

City of LeRoy MN – Council Meeting Minutes, January 8, 2018

A regular meeting of the LeRoy City Council was called to order by Mayor Brian Thiel on Monday, January 8, 2018, at 6:30 PM at the LeRoy Community Center with the following members present: Mayor Brian Thiel, Council Members Kathleen Gottschalk, Ashley Huntley, Gene Miller, Jan Whisler, Maintenance Supervisor John Jones, and City Clerk Patty White. Also attending: Jon Rodd, Scott Osmundson, Axel Gumbel, Craig Bucknell, Sharon Thiel, Dave Perkins, Kevin Janssen, Rose Erie, Josh Lewis, and Steve Eisenhauer. All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Thiel noted he would like to defer the appointments to the standing committees for 2018 until the February meeting. He would like to see each council member give up one of their present committee assignments and undertake a different committee assignment.

Appointments to the appointed committees for the new year were made as follows:

- City Auditor-the law firm of Baudler, Maus, Forman, and King, LLP
- City Auditor-Smith Schafer & Associates, LTD
- Official City Newspaper-Mower County Independent
- Official Depositories-First National Bank, LeRoy; First State Bank Minnesota, LeRoy
- City Engineer-Jones, Haugh & Smith

Motion by Miller, second by Whisler to approve the appointments to the appointed committees. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Miller, second by Whisler to approve the mayor, acting mayor, and city clerk as official signatories for the city checking account. Motion carried 5-0.

Scott Osmundson presented the slate of officers for 2018 for the LeRoy Volunteer Fire Department. The officers include Fire Chief-Scott Osmundson; Assistant Chief-Dan Feather; Captain-Tim Freerksen; Lieutenant-Caleb Hovde; Fire Marshall/Emergency Management-John Jones; Training Officers-Jake Payne and Dan Hanson; Secretary-Bob Drees.

Motion by Huntley, second by Whisler to approve the slate of officers for the LeRoy Volunteer Fire Department for 2018. Motion carried 5-0.

On approval of the council, agenda item 9A-Broadband was moved up on the agenda. Jon Rodd, Vice President of Sales at Jaguar Communications presented a Telecommunications Proposal to the city council. Mr. Rodd noted over the past year, Jaguar has been discussing how to bring fiber to the citizens of LeRoy. Jaguar has come up with an interim plan to bring fiber optics triple play service (internet, telephone, television) to the city at no cost to the city. Jaguar is requesting 50% of the homes to sign up for at least one of their services. Jaguar would hold informational meetings to meet with residents to showcase their services and get people signed up. Whisler questioned about those people that may be currently locked into an agreement with another provider. Mr. Rodd noted these people can sign up; they would get connected when their term is up with the other provider. Mr. Rodd noted Jaguar is ready to move forward with laying their fiber lines in early spring of 2018. They would run infrastructure to every property. Jaguar offers numerous packages of services. Rates would be guaranteed for either three or five years with a discount over the published rates if committing to this term of service. A question about the franchise agreement in place with Mediacom was asked. Mr. Rodd noted that Jaguar can enter the LeRoy market as long as they offer the same services as Mediacom throughout the entire community. The next step for the city is to determine if the city wants to move forward with this offer from Jaguar. Council thanked Mr. Rodd for his presentation. Council will address this offer later in the meeting.

During Public Input Time:

- Craig Bucknell gave an update on the Lions City Park. He thanked all those involved with getting water installed to the property, for working the ground so grass seed could be sowed, for planting the trees, and for the businesses that assisted with the grass seed and trees. Mr. Bucknell noted when this park is completed it will be handicap accessible with a surface that will be accessible for people with mobility issues. The LeRoy Lions plan to shoulder the major expense of the park. The Lions are asking the city to provide restrooms and a shelter. They would like to see these items installed in either 2018 or 2019. Mr. Bucknell noted the Lions will do their own fundraising and grant writing; they want to incorporate the community and community groups into this endeavor. He also noted there will be more information available at the Farm & Home Show. Council thanked Mr. Bucknell for his report.

During Standing Committee Reports:

- Gottschalk noted the LeRoy Library Board is meeting tonight. The extension of the hand railing will be installed yet this week.
- Huntley reported the LeRoy Pool Board will be meeting on January 15. The pool is holding a membership open house this Sunday.
- Whisler and Miller noted LeRoy City Lines continues to operate and offer transportation to and from Rochester with two routes each morning and afternoon. Vacancies are still an issue at Wildwood Grove.

Deputy Wilson was not in attendance, but he had left his written report for council review. Council noted how busy the department is. Thiel and Whisler had met with Sheriff Amazi and County Coordinator Oscarson to discuss police protection. The county is not looking at making any changes with the present contract. Thiel noted he had stopped at Adams City Hall; their mayor and city clerk and questioned if LeRoy would be interested in pursuing some type of joint police protection plan. Council expressed interest in this possibility. Motion by Whisler, second by Gottschalk to pursue this. Motion carried 5-0.

In Old Business:

- Broadband-Council further discussed the offer made by Jaguar. Motion by Huntley to move forward with Jaguar. Second by Miller. Motion carried 5-0.
- LeRoy Senior Citizens-Sharon Thiel, president of the LeRoy Senior Citizens, read a summary of events and uses of their room. The Senior Citizens are requesting a reduction or elimination of the monthly rent of \$130 that they have paid to the city for many years. They would accept a reduction of half of the rent to \$65 per month or eliminate this altogether. Motion by Thiel to set the new monthly rent rate for the LeRoy Senior Citizens at \$65 per month. Miller moved to amend Thiel's motion and set the monthly rent at \$75 per month. On a roll call of votes, Miller, Whisler, Gottschalk, and Thiel voted aye for the \$75 per month rental rate. Huntley abstained. The motion carried.
- 2018 Employee Pay Package-Thiel noted the Personnel Committee met. Gottschalk read the following report of the Personnel Committee to the council:
 - The Personnel Committee reasons for **NOT** recommending 3% across the board to all:
 1. Last year's review process **began** a more objective basis for salary and hourly wage levels.
 2. The city still does not have any structured plan to measure each employee's goals and time lines for their work product.
 3. But salary/hourly increases need to be based on both performance reviews and measurements of accomplishments.
 4. Until that part of the city employee compensation process is completed, the remaining portion of the 2018 budget estimates will be reserved.
 5. The Personnel Committee is ready to assist Council and supervisors of employees in adopting individualized work goals and timelines so objective measurements can be completed.

6. The Personnel Committee believes across the board % increases can be unfair to superior performers and tend to reduce most employees to a lower standard of work performances.
 - The committee's recommendations about a compensation plan in future years is unlikely to be simply an across the board % increase for all. Instead, it will provide varying amounts of salary adjustments to each employee based on objective measurements.

Huntley questioned how an employee can ever gain additional pay if semi-annual reviews aren't done. Jones questioned council if they know what happens at 2:00 AM when an alarm goes off. Council felt the review process has to be refined. Miller noted that with the 1% increase being proposed added to the other increases would amount to 10% in a four-year time span. Whisler felt the council should follow the recommendation of the Personnel Committee. Huntley questioned what has to be done for an employee to gain the other 2%? Thiel would like to see something finite in place to set this up. Miller commented the Personnel Committee or city council needs to have a better way and policy in doing employee reviews. Huntley suggested granting the 1% pay increase to any employee that has not received a review yet and a 3% pay increase to the three employees that have been reviewed. Motion by Huntley that reviewed personnel receive a 3% increase in pay; un-reviewed personnel will receive a 1% increase in pay. Second by Gottschalk. Miller questioned if one employee will question why she did not receive the full 3% increase in pay and why she hasn't had a review. Miller did commend White on her research on finding a different health care carrier and the savings being afforded to the city on premium payments. On a roll call of votes, all members voted aye. The motion carried 5-0.

Tax Forfeiture Assessments Review:

- Thiel noted that some months ago an assessment was put on the property located at 314 East Main Street for cleanup of this property. There is a party interested in purchasing this property through a tax forfeiture auction, but this party is not interested in paying the assessment for cleanup in the amount of \$23,700. Huntley felt it best to leave the assessment in place; Whisler and Miller concurred. Whisler noted he has no problem in removing the assessment, or part of the assessment, if it was going to be for the betterment of LeRoy. Thiel noted the property can either be left as it is, as unmaintained property, or remove the assessment and have the new owner take care of this property. Council took no further action on this topic.

Employee Request to Attend Upcoming Conference:

- White had the brochure for the upcoming MCFOA Conference. The conference will be held in Burnsville March 20-23. Motion by Gottschalk, second by Huntley to allow White's attendance at this conference. Motion carried 5-0.

There were no land use permits for council review.

The Communications File was reviewed; items included:

- Council reviewed the invitation to the SEMLM quarterly meeting in Stewartville.
- A thank you from Wildwood Grove was read.
- Information from Minnesota Energy requesting a rate increase was reviewed.
- The City was awarded a Water Fluoridation Quality Award. Jones and Sweeney were commended for this award.

Street Signs:

- Thiel had gathered information on speed control signs and the rationale for installing these signs. These signs make drivers aware of the speed they are traveling when entering the city. The cost for these signs is approximately \$2500 each.
- Council discussed the need for these signs. Placement of the signs was also discussed.

- Motion by Huntley to purchase three of these signs and place them at the east and west entrances to the city on Highway 56 and at the entrance to the city on Mower County 14 near the bridge by the school. Second by Miller. Motion carried 5-0.
- White reported she has been contacted by residents asking if signage could be installed addressing the use of engine brakes (jake brakes). Council consensus to proceed with purchasing and installing these signs.

State Highway 56 Project Update:

- White and Jones had met with City Engineer Brian Johnson to gather his input on the upcoming Highway 56 project. Mr. Johnson recommended having the sanitary sewer televised to see the condition of the mains under Highway 56. Miller suggested getting a second well dug and plumbed to the well-house as part of this project. Mr. Johnson had contacted a couple of companies that could do this televising. Motion by Miller, second by Huntley to proceed with having Main Street sanitary sewer main televised from Bauer Built to the East Y with Empire Pipe Services. Motion carried 5-0.

Community Center Kitchen Renovation:

- Whisler read the following prepared statement pertaining to the kitchen renovation:
- “A remodeling project of the kitchen in a building owned by the City of LeRoy unfortunately has turned into something of an issue. A stove which was purchased by the Senior Citizens and placed into the kitchen of a building owned by the City of LeRoy is in need of repairs and cleaning. Due to the uncertainty of how we might stand with the Minnesota Department of Health, it would not be feasible for the City to invest any money into a restoration project at this time without further study of the project. I make a motion to stop the project at this time.”
- Miller seconded this motion. Motion carried 5-0.
- Rose Erie noted the stove has been looked at and parts have been ordered. The stove will be repaired and cleaned with funds from the LeRoy Senior Citizens.

City Hall Security:

- White did not have any new information to present to council.

Other Items:

- Jones requested to take the old Ford pickup out to the scrap yard for disposal. It was the consensus of the council to get rid of the pickup.
- White noted the Community Center LED sign is being worked on.
- White will gather information on costs for replacing a couple of the doors at the Community Center.

Being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Huntley, second by Gottschalk at 8:42 PM.

Brian Thiel, Mayor

Attest:

Patty A. White, City Clerk-Treasurer