

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
INDEPENDENCE CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020 –6:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Independence City Council was called to order by Mayor Johnson at 6:30 p.m.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mayor Johnson led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Johnson, Councilors Betts (virtual), Spencer, McCoy and Grotting

ABSENT:

STAFF: City Administrator Kaltsas, Assistant to Administrator Horner

VISITORS: WHPS Chief Kroells

3. ****Consent Agenda****

All items listed under Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by Council and will be acted on by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

- a. Approval of City Council Minutes from the October 6, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting.
- b. Approval of Accounts Payable; Checks Numbered 19944 and 19945, 20005 to 20028 (Checks Numbered 19946-20004 were not printed as a result of being out of order and will be used for next check run).

Motion by Spencer, second by McCoy to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Spencer, McCoy and Grotting. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

4. SET AGENDA – ANYONE NOT ON THE AGENDA CAN BE PLACED UNDER OPEN/MISC.

5. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES BY COUNCIL AND STAFF

Spencer attended the following meetings:

- Department of Fisheries meetings

Grotting attended the following meetings:

- None

McCoy attended the following meetings:

- None

Betts attended the following meetings:

- Chamber of Commerce Meeting (zoom)

Johnson attended the following meetings:

- Highway 55 Executive Meeting (zoom)
- Orono Healthy Youth Committee Meeting (zoom)
- Wright Hennepin Coop Annual Meeting
- Regional Council of Mayors Meeting (zoom)
- Orono School Board Meeting (zoom)
- Election Judge Training Webinar
- Chamber of Commerce Meeting
- Northwest League of Municipalities
- Regional Council of Mayors World Food Day Virtual Meeting
- Two Sessions of Toward Zero Deaths

Horner attended the following meetings:

- Met with BKV architects

Kaltsas attended the following meetings:

6. West Hennepin Public Safety Director Gary Kroells: Presentation of the September 2020 Activity Report.

Kroells stated at the end of September 30, 2020 West Hennepin Public Safety (WHPS) handled year-to-date a total 3,986 incident complaints. For the month of September, 269 incidents were in the city of Independence and 149 in the city of Maple Plain. He highlighted some incidents.

for a complete report see the City Council packet

7. City Hall Renovation Update:

- a. Review preliminary construction schedule and temporary office plans.

Kaltsas said the City has been working with our contractor on the coordination and timing of the project. Our contractor has provided the City with a tentative schedule and initial construction site plan. Based on the discussions and information provided, there will be an approximately 4-6-month period where access to the community room and City Hall offices will be limited. Staff is working on a plan to accommodate the construction and limit disruption to City services. It is currently anticipated that construction will commence immediately following the election.

The City has discussed the possibility of temporary relocating the City Hall office and public facing window in order to avoid construction conflict, additional costs with staging, temporary and frequent disruptions to service and to expedite the overall construction process. Staff has reviewed several options including bringing in a construction trailer, relocating offices to the WHPS side of the building and relocating offices to the Public Works front office. For a wide array of reasons, staff believes that relocating to the Public Works front office will be the most suitable and efficient option. Having access to our network, phones, a nonportable restroom and a front facing door are all benefits of temporarily relocating to this space versus other options. Staff will review the draft schedule with Council and the discuss the process, plans and timing of the project.

Kroells stated WHPS would convert the garage to the have a public area with window. He said it would not be that complicated. Johnson asked if there would be a space in the garage for public meetings? Kaltsas said he would have to look at it further to determine feasibility. McCoy suggested Council could come in the back

door and then have the actual meeting in the conference room. Johnson said it is nice that Staff can continue working until the offices are done without disruption to work time. McCoy said he liked the idea of fixing up Public Works and saving that rent money. Betts agreed that she liked the idea of using the Public Works building.

8. Cares Act Funding Discussion:

- a. Approval of Business Corona Virus Relief Grant Awards.
- b. Cares Act Funding Current Balance and Additional Organizational Funding Considerations.

Kaltsas said the City received \$283,505 dollars in federal Cares Act Funding. The City has already paid for eligible expenses relating to increased costs associated with operating during the pandemic. Eligible expenses include technology upgrades, a new data tower at City Hall, PPE supplies, additional cleaning costs, additional staff time due to remote conditions and printing and mailing of information to residents.

The City has expended approximately \$59,000 to date. The City is in the process of assessing and moving forward with several additional projects that would meet eligibility criteria and provide additional flexibility relating to navigating the pandemic and protecting City resources and staff. The City has also received requests from outside organizations for funding. Staff would like to further discuss funding outside organizations and remaining projects and expenses with City Council. As it relates to the information provided above, the City has determined that the encouragement and the financial support of economic development and redevelopment in the City is in the best interests of the health, safety, success and common welfare of the citizens of Independence. The 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic has presented significant challenges and economic impacts to many residents and businesses. In September 2020, the City Council made \$50,000 available to Independence businesses in the form of the Corona Virus Business Relief Grant Program.

Applications were directly mailed to as many local businesses known to be in existence within the City. As of the time this report was prepared, the City has only received one application. As a result of the limited number of applications received, staff is recommending that Council extend the program through November 5th. The proceeds from the Cares Act Funding needs to be utilized by November 15th, 2020. This will allow the City to continue to market the program and solicit additional applications.

It is recommended that the City Council approve the application from Ox Yoke Inn and award the requested grant in the amount of \$2,000. It is also recommended that the City extend the grant program until November 5th, 2020.

McCoy asked about the fire side and Kaltsas said that we do not pay fire directly. Betts said she thought there was a difference between fire and police and the police side is easier to process.

Johnson noted that we are in WeCAN territory and they have seen a lot of increased rent costs and people needing rent money and food. Spencer asked if organizations needed to provide a formal request and provide documentation of what they are spending the money on. Kaltsas said there is paperwork to process and document expenditures. He noted the City of Orono gave money to Orono schools. Johnson said he would like to give to the school districts. Kaltsas said we could create a proportional share for the districts.

Spencer said if the grant was not fully utilized maybe we could give 5k to fire, 10k to Orono and Delano schools, 5k to Rockford and Mound and 2500k to WeCAN and Delano Senior Center.

Johnson noted we heard from Ox Yoke but have there been any others. Kaltsas said that was the only one to date.

Kaltsas said there would be a formal resolution for this in the next City Council Workshop.

Motion by Spencer, second by McCoy to approve the Corona Virus Relief Grant Award to Ox Yoke Inn in the amount of \$2000.00. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Grotting, McCoy and Spencer. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

7. OPEN/MISC.

8. ADJOURN.

Motion by Spencer, second by Grotting to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. Ayes: Johnson, Betts, Grotting, McCoy and Spencer. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Trish Gronstal/ Recording Secretary