



AGENDA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
May 6th 2014 / 6:00 pm

- **CALL TO ORDER**
- **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- **ROLL CALL** - Vetch Lonkoski, Fordahl, Martell
- **ACTION TO CHANGE AGENDA** One change Smokey Johnson Tree Service \$150 for tree by Matt Von Arx's street.

1. Consent Agenda:

All items listed under the consent agenda are considered routine by the City Council and will be enacted 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.

1.1	Minutes:	April 1, 2014
1.2	Bills Payable Through:	May 2nd, 2014
1.3	Consolidated Balance Sheet:	May 2, 2014

Motion made by Vetch to approve the Consent Agenda Items, seconded by Fordahl, all in favor

Open Book Meeting: Houston County Assessor’s Office

Karl Ask - 3 sales in the city which does not make enough to have a sale study, Median 94.1% Naliand bought the eight-plex , and 5 other apartments in 2 years, so that did increase the apartments in Hokah City by 10% and apartments in La Crescent City 15%. Planning on looking at valuing that. Discussion. Hokah Township Residential got an increase of 5%. All based on sales studies. Any Questions? you have the book and you can compare with other yrs. Not a lot of change. Martel: When is the City Scheduled to be reassessed? Pictomotry just did a new fly over. Should have new aerial photos sometime this year.

1. Water/Waste Water/City Engineer : Reservoir Cleaning - Bid from Liquid Engineering, tried to get a second bid, they want the reservoir empty, have no clue what we have going on. And how much is the cleaning? - \$2975 - been trying to get a second bid for 4 months. These are the same ones that did it last time. They can camera the reservoir also.

Motion by Lonkoski to accept the bid from Liquid Engineering, seconded by Fordahl - all in favor, motion passed

2. Library : Hazel retired. Decided to look at having her through the summer, Looking at somebody replace her later on. County contract negotiations are coming up - Every Thursday in June is booked for an event either in the park of Hall if it rains.

3. Police Dept.: Nothing to report

4. Streets / Maintenance : Park Shelters - 2 shelters, the 6 x 6's are rotten, some you can kick loose. Per Martell the Lion's Club was going to do that last year, but it turned out to be more of a project than they could afford, they are willing to put some towards the repairs.. It did not get done. Fascia is getting bad. You should have a price quote from Menards. Roughly \$1300 including stain etc. Chris proposed he and Allen can do the work. Discussion on how this will be done. Just the posts, cross braces and fascia need to be replaced. Will be able to do in the next couple of weeks, before school is out. Will need to replace electric line from one shelter

to pole. Martell will bring up at Lions Club for monetary help. Motion made by Vetch to allow Chris and Al to start this project, seconded by Fordahl - all in favor. Motion carried
Discussion on work being done at the Pool.

5. Recreation Board: Nothing to report

6. Planning Commission / Zoning : Zoning Request- Weiser - Review of permit re: 44 Main Street, the applicant is looking to change a commercial building to 2 apartments on the lower level. A conditional use permit would be needed to do this. The current ordinance requires that apartments in the commercial district only be allowed on the upper floors. Applicant wants the apartments on the main/street level. Not eligible for a conditional use permit because it is not on the upper floor. Council need to deny OR If council desires the applicant move forward, a text amendment (rewrite) would need to be made to the ordinance that would allow apartments on the main/street level in the commercial district. Person who is applying is Dan Walker and the property is the old Grocery Store. This has been vacant for 2 years. Did anyone verify the floor plan? That is in his application. If you want to move forward one of the conditions would be to be sure the MN State Building Code is followed, the contractor licensed by the state would be required to follow the ingress/egress for fire escape. Across the street was a business at one time, the building next to the Post Office, that now has main/street level apartments. Are we ever going to try to develop Hokah in to something besides more and more apartments? We are small, but it would be good to get more businesses back in again. Discussion on the floor plans, fire walls, adjoining business. In regards to the other places that have put apartments on the lower level, as far as we know there were no zoning applications for those improvements. Some things just happened. The date on enactment of this Ordinance was April 6, 2004, signed by then Mayor Martell. There was a period there, we don't know what happened prior to 2007, but I would think all the buildings you referenced were in existence prior to 2004. What prompted that was Tony Becker changed Fricks and there was nothing we could do. Will that affect this? No, that was before the Ordinance, they were pre-existing. Any use prior to the adoption of the ordinance will be allowed to continue unless it was discontinued for at least a year. I just worry about what might happen, it could just keep moving down the line. I agree, I would like to see some growth in our community and improvements. If we don't improve and maintain things we don't grow or improve. I think we are a community that could offer so much but we just kind of like, OK, well that's OK, we'll make that an apartment. I would like to take this stand and say lets start more economic growth for our City. No matter what way the council decides to go, procedural there is 60 days for the council to act, or act now. The sequence of your meetings, even if the council would want to permit this, I think at a minimum we would want to consider a motion to deny the application and it sounds like, based on your discussions, the concerns I am hearing from the council are as follows and feel free to add or subtract from these: " it fails to comply with our current zoning regulations, there are concerns about the size and compliance of the proposal and third there is a concern of impeding growth in your commercial zoning district. If the council would want to deny it tonight, that would be the motion with those findings and then we can discuss whether or not we want to encourage the project to go forward as presented or do we want to encourage the property owner to do apartments on the 2nd floor which he would be able to apply for, he already has - Oh, so take that idea off the table. Concern about adequacy of parking. With Conditional Use Permit he would, at minimum there would need to be designated 3 spots for a 2 unit. That would be the minimum. It sounds like that would be a struggle. That is for the main level only. Motion by Fordahl to Deny based on the 4 findings previously discussed, seconded by Lonkoski - All in Favor, Motion passed. Admin Blank and I will communicate with the property owner.

7. Items for Consideration:

7.1 Tom Danielson - Insurance renewal packet - City of Hokah Insurance Coverage explanations and discussion. Pressure on Work Comp rates because medical bills keep going up. This past year the League conducted its Property appraisal, particularly the City Auditorium value has gone from \$679,380 up to \$1,183,000.00. That was the biggest change. Sewer plant went up by \$300,000. City admin gets copy of premium worksheet every year. Pg, 3 skid-loader needs to be updated. Even though the value of the City Auditorium went up, it did not cause the premium to go up very much as it is made of material that is not something that would be lost in a fire. Full time Police Officer causes the rate to be more because there can be

more liability claims. Increase from 2013 to 2014 is over \$12,000. Greatest reason is the Workers Compensation. Experience modification factor based on loss ratio, and City of Hokah has a claim currently on the books. Claim data stays on your worksheet for 3 years. Discussion on increase and when it may possibly go down. Cost may drop a little next year. Worker Comp laws require the increase stay in place for 3 years when you have a claim. The Auto insurance is very reasonable. Need to add the new bobcat. \$1000 deductible for each claim including Liability, Property and Comprehensive collision. \$2500 deductible on sewer backup claim. If someone doing Community Service gets hurt does that affect our premium? If done through Sentence-to-Serve you have liability for that and they too have coverage. But it is not just Sentence-to-Serve, the court will direct the juvenile who has hours to complete for Community Service, the court will direct them to us to complete that service. I would think it would fall under the same category, but I will check into that. City has them sign a 'hold harmless' clause, but that does not always hold up in court. You do have volunteer coverage for someone who for example, waters the flowers. Explanation of excess liability - city's do have immunity at a certain level, however, some claims are not covered by the immunity law. You are getting approx 10% discount on the work comp rate for Police and Fire dept. because 90% are not smokers.

7.2 Hazel Iverson Resignation - Included in your packets is Hazel's resignation, her last day was April 24 and Barb had a going away party for her.

7.3 Refuse Letter - dated April 9 from Richard's Sanitation. Current contract is up this year, that was a 3 yr contract. Same rate structure we have been paying for the last 34 months. Is city interested in renewing for a 5 yr period? Very good service from Richard's, no complaints. Motion made by Vetch to renew the contract with Richard's Sanitation. Seconded by Lonkoski - all in favor w/Martell abstaining

8. Council Member's Comments: Can we do something different with the garbage can in front of the Post Office? It gets overflowing with everyone's junk mail. We could maybe move it down the block.

Vetsch - Excel energy program for lighting for Fire Dept. bays and outside. Total cost was \$2252.36 - Utility rebate is \$774.72 and our cost is \$1477.64. Total upgrade. This is just fixtures, will still need conduit and wiring and some smaller things. This will totally upgrade all FD Lights. Estimated \$668.33 a year savings. Motion made by Fordahl to approve. Seconded by Lonkoski - all in Favor.

Vetsch - Between Lions, FD and possibly Hokah Fun days - looking to update Ball Diamond Concession stand. Have a plan from an architect donated by Vetsch. Wondering if the City would be in favor of this. Unsure of cost at this time. Will have more of an idea at next meeting. City knows of someone who would relocate the old Concession Stand, the Mayor would like the work to not start until after July 15th.

Vetsch - Questions on the cell phone per-diem program. Currently Police Chief, City Administrator and Allen receive \$40/month to use their personal cell phones. City cell phones have been cancelled. Fire Chief would also like to be included because of the amount of emergency calls he gets. Motion has been made by Lonkoski to include the Fire Chief (Currently Matt Vetch) and Public Works Employee Chris Oliver in the per-diem phone program, seconded by Fordahl, all in favor - Vetch abstained

Lonkoski - Request the council approve a load of mulch and some preen by the City sign.

Also, plant watering - can we hire someone? Needs to be done daily, possibly an hour a day. I do have someone who will do it. It would be nice if each business take care of the plant in front of them. City Employee could do from the gator. 22 - 25 gallons of water each time. Names and numbers needed before Council can make a motion. Motion made by Lonkoski to authorize City Admin to hire someone at a reasonable rate to water the plants seconded and all in favor

Rita Water's property - would like to see if City could purchase all with exception of the Blue House and add to the park/pool area. City will check in to this suggestion.

9. Mayor's Comments: Acting Mayor Martell - attended the SE MN League of Municipalities - discussion on the Destination Medical Center in Rochester and the potential economic boom to SE MN. Other portion of the meeting was impact of the severe winter on some cities. We lucked out compared to some cities. Snow removal, so much snow in Cul-de-sacs no where to go with it. Seal coating cul-de-sacs does not work because there is not enough traffic. Lot of cities did the drip list like we did and gave credit to the citizens. Some cities had the sewers freeze as well as the water lines.

10. Staff Correspondence: Chickens - City admin has had several requests, 5 actually, to house chickens in the city, we do not have a Chicken Ordinance. Blank has worked on an Urban Chicken Ordinance. discussion follows. Council agrees there needs to be an ordinance. Blank will have one ready for next month.

Mayor has asked Blank to discuss trees, we have a quote for \$350/tree from Standish Instant Shade in Caledonia, interested in Three 9 to 12 foot conifers on the Old Junction Inn Property. Also put shrubs and 2 picnic tables.

Let the record reflect Mayor Scholze present at 7:55pm - input on old Junction Inn Property - would like to re-identify this piece of property as part of the City. Discussion
Motion made by Vetch to approve funding to not exceed \$1000 for improvements on the Old Junction Property to turn it in to a park - seconded by Fordahl, all in favor.

Chris would like approval to rent a walk-behind tiller to till the pool area, twice a year.

11. Correspondence Received:

12. Announcements : Next Council Meeting: June 3, 2014 @ 6:00pm

13. Items for next Agenda:

14. Adjournment: 8:05pm