

**MINUTES  
CITY OF AURORA COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY/TOWN GOVERNMENT CENTER  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2014  
5:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Hess; Councilors Cromley, Lislegard, Smolich, Worshek

**ABSENT:** NONE

**ALSO PRESENT:** Britt See-Benes, Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Wayne Thuringer, Public Works Director; Bonnie Thayer, Replacement City Attorney

Meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m.

**Moved by Smolich and supported by Worshek to approve the following minutes, as presented: the Regular Meeting of July 8, 2014, Special Meeting of July 15, 2014, and Special Meeting of July 30, 2014. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Cromley to approve the receipts for July 2014 in the amount of \$141,468.72 as presented. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Smolich to approve the following disbursements for July 2014 in the amount of \$166,346.72 and the Payroll for July 2014 in the amount of \$106,537.56. MOTION CARRIED**

**MOVING PERMITS  
NONE**

**APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT**

Administrator See-Benes stated that applications have been received; an Interview Committee has been formed. A date for interviews and a finalist lists needs to be compiled. Successful applicants will be notified by the Clerk's Office of the interview time.

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Smolich to schedule Water/Wastewater Technician Interviews for Wednesday, August 20, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. at the Aurora City Hall. MOTION CARRIED**

Fire Chief Bryan Cromley was present to discuss his request to advertise for the vacant firefighter positions in the Aurora Fire Department. He stated that the Department is currently short six (6) members. It was discussed that maybe we need to begin to look at combining with other departments if other departments are experiencing the same staffing issues.

**Moved by Hess and supported by Lislegard to authorize City Staff to advertise for a period of three weeks for the position of Firefighter in order to fill up to the six current vacant positions. MOTION CARRIED**

## CORRESPONDENCE

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Cromley to receive and file the following correspondence: MN State Demographic Center Regarding 2013 Population Estimates for Aurora; FEMA Regarding Firefighters Grant Program Application for New Fire Equipment; ARDC regarding their 2015 Preliminary Budget and Levy Request and Office of Inspector of Mines regarding Repair of Mine Fence. MOTION CARRIED**

## TRAVEL AND TRAINING REQUEST

NONE

## PUBLIC FORUM

JPJ Engineering was present to discuss with residents the North 1<sup>st</sup> Street East Road Reconstruction Project. Dan Devaney representing the Methodist Church asked how long the water would be off to the church in conjunction to the project. Public Works Director Thuringer stated that if the water is off due to the road construction, it should only be a temporary disruption.

Christina Hujanen, candidate for St. Louis County Commissioner District 4, was present to introduce herself as a candidate. She is a resident of the Tower area. She discussed her past accomplishments and her strengths if she were elected as a Commissioner.

Tom Rukavina, candidate for St. Louis County Commissioner District 4, was present to introduce himself as a candidate. He discussed his ties to Aurora, and his past accomplishments as a State Legislator. He urged everyone to get out and vote for the August 12, 2014 Primary Election.

## REPORTS FROM STAFF MEMBERS

Ed Modetz, Cemetery Board, stated that the North Expansion water and drainage is completed and it looks great.

Jan Moore, Spruce Up Aurora, was not able to attend the meeting but asked Mayor Hess to relay the message that Spruce Up Aurora needs volunteers to water the potted plants throughout Aurora. If interested, call Jan at (218) 229-3466.

Paula Chapman, Librarian, was not able to attend the meeting but asked Mayor Hess to read the following: "The library has had a very active July as well! Events included 3 children's story times, 2 children's Discovery Tables, a program about tracking animals by an interpreter from the Lake Vermilion – Soudan Underground Mine State Park, a program by a K-9 team, a teen volunteer event, a drop-in craft event, a children's concert by the Northern Lights International Music Festival, a library sleepover for stuffed animals, and a music and dance program by the Zinghoppers, almost all of which were very well attended. Children have a few more days to report reading before the library determine the top readers for each age group.

The Aurora Friends of the Library also hosted an ice cream social on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and thanks Zup's for donating the ice cream and the American Legion for letting us store it in their freezer until it was served. The library has 2 events scheduled in August. Earlier this afternoon, Z Puppets presented a puppetry workshop at the library. 8 children, 3 teens, and 6 adults learned the secrets of bringing characters to life. Next week, on August 13, two members of the Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra

will present a concert called “The Timeless Beauty of Harp and Flute.” The library is partnering with the Northern Pines Nursing Home for this event; the concert will be held in the large dining at the nursing home at 1:30 pm and is open to all. Both programs are sponsored by the Legacy Fund, supporting Minnesota’s arts and cultural heritage”. Councilor Worshek stated that a very nice article was in the Mesabi Daily News right after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July about our Library and all the events that are held there.

Mayor Hess reported that the Recreation Department is wrapping up the summer season with the End-of-the-Year Banquet tonight at Pine Grove Park.

#### REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Mayor Hess stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission has presented the minutes from their July 29, 2014 meeting for approval.

Councilor Smolich stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed the presented permit requests and have forwarded their recommendations in the July 29, 2014 minutes.

**Moved by Smolich and supported by Lislegard to approve following Zoning Permits as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission from their July 29, 2014 meeting:**

- **Steven Gregorich – 319 S 2<sup>nd</sup> Street East in order to construct a 20’ x 26’ Shed with Concrete Footing**
- **Marilyn Hagberg – 322 Main Street South in order to install a new Fence adjacent to the South Property Line**
- **Imperial Development Co. LLC - 405 South Main Street in order to construct a New Retail Facility**

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Smolich and supported by Cromley to approve the following Residential Improvement Permits as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission from their July 29, 2014 meeting:**

- **Marilyn Hagberg – 322 Main Street South in order to install a new window**
- **Dennis Jacobsen – 205 S. 2nd Street West in order to repair the roof**
- **Ernest & Marlys Rabb – 312 So. 2nd Street West in order to install a new roof on garage and a new roof on house**
- **Pamela Viktora – 203 S 1st Street West in order to install a new roof on house**
- **Veda Zuponcic – 11 South 4th Street West in order to install a new roof on house and three (3) replacement windows**
- **Kevin Daley – 314 S 2nd Street East in order to install new shingles on house**
- **Tom Wright - 315 S 2nd Street East in order to install new Shingles on House**
- **John W. Samuelson – 13 W 2nd Ave No/15 W 2nd Ave No in order to add a screened porch/roof over the existing 10’ x 12’ deck**

#### **MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Smolich and supported by Cromley to approve the following Sign Permits as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission from their July 29, 2014 meeting:**

- **Michael A. Zinski d/b/a Mike's Window & Screen Repair in order to install 56' square footage of signage on garage door**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Smolich to receive and file the following reports from Boards and Commissions as presented: Aurora HRA – July 16, 2014 Minutes, Animal Control Report – July 2014, Aurora Park Committee – July 17, 2014, Aurora Fire Department – July 9, 2014 Minutes, Ambulance Report – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2014, Joint Labor-Management Safety Committee – July 10, 2014 Minutes, and Cemetery Board – July 23, 2014 Minutes. MOTION CARRIED**

**REPORT FROM COUNCILORS**

Councilor Lislegard commended Ryan Construction is doing a nice job on the Spectrum Project in town. They have been cleaning up the street after themselves, and maintaining as nice of an area as they can.

Councilor Cromley reminded all to consider applying for the vacant positions on the Aurora Fire Department. Unlike other departments, you do not have to be EMS certified to be on Aurora's department. The Community needs good people and it's a great way to give back.

Councilor Smolich thanked all the Little League coaches, umpires, parents for a great season and a thank you to the group who placed the protective barrier up on the fence at the Ed Berdice field. The Twins Grant that was received was put to good use, and we are going to continue to improve the area. He stated that he attended a few Mayor Hess's Arts & Crafts events throughout the summer. He stated he felt it was a great program and that we need to put more money towards it in the future. He felt the kids were so polite and thankful for Mayor Hess, the volunteers, and their efforts.

Councilor Worshek stated that he has heard from Craig Pulford, who is the Range Association of Municipalities and Schools Board President. They are seeking a person to fill the position that was vacated by former director Ron Dicklich. It sounds like they are going to keep Dicklich on as a lobbyist, but the Executive Board is seeking a director. Once they have formed a recommendation, they will be bringing it to the full board for approval. Worshek stated that he feels that we need to do a follow up letter to RAMS to continue with the process.

**REPORT FROM MAYOR**

Mayor Hess reported that she has been busy with the Arts & Crafts program. The Council has been busy working on budgets for 2015. She urged everyone to mark their calendars for September 19, 2014. The Council will be conducting an Italian Night fundraiser for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, at the American Legion.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Worshek to table adopting the ordinance regarding Franchise Fees for Lake County Connections. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Worshek to table adopting the ordinance regarding Franchise Fees for Mediacom. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Smolich to table the request to review the yellow paint on curb at Main Street and Central Avenue. MOTION CARRIED**

#### NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Smolich stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed the presented Variance Requests from Marilyn Hagberg and have forwarded their recommendations to the Council for their consideration.

**Moved by Smolich and supported by Worshek to approve the request from Marilyn Hagberg of 322 Main Street South for a 32' variance from the required 50' front yard setback in order to construct a fence 18' from the front (east) property line (Main Street). MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Smolich and supported by Worshek to approve the request from Marilyn Hagberg of 322 Main Street South for a 2' variance from the maximum allowed 4' high fence in a front yard in order to construct a 6' high fence in the front yard. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Smolich to adopt Resolution No. 2014-21, Ordering the Preparation of Feasibility Reports For The 2015 Street Project. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Hess and supported by Lislegard to table the appointment of Two (2) Vacant Board Positions on Housing and Redevelopment Board and the appointment of Vacant Position on Planning and Zoning Commission. MOTION CARRIED**

Councilor Worshek reported that at the Park Committee Meeting on July 17, 2014, the Committee had discussed placing a member of the Caring for the Kids Community Group on the Committee. After the meeting, the Caring for the Kids Community Group asked that the City also consider appointing another person from the group – for a total of two members from the Caring for the Kids Community Group on the Park Committee. They suggested the City appoint Suzy Parkhurst and Jacie Cherro to the Park Committee.

**Moved by Smolich and supported by Cromley to authorize appointing Suzy Parkhurst and Jacie Cherro of the Caring for the Kids Community Group to the City Park Committee. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Lislegard to table the request to appoint a member of the ISD 2711 School Board to the Park Committee until City Staff has communicated with the School Board. MOTION CARRIED**

The Council reviewed a proposed Ordinance entitled “Banning the Sale, Possession, Transfer, or Manufacture of Synthetic or Alternative Drugs”. This ordinance was drafted from similar ordinances in Proctor and Virginia, MN. Ms. Thayer stated that Mr. Kearney was seeking input from the City of Virginia attorney regarding what they would change or would have done different in their ordinance.

Final Approval of this ordinance is scheduled at September 2, 2014 Meeting. The earliest effective date is date of publication.

Delbert Hall, 410 S 1<sup>st</sup> Street East was present to discuss his request to extend the alley behind 410 S 1<sup>st</sup> Street East. He stated that when the City removed the fence in the cemetery, that the City crews were putting piles of sand on his property. He asked the City to remove the sand they placed there. He also stated that the neighbor was throwing trees into the long grass along the alleyway. Public Works Director Thuringer stated that he thought it was the trees in the cemetery were dropping branches, not the residents. Mr. Thuringer stated that when time allows, the City crews will come remove the debris left by the plows. But that it was not a top priority. Administrator See-Benes reiterated that the work will be completed when time allows.

Mayor Hess reminded all of the upcoming Joint Meeting with Hoyt Lakes City Council on August 19, 2014 @ 4:00 pm at the Aurora City Hall.

A future Special Meeting will be held to discuss AFSCME Request regarding Biwabik Agreement and the 2015 Budget. City Administrator See-Benes will poll the Council Members to find out when they are available.

Councilor Worshek will be contacting members of the Tree Committee regarding when they can meet in order to discuss tree removal bids & tree survey in Central Park.

Councilor Worshek stated that the Park Committee will be conducting a survey via the City utility bills asking which parks the residents like and what you use.

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Smolich to approve placing a Park Use Survey in the September City of Aurora Utility Bills. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Smolich to adjourn the meeting. MOTION CARRIED.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

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Mary Hess, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Britt See-Benes, Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer