

MINUTES OF THE DEVILS LAKE CITY COMMISSION
April 04, 2022

The regular meeting of the Devils Lake City Commission was held April 04, 2022, at 5:30pm with the following members present: President Johnson, Dale Robbins, Rob Hach, Shane Hamre, and Jack Volk.

Commissioner Volk moved to approve the minutes of the regular City Commission meeting held March 21, 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hamre and the motion carried unanimously.

Sean Roed with Lake Region Ambulance Service provided a briefing to the Commission. He noted that due to some more rural ambulance services terminating their services, Lake Region Ambulance Service serves the vast majority of Ramsey County. Mr. Roed also gave an update on their training facility improvements. He gauged the Commission's sentiments towards helping fund some of the improvements. The Commission said they are initially favorable to the request. Mr. Roed said he would come to the City of Devils Lake and Ramsey County Commission with a more formal ask.

Brandon Padilla with the Devils Lake Rodeo Club gave an update on their initiatives to bring back the rodeo to town. He gave a background of the event, their efforts to bring it back to the community, and noted past economic impact data provided by the CVB. He asked if the City Commission could support the event with a \$10,000 sponsorship for 2022. Commissioner Volk approved the request for 10,000 to support the event for 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hamre and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Volk – The City Engineer said the street sweepers are out trying to cleanup all the sand left from winter to keep it out of the stormwater system. He also talked about their partnership with the Lake Region Corporation and further the agreement with them for cleaning garbage downtown. The City Engineer briefed the authorization for Airborne Vector Control. He said having three ground sprayers has brought a lot of efficiencies to their operations. Commissioner Volk moved to approve the Airborne Vector Control Authorization. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robbins and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Robbins – The City Engineer said there would be two bid openings at the next City Commission meeting. The Police Chief said they've seen a couple use of force scenarios as of late but luckily they have all concluded safely. The Police Chief said their current body cameras they are using have reached the end of their useful life. He also said the server they are using has reached the end of its useful life and will need to be upgraded. He said the price tag for these improvements is \$32,000. Commissioner Hamre motioned to approve spending \$32,000 for body cameras and upgrading the server. Commissioner Volk seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hamre – The City Engineer said they are working on some backflow prevention initiatives to meet some requirements put in place by the State of North Dakota. He said they are still talking with Rural water providers and putting forward an application for a funding partnership with the State Water Commission for a booster station.

Commissioner Hach – The City Engineer said Spring Cleanup is set to take place at the end of the month. The City Assessor said the Board of Equalization meeting is set for April 14.

President Johnson – The Acting City Auditor said the new Accounts Payable/Payroll clerk is set to start next Monday.

Commissioner Hamre moved to approve the consent agenda which included the following:

1. Authorization to Call for Bids for Half Ton 4X4 Crew Cab Truck and Chassis
2. Parade Permit
3. Transient Permit – Off-da Taco
4. Authorization to Call for Bids for 2022 Asphalt and Concrete Street Repair
5. Authorization to Call for Bids for 2022 Curb, Gutter & Sidewalk
6. Authorization to Call for Bids for Devils Lake City Project 220201 – 10th St NW, 12th St NW & 13th St NW Water Main Replacement
7. Public Dance Permit
8. Fireworks Permit
9. Gaming Site Authorization – Cobblestone Hotel & Suites
10. Gaming Site Authorization – Fireside Inn & Suites

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hach, and the motion carried unanimously.

Lisa Crosby, Director of the Lake Region Heritage Center was present to request 2nd Quarter Funds from the City. She said it has been a successful quarter, highlighted by the Gala which raised \$11,000. She gave a preview of upcoming events. Commissioner Volk said he attended the gala and felt it was a wonderful event. Commissioner Volk moved to approve the Lake Region Heritage Center's request for 2nd quarter funds. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Robbins and the motion carried unanimously.

The City Engineer reviewed the maintenance partnership with Ramsey County for gravel roadways the City maintains. Commissioner Volk motioned to approve the contract for summer maintenance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hach and the motion carried unanimously.

The City Administrator went through the proposed Request for Qualifications for City Attorney Services. Commissioner Volk asked if it was considered to try merge the Human Resources Director and City Attorney positions. The City Administrator said the City of Valley City has the two positions merged and that the position plus benefits costs them close to \$200,000. The City Administrator communicated that both services cost a total of about \$75,000 at the moment. The City Administrator also mentioned that from speaking with the Department Heads, they all felt like they were getting satisfactory services from the City's Human Resources consultant. The Commission spoke to the past relationships between the Human Resources Consultant, the City and the County. President Johnson said the City's Human Resources Consultant is well respected around the state of North Dakota. The City Administrator said that language could be added to the RFQ noting the interest in candidates with Human Resource experience and background. The Fire Chief, Police Chief, City Engineer and said that their experiences working with the Human Resources consultant were positive over the past few years. Commissioner Hamre said it might be better to pay a little more if the money stayed locally in Devils Lake. Commissioner Robbins said his limited experience with the Human Resources Consultant were positive. President Johnson acknowledged the tough job human resources can be. Commissioner Robbins moved to approve the RFQ for City Attorney Services subject to City Attorney review and approval. Commissioner Volk seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The City Administrator briefed the staff report given to the Commission regarding the City Commission's role in hiring non-department head employees. He went over current City policy in the Employee

Personnel Handbook which states that the City Commission needs to approve the hiring of any employee above a step A in their specific grade. The City Administrator expressed that this policy is putting the City at a disadvantaged position due to the necessary timeline, wage inflation, and the sheer number of positions the City has open. He recommended giving the City Administrator and Department Heads a window between step A and step E in each grade to hire non-department head employees without City Commission approval. The City Administrator stressed that by giving this further responsibility, more accountability to maintain moral and performance in their department would be expected. Commissioner Volk expressed concerns about inequities occurring between employees in different departments. Commissioner Hamre noted the rise in compensation for positions in the private sector and the need to give staff a window to negotiate. Commissioner Robbins said supervisors will need to weigh the risk and rewards when hiring new employees. The City Administrator said it is his job as well as the Department Heads' jobs to maintain good working relationships with City Commissioners and portfolio holders. The Police Chief noted compression he's seen in his department and Commissioner Hamre motioned to amend section 302 of the City Employee Personnel Policies Handbook to give Department Heads and the City Administrator to hire non-department head employees within salary ranges A-E as laid out in the City's approved salary schedule. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The City Engineer said the City is nearing the completion of its \$170 million dollar dike project. He asked the Commission to grant the President Johnson the authority to sign on behalf of the City for an agreement with the State Water Commission. Commissioner Volk motioned to approve giving President Johnson the authority to sign on behalf of the City for the State Water Commission Agreement. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Volk motioned to approve the payment of the list of bills as submitted. Commissioner Hach seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The Acting City Auditor gave an overview of 1st Quarter Economic Data for the City of Devils Lake and State of North Dakota.

**TERRY JOHNSTON
ACTING CITY AUDITOR**

**RICHARD S. JOHNSON
PRESIDENT OF CITY COMMISSION**