because it does say to be cautioned from saying where you work. I would think that we would want people to know where we are so they can contact us via social media.

Councilman Ingemann – It pretty much means that if you are posting items on your personal page and you say that you’re an employee for the City or a Council member that you should put a disclaimer on your page stating that your opinions are your own and not of the City.

Councilman Gallagher – I don’t think we want to prohibit individuals from contacting us via social media and would recommend that this policy be reviewed annually.

Motion by Sumner, seconded by Ingemann, to approve the Social Media Policy with an annual review of official sites and the policy. With 4 Ayes, 1 Nay, the motion carried.

C. Resolution No. 2011-39 – Approving a Conditional Use Permit Request by Bruce Timm, 533 Geneva Avenue North, Oakdale, MN 55128, for Property Located at 1206 Hastings Avenue, Newport, MN 55055

Admin. Anderson presented on Resolution No. 2011-39 as outlined in the December 15, 2011 City Council packet.

Councilman Rahm – Did the Planning Commission approve it unanimously?

Admin. Anderson – Yes

Councilman Gallagher – Didn't the Planning Commission talk about there not being some approved plans at the time of approval?

Admin. Anderson – Yes, he needs to submit final plans prior to issuing the permits but they usually don't submit the final plans until the CUP has been approved. It's one of the conditions.

Motion by Ingemann, seconded by Rahm, to approve Resolution No. 2011-39 to approve a conditional use permit request by Bruce Timm for property located at 1206 Hastings Avenue. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.

10. ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Knaak – There are two general items. The first is regarding the Sure Lock Motel. There are several pending criminal charges that relate to the ownership of that property. I will be keeping you apprised of that. I do want to assure you that we are moving forward very aggressively on the issue. The second matter is in regards to use issues on top of the hill and there is a recurrence of the issues. We are working on it and you will hear more from me as time goes on.

Mayor Geraghty – I would just like to note that the City is doing everything we can to improve the situation at the Sure Lock Motel.

11. POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT –

Chief Montgomery – You have the November Report before you and I will stand for any questions.

12. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – No Report

13. ENGINEER'S REPORT – No Report

14. SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – No Report

15. NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Admin. Anderson – The Council may remember that we discussed the City doing a business marketing strategy at the last EDA meeting. Councilman Rahm came forward with a program at the University of St. Thomas where graduate students conduct some work. I've been talking with the coordinator and the students are able to do a majority of the work for a marketing strategy. They'll be able to give us a lot of the information that is used in a marketing strategy. The coordinator suggested hiring an intern to finish the report. The price is a little over \$3,000. I believe this is a good price as many cities are paying about \$30,000.

Mayor Geraghty – Move forward.

Councilman Rahm – I want to make sure that as a Council, we understand what problem the students are fixing or exposing.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Geraghty, seconded by Ingemann, to adjourn the regular Council Meeting at 6:10 P.M. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.

Signed: _____
Tim Geraghty, Mayor

Respectfully Submitted,

Renee Helm
Executive Analyst