

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL
ST. AUGUSTA, MINNESOTA
February 2, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Zenzen at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Mayor Zenzen, Council Members Backes, Genereux, Coleman and Schmitz; Asst. Fire Chief Steinhofer, Fire Captain Voigt, Fire Captain Sandhurst, , Attorney Couri, City Engineer Hajicek, Stearns County Deputy Niemi, and Clerk/Administrator McCabe.

OTHERS PRESENT: Nicole Schmitz, Scott Hanisch, Lauren Bahr, Sherri Stang and Jackie Steinhofer.

CONSENT AGENDA: Mr. McCabe indicated the new agenda had an added closed session on attorney client privilege. He asked that we add the hiring of Jake Masters as a backup snow plow driver, add payables to the League of Minnesota Cities in an amount of \$630 for safety training and stormwater coalition dues and to Xcel Energy for gas usage in the amount of \$1,306.77.

A motion was made to approve as amended by Mr. Backes, seconded by Mr. Schmitz. Motion carried unanimously.

The following items were approved with the consent agenda:

City Council Minutes, January 5, 2022
Bill Payable, Receipts and Treasurer's Report dated February 2, 2022 and for US Bank payment and Checks #26930 – 26984./
City Council Agenda, February 2, 2022
Gambling Permits for St. Wendelin, St. Mary HOC and the St. Augusta Legion Auxiliary.
Gambling Premise Permit – Hayloft
Paul Hollermann's and Chad Blashack's attendance at Annual Rural Water Conference.
Tri-County Humane Society Contract
Hire Jake Masters as backup snow plow driver (\$18.71/hour)

SHERIFF'S REPORT: Deputy Neimi presented the Sheriff's report. He reviewed the call types and answered questions from the Council.

A motion was made to approve the Sheriff's report as presented by Mr. Backes, seconded by Mr. Genereux. Motion carried unanimously.

BUILDING INSPECTOR'S

REPORT: Mr. McCabe reported there were only 4 permits issued. He stated the transfer to the new inspector is going smoothly.

PUBLIC WORKS

UPDATE: Mr. Kiffmeyer was in attendance and reviewed the quotes included in the packets for a brush hog after explaining that he was not able to find a new boom mower, he suggested we rent one from Ziegler when we need to and purchase a new brush hog. He presented four separate quotes for brush mowers and the cost to rent a boom owner.

A motion was made to approve the purchase of the brush hog from Skid Pro in an amount of \$7,090 by Mr. Backes, seconded by Mr. Genereux. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCabe reported the water sewer information was included for information.

FIRE DEPT. REPORT:

Assistant Chief Steinhofer presented the December monthly report indicating there were seven calls for the month bringing the total to 120 for the year as compared to 131 at this time in 2020. Monthly training was provided by Fire Inc. and was on unified command.

A motion was made to approve the report by Mr. Backes, seconded by Mr. Schmitz. Motion carried unanimously.

A quote for a single use wireless base for headset radios was presented.

A motion was made by Mr. Schmitz to purchase the new base for the headsets, seconded by Mr. Genereux. Motion carried unanimously.

The Council acknowledged they received Chief Joe Kramer's request for a leave of absence to deal with health issues.

A motion was made to approve the leave and increase Asst. Chief Steinhofer's pay to that of the Chief in the interim by Mr. Backes, seconded by Mayor Zenzen.

Asst. Chief Steinhofer requested approval for training for 8 different individuals.

A motion was made to approve the training by Mr. Schmitz, seconded by Mr. Genereux. Motion carried unanimously.

OPEN FORUM: no comments offered.

**ENGINEER'S
REPORT:**

Mr. Hajicek was in attendance and presented a letter of recommendation after the 2022 Street Project bids were opened last week. Mr. McCabe explained the budget allows for a roughly \$500,000 project and the remaining funds will come from the unallocated CIP funds.

A motion was made to approve the bid and enter into a contract with Knife River for an amount of \$850,066.26 by Mr. Backes, seconded by Mr. Genereux. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. McCabe and Mr. Hajicek presented a proposal from O'Rourke Strategic Consulting to lobby the state legislature for bonding funds for the water treatment facility. Mr. Hajicek indicated the cost is minimal if bonding dollars are secured. Mayor Zenzen asked about the federal WIFFA program. Mr. Hajicek explained he watches that program but it is for larger projects.

A motion was made and seconded to hire O'Rourke Strategic Consulting by Mr. Genereux, seconded by Mr. Schmitz. Motion carried unanimously.

**COUNCIL MEMBER
PURVIEW:**

Mr. Backes reported they were at a meeting at the fire hall that focused on equipment. He suggested we get on a replacement track for these trucks. Mr. Schmitz jumped in and stated they looked at a grass rig to replace the van as well as future needs for a second engine. The fire department was directed to get quotes for a grass rig.

Mayor Zenzen asked for an update on Winkelman. Mr. Couri responded that he has the complaint drafted, just not yet filed.

Mayor Zenzen wondered if we had heard anything from Green Acres and was told nothing.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR
REPORT:**

Mr. Couri's presented a memo that was included in the packet on a conditional offer of employment that was contingent on passing a background check. He addressed a couple items that showed up in the background check and were of concern. Discussion centered around trust and potential liability and with the fact the convictions were more than 10 years old, the liability was taken more into consideration.

A motion was made to withdraw the offer of employment to the individual by Mr. Schmitz, seconded by Mr. Genereux. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made to move to the closed session at 8:30pm by Mr. Schmitz seconded by Mr. Genereux.

CLOSED SESSION RE: Attorney Client Privileged Communication on the matter of RCC v the City of St. Augusta, a Veteran's Preference Claim. In attendance are Mayor Zenzen, Council Members Backes, Genereux and Schmitz, Attorney Couri and City Administrator McCabe.

Discussion was held and Mr. Couri was going to contact the other party with the wishes of the Council.

The meeting was called back to order by Mayor Zenzen at 8:45pm.

A motion was made to authorize the City to enter into a settlement with RCC contingent on Mayor Zenzen and Administrator McCabe approves of the language by Mr. Schmitz, seconded by Mr. Backes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Zenzen wants to add that more care should be taken on paying attention to what we are spending and what is budgeted.

A motion was made to adjourn at 9:20 by Mr. Schmitz, seconded by Mr. Genereux. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved this 1st day of March, 2022.

Michael G. Zenzen, Mayor

Attest:

William R. McCabe, Clerk/Administrator