

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CALEDONIA CITY COUNCIL
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC
CALEDONIA, MINNESOTA
Monday, April 13, 2020

CALL TO ORDER: Following due call and notice thereof, Mayor DeWayne “Tank” Schroeder called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Due to the Council’s emergency declaration because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held via a video conference through GoToMeeting.

ROLL CALL: Council members present: Mayor Schroeder, Paul Fisch, David Fitzpatrick, Brad Rykhus, and Randi Vick. City staff present: Casey Klug, public works and zoning director; Adam Swann, clerk/administrator; Carson Coffield, assistant to clerk/administrator. Visitor(s) present: Cindy Creswell-Hatleli, Houston County assessor; Bob Burns, Houston County Commissioner; Mike Gerbitz, Donohue & Associates (at 7:00 p.m.); Eric Lynne, Donohue & Associates (at 7:00 p.m.); Robert McCarthy; Harley Meiners; Craig Moorhead, *Caledonia Argus*; Ryan Newman; and Jim Weichert.

CONSENT AGENDA: Member Fisch moved to approve the consent agenda. Member Fitzpatrick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, motion was passed unanimously. The consent agenda comprised the following items:

- a. Approve minutes from March 23, 2020 regular City Council meeting
- b. Approve request to modify hourly standby rate for Ambulance Department EMTs from current rates of \$2.00 (6:00 p.m. – 5:59 a.m.) and \$3.00 (6:00 a.m. – 5:59 p.m.) to a flat hourly standby rate of \$2.50

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

LOCAL BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION MEETING: At 6:01 p.m. Member Fisch moved to adjourn the regular City Council meeting and convene the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting for the City of Caledonia. Member Vick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously. The Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting convened at 6:02 p.m.

Houston County Assessor Cindy Creswell-Hatleli summarized the property owners who had contacted her office prior to the meeting to discuss their valuations.

The following people called in to the meeting to discuss their concerns about their property valuations:

Ryan Newman addressed the LBAE regarding the property with parcel ID 21.1125.000, which was owned by Ryan and Danielle Newman. Newman was concerned that their property valuation had gone up by 10% because their property had been reassessed with a lower value last year. Newman acknowledged that all residential properties had been increased by 10% in 2020 for taxes payable in 2021.

Jim Weichert addressed the LBAE regarding the property with parcel ID 21.0070.000, which was owned by Club W, LLC. Weichert was concerned that the valuation had increased by more than 100%--from \$70,500 to \$164,800. Weichert reported that the property was no longer being used for auto repair and should be reduced in value. Weichert further noted that when the

property was purchased in 2013, the purchase price included personal property. Weichert requested that the LBAE reduce his valuation to \$77,000, which would be a 10% increase.

Robert McCarthy addressed the LBAE regarding the property with parcel ID 21.1192.000, which was owned by Mary McCarthy. Robert McCarthy was concerned about the increase in the property valuation. McCarthy acknowledged that the property could probably be sold for the estimated market value, but he did not think he should have to pay taxes on that value because he was not planning on selling the house. McCarthy acknowledged that there was nothing that could be done about it.

Harley Meiners addressed the LBAE regarding the property with parcel ID 21.0717.028, which was owned by H & J Meiners Properties, LLC. Harley Meiners was concerned about the increase in the property valuation from \$106,600 to \$117,100. The increase was due to the 10% increase for all residential properties in the City. Meiners said that the property had two apartments with 500 square feet and that he hadn't made any improvements to them. Meiners further stated that he would have to increase rent by \$50 because of the new valuation. Cindy Creswell-Hatleli confirmed that there were no errors in the valuation calculation.

At 7:00 p.m. Member Fitzpatrick moved to recess the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting until May 4 at 6:00 p.m. Member Rykhus seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously. The Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting was recessed at 7:00 p.m.

At 7:06 p.m. Member Rykhus moved to reconvene the regular City Council meeting. Member Vick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously. The regular City Council meeting reconvened at 7:06 p.m.

PUBLIC WORKS/ZONING DIRECTOR:

a. Updates:

i. Rehab of Well No. 6 pump: Public Works/Zoning Director Casey Klug reported that the Well No. 6 pump had been rehabbed and reinstalled.

ii. Repair of wastewater treatment plant digester: Klug reported that the digester repairs had been completed for a total of \$108,000, which was less than the \$174,000 authorized by the City Council.

iii. Consulting with Op2Myz, LLC: Klug reported that he, Water/Wastewater Operator Eli Craig, and Water/Wastewater Supervisor Craig Nelson had started meeting (virtually) with wastewater consultant Greg Paul of Op2Myz, LLC to discuss strategies for reducing nitrogen discharges from the wastewater treatment plant.

CLERK/ADMINISTRATOR:

a. Updates:

i. 2020 Census: Clerk/Administrator Adam Swann encouraged the Council and the community to complete the 2020 Census if they hadn't already done so. Swann noted that the

City's response rate was comparable to the state average, which was good given that the State of Minnesota had the highest response rate in the country.

ii. Carson Coffield's assistance with meeting: Swann thanked Assistant to the Clerk/Administrator Carson Coffield for his assistance organizing the video conference for the City Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. Public hearing re application by Minnesota Energy Resources for a six-foot height variance at 614 Esch Dr. (Parcel ID 211148013) for the purpose of constructing a 46-foot tall utility pole in an I-1, Industrial District: At 7:24 p.m. Member Fitzpatrick moved to adjourn the regular City Council meeting to hold a public hearing on the application by Minnesota Energy Resources for a six-foot height variance at 614 Esch Dr. (Parcel ID 211148013) for the purpose of constructing a 46-foot tall utility pole in an I-1, Industrial District. Member Vick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously.

The public hearing convened at 7:24 p.m. Public Works/Zoning Director Klug reported that Minnesota Energy Resources wanted to construct a 46-foot tall pole to be able to read gas meters remotely. Klug reported that he had received several responses to the public notice. Ron Carlson of the USDA had called to ask for more information but had no issues with the variance request. KwikTrip contacted the City for more information but was content with the location. Member Fisch inquired whether the pole would have lights. Public Works/Zoning Director was not sure and said he would inquire further. Klug further reported that a consultant for the applicant had informed the City that the applicant wouldn't need the pole to be 46 feet tall because of the location of the property and pole. The consultant said that the applicant should be able to proceed with a 40-foot tall pole. Klug further noted that he had informed the applicant that the pole could not be erected in the City's 15-foot easement and that the pole would have to be erected in the location designated by Klug on the map. At 7:36 p.m. Member Fitzpatrick moved to adjourn the public hearing and reconvene the regular City Council meeting. Member Vick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously. The regular City Council meeting reconvened at 7:36 p.m.

b. Consideration of application by Minnesota Energy Resources for a six-foot height variance at 614 Esch Dr. (Parcel ID 211148013) for the purpose of constructing a 46-foot tall utility pole in an I-1, Industrial District: Based upon the findings of the public hearing, including the statement by Minnesota Energy Resources' consultant that a 40-foot pole would be sufficient, Member Fisch moved to postpone consideration of the variance request until the next City Council meeting on April 27, 2020. Member Fitzpatrick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously.

Member Fisch moved to authorize Minnesota Energy Resources to construct a utility pole with a height of 40 feet at 614 Esch Dr. (Parcel ID 211148013) at the location identified by Public Works/Zoning Director Casey Klug on the drawing attached to the application. Member Fitzpatrick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously.

c. Review of draft agreement between Donohue & Associates and the City of Caledonia for design and bidding services for wastewater treatment plan: Eric Lynne and Mike Gerbitz of Donohue & Associates summarized the proposed agreement between Donohue & Associates and the City of Caledonia for design and bidding services for the new wastewater treatment plant. The proposed fee was \$714,765. Gerbitz noted that the proposal utilized services from both senior and junior engineers to minimize costs. Gerbitz reported that it would be too early to negotiate a contract for engineering services for the construction phase, but those fees should be less than 7% of the construction costs. The City Council members were comfortable with moving forward with the proposal and sending it to the city attorney for review.

d. Consideration of proposed agreement between WSB & Associates, Inc. and the City of Caledonia for the provision of design, bidding, and construction engineering services for Well House No. 8: Member Fisch moved to approve the proposed agreement between WSB & Associate, Inc. and the City of Caledonia for the provision of design, bidding, and construction engineering services for Well House No. 8 at an amount not to exceed \$116,624. Member Fitzpatrick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously.

e. Consideration of proposed Resolution 2020-06: A Resolution Rescinding Resolution 2020-04 and Authorizing the City of Caledonia to Apply to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority for a Loan of \$333,149 for Construction of Production Well No. 8: Member Fisch moved to approve proposed Resolution 2020-06: A Resolution Rescinding Resolution 2020-04 and Authorizing the City of Caledonia to Apply to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority for a Loan of \$333,149 for Construction of Production Well No. 8. Member Fitzpatrick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously.

f. Discussion re purchase of body armor for part-time police officers: Clerk/Administrator Swann reported that in response to Member Fisch's question at the last City Council meeting, he had reviewed the requirements for receiving reimbursement for the cost of purchasing body armor from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. Swann reported that any police officer with a full-time license was eligible to be reimbursed up to half the cost of purchasing body armor. Swann noted individual police officers could request reimbursement as well as police departments. Swann further noted that the reimbursement program had a maximum reimbursement amount set by statute and that the reimbursement was capped at half the cost of purchasing vests through Minnesota's Cooperative Purchasing Venture. Swann further noted that the Police Department had purchased vests for six full-time officers since 2017, but the Police Department had not submitted reimbursement requests, so the City had not been reimbursed.

Mayor Schroeder thought the City should pay the invoice for part-time Officer Trent Prince's body armor, in the amount of \$1,077.76, because Mayor Schroeder didn't want the invoice to accrue late charges and didn't want the City's reputation to be damaged for not paying a bill. Mayor Schroeder emphasized that the body armor was purchased by mistake and should have been approved by the City Council in advance. Member Fisch suggested that the City should work on a policy that would pay for body armor if a part-time officer worked a minimum number of shifts. Member Fisch further stated that he agreed with Mayor Schroeder. Member Vick expressed concern that paying the bill would establish a precedent. Member Fitzpatrick

moved to approve paying the body armor invoice for part-time officer Trent Prince. Member Fisch seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion passed 4-0, with Member Vick abstaining.

g. Prepaid claims: Council reviewed the prepaid claims for the period March 11, 2020 – April 9, 2020, which totaled \$472,586.31. Member Fisch moved to approve the prepaid claims as presented. Member Rykhus seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously.

h. Claims payable: Council reviewed the claims payable for April 2020, which totaled \$206,352.76. Member Vick moved to approve the claims payable as presented. Member Fitzpatrick seconded the motion. On roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously.

i. Overtime report: Council reviewed the overtime report for the pay period March 23, 2020 – April 5, 2020. No further action was taken by the Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a. The next regular Council meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 27, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business before the Council, a motion to adjourn was made by Member Vick, seconded by Member Fitzpatrick. All members present voted in favor, and the motion was declared carried to adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

DeWayne “Tank” Schroeder
Mayor

Adam G. Swann
Clerk/Administrator