



Watertown City Council
Regular Meeting

Mayor Michael Walters
Kay Thul
Adam Pawelk
Fred McGuire
Dan Schuette

2/14/2023 - Minutes

1. Call To Order And Roll Call

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the Watertown City Council was called to order in the Council Chambers of City Hall at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, by Mayor Michael Walters.

Councilmembers present: Mike Walters, Fred McGuire, Adam Pawelk, Kay Thul and Dan Schuette.

Councilmembers absent: None.

City Staff present: City Administrator Jake Foster, City Planner Mark Kaltsas, Public Works Superintendent Mike Dressel, Public Works Lead, Mike Loehrs, and Administrative Services Director Maggie Reisdorf.

Others Present: None.

2. Adopt Agenda

**COUNCILMEMBER PAWELK MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.
COUNCILMEMBER MCGUIRE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

3. Consent Agenda Discussion And Approval

**COUNCILMEMBER SCHUETTE MOVED TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.
PAWELK SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

Walters thanked firefighter Randell Freyholtz for their dedication and service to the Watertown Fire Department and the residents of the City of Watertown.

3.A. January 24, 2023 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

3.B. January 24, 2023 City Council Meeting Minutes

- 3.C. EE Handbook Change
- 3.D. 2023 WFD Recruitment
- 3.E. Accept FF Resignation
- 3.F. Charitable Gambling Application
- 3.G. 3G - Commission Appointments
- 3.H. 3H - 2023 North-South Corridor Study With Carver Co.
- 4. Open Forum
- 5. New/Old Business
 - 5.A. Brush Chipper

Loehrs introduced this item to the City Council for review and discussion. He explained that at the January 10, 2023 City Council meeting, the City Council authorized staff to solicit quotes for a 2023 Vermeer BC1500 brush chipper. Loehrs explained that one quote was received from a local vendor utilizing the state Sourcwell Contract Pricing option. He stated that two quotes were also received for used units. Loehrs reviewed the two used units and stated that staff could only find one chipper that was completely comparable with the quoted new chipper.

Loehrs provided the following pricing information on the three units:

2019 Vermeer BC1500 with 750 hours from Ruckersville, VA: \$58,898.00. Does not include shipping costs.

2012 Vermeer BC1500 with 3,882 hours from Fontana, CA: \$54,500.00. Does not include shipping costs.

2023 Vermeer BC1500 with 0 hours from Burnsville, MN: \$83,985.77

Loehrs informed that the budget for the capital purchase is \$85,000.00. He said that if approved, the unit could be ordered and tentatively available June/July of 2023.

Thul thanked public works for looking into used options as well.

Walters explained that during the capital improvement planning process for the next coming years, that the brush chipper was identified as a 2023 capital purchase item. He stated that the unit is needed to as the public works department starts working on eliminating Emerald Ash Borer trees throughout the city.

SCHUETTE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE RESOLUTION 2023-07 APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF THE NEW 2023 VERMEER BRUSH CHIPPER BC1500 FOR \$83,985.77. MCGUIRE SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

- 5.B. Tree Removal In City ROW

Dressel introduced this item to the City Council for review and discussion. He reviewed the current city procedures for removing trees within the Right-Of-Way (ROW). He explained that it includes hiring a local tree contractor, having them remove the tree and the stump. He stated that once the tree is removed, the city is invoiced for the work and the cost is split between the adjacent property owner and

the city at 50/50 percent. This is per city ordinance.

Dressel informed that with the purchase of the brush chipper and the starting of the city to remove Emerald Ash Borer trees, staff is proposing to bring some of the ROW tree removal process in house. He said that the staff has the capacity to take down some of the trees, but not all and that some would still have to be taken down by a private contractor. He explained that the cost would still be 50% to the property owner

Dressel explained that in 2020, Emerald Ash Borer was found throughout the city and continues to get worse over time. He estimated 15% to currently have symptoms. He informed that the city maintains all trees within the public parks and right-of-way (ROW). He estimated that about 400 trees would have to be removed in the upcoming years. He explained that property owners are responsible for all trees within their property limits.

Dressel asked the City Council if they would what to replace 100% of the trees that are removed. The City Council came to a consensus that it would be based on each situation and determined administratively.

Dressel explained that recommended fee schedule for the in-house tree removal process.

	Total Cost	50 /50 Split Cost
Cost for each inch diameter of the tree after 8 inches	\$50.00	\$25.00
Minimum Cost	\$400.00	\$200.00
Maximum Cost	\$2000.00	\$1000.00

Dressel explained that trees typically range between 8 – 30 inches in diameter.

Dressel reviewed that trees are tagged for removal when the canopy of the tree starts to decline after infected. He explained that once infected, trees can fail and fall within two years. He said that is the risk. Dressel explained that the process to removal all infected trees would likely take 10 years. He estimated a removal of 30-40 trees per year. He stressed taking a proactive approach to reduce the risk. He stated that some trees would have to be contracted out, but most would be done in house.

Dressel explained that trees can be treated for between \$70 - \$200 per year, every two years. He informed that it can be 99% effective. He explained that he does not recommend treating any public trees.

Dressel informed that he would be applying for a MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grant (a two-year grant) to help cover the costs related to the tree removal of trees with emerald ash borer. The grant would also help cover the costs of tree replacement.

Pawelk asked Kaltsas about his thoughts on tree replacement and tree location.

Kaltsas explained that he is pro street trees. He agreed that it made sense to not treat the trees, but to remove them and replace when possible. He recommended trying to replace boulevard trees when allowable. He said if they can't be replaced in the boulevard, the city could plant replacement trees in a different location to maintain the tree count. He said that some tree types survive the boulevard areas better than others and that should be taken into consideration.

Thul stated that she loved trees along the streets. She agreed to pursuing the DNR grant and replacing trees when it made sense.

Walters expressed that it would be vital for the city to communicate effectively with homeowners about

the process. Walters asked if residents had to put trees back, per the policy, if they didn't want to.

Dressel explained that most people want trees back after they have been removed. HE said that the city needs to make sure that there is diversity in the trees that are replanted.

McGuire asked if the city would work with residents who are faced with an unplanned cost related to the removal of a tree.

Foster explained that the city would work with homeowners in some way or another including payment plans, assessments and/or other options.

McGuire asked about properties with more than one tree that needs to be removed.

Dressel explained that there will be some properties with more than one tree. He said that there si one property in town with six trees that will need to be removed.

Pawelk summarized the fee schedule proposal explaining that the new fees would only be appliable to staff removed trees. He said if the tree is contracted for removal, the homeowner, per ordinance, pays 50% of the invoice.

Dressel confirmed.

Foster explained that the process of communication would include the city sending letters to property owners 30 days before any planned work would be completed.

MCGUIRE MOVED APPROVE THE PRACTICE OF REMOVING TREES WITHIN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY AND ADOPTING ORDINANCE 436, AMENDING THE ADOPTED 2023 PERMITS, LICENSES, AND FEES SCHEDULE AND AUTHORIZING SUMMARY PUBLICATION. WALTERS SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

5.C. 2023 Amended Fee Schedule

See Minutes from 5.B.

5.D. 1001 Hwy 25 Variance

Kaltsas introduced this item to the City Council. He explained that the applicant, Chris Vogel, and property owner, Watertown-Mayer Public Schools submitted an application to request a variance. The variance would be to allow more than 50% of a proposed accessory structure to be constructed using metal siding and to allow for a metal roof with exposed fasteners.

Kaltsas informed that the accessory structure is planned to be located to the north of the High School building and will be used to store equipment and materials for the adjacent new greenhouse.

Kaltsas reviewed background information on the property location. He explained that property is located on the north side of TH25 and just northwest of the intersection of CSAH 10 and TH 25 in the Cit of Watertown. He said that the property is owned by and the location of Watertown Mayer High School.

He explained that the zoning is P-2 (Public Building or Facility), and the comprehensive plan guides it as institutional. He stated that the site is about 69 acres.

Kaltsas reviewed construction standards within the P-2 district state that the use of metal siding for greater than 50% of the exposed building surface areas is prohibited and that metal roofing shall not have exposed fasteners.

Kaltsas explained that Watertown Mayer High School has been planning for the construction of a green house and storage building for some time. He provided history on the 2022 approval for the school to add a new ingress/egress driveway that provides access onto Quarry Ave. from the north side of the building. Kaltsas explained that the original plans for the greenhouse/storage buildings was a conjoined building that was one structure. The original joined structure met the material requirements of the Watertown city code.

Kaltsas said that during the continued planning process, the school district found and determined that it wouldn't be feasible to have the buildings adjoined and therefore had to separate the buildings into a greenhouse and a neighboring storage accessory building. He explained that the storage accessory building doesn't meet building code as a separate structure because it is 100% metal.

Kaltsas stated that because of the accessory storage building not meeting code, the school district applied for a variance from the building material requirements to be allowed to have 100% steel panels with an exposed fastener metal roof.

Kaltsas reviewed the dimensions and location of the buildings with the City Council.

Kaltsas reviewed screening requirements for the building from neighboring properties. He explained that the building would meet the requirements.

Kaltsas reviewed the variance considerations that need to be met to grant a variance.

Kaltsas reviewed the Planning Commission's evaluation of the variance request. He stated that there was discussion about the FFA partnership with the school on the project. He explained that the Commissioners requested information from the school on how much the project cost would increase if they were to adhere to the City Code. The school responded that it would increase the project cost about 50%. Kaltsas explained that the Planning Commission discussed the metal roof provisions and asked that the Commission do a review of the City Code as it relates building materials to determine if the current code is still relevant. Kaltsas stated that the Planning Commission noted that they believed approval of the variance in the P-2 Zoning District would not set or establish a precedent for metal buildings in any other district. Lastly, Kaltsas informed that the Commission found that the criteria for granting the variance had been satisfied by the applicant and thus recommended approval to the City Council.

Kaltsas stated that the Planning Commission recommended approval with conditions. He explained that the conditions are highlighted within Resolution 2023-08 that grants the approval of the variance.

There was discussion on other buildings throughout the city with exposed roof fasteners.

Thul said that exposed fastener roofs are more of a design trend. She stated that more buildings are being constructed with metal. She explained that she was ok with the exposed fastener roof as long as it does cause structural issues.

There was discussion on what the color would be.

Kaltsas believed the colors to be more earth toned, but stated that it could be confirmed.

THUL MOVED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2023-08 GRANTING APPROVAL OF A VARIANCE TO ALLOW AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE TO BE CONSTRUCTED WITH MORE THAN 50% OF THE BUILDING BEING COMPRISED OF METAL SIDING AND TO ALLOW A METAL ROOF WITH EXPOSED FASTENERS ON THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1001 HWY 25 NW. PAWELK SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Pawelk stated that he thought the Planning Commission's recommendation made sense. He explained that he didn't have any concerns about the request. He said that it is a public-school property within the

P-2 District. He stated he was not concerned about setting a precedent.

5.E. Reauthorization To Purchase 1-Ton Dump Truck

Dressel introduced this item to the City Council. He informed that on at the February 23, 2021 City Council meeting, the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-22 that approved the purchase of a 1-ton Chevy dump truck, dump body, and chipper box. He explained that staff placed the order for all three items.

Dressel explained that once the order for the truck was placed, the pandemic caused things to shut down. As a result, he said that the order was never fulfilled for the 1-ton truck and dump body and that prices have since gone up.

Dressel stated that the truck is still needed and if approved could be ordered in February and available at some point in 2023.

Dressel informed that due to the increase in the cost of equipment that staff is recommending to purchase a 1-ton truck with a gas motor instead of the originally planned diesel motor. He explained that the cost savings would be about \$9,000.00.

Dressel reviewed the cost changes between 2021 and 2023.

	2021	2023
North Country GM	\$42,134.80	\$47,430.85
Towmaster	\$24,916.00	\$38,151.00
Total	\$67,050.80	\$85,581.85

Dressel explained that the budget in 2021 for all three items was \$74,160.00. He said that was able to purchase the chipper box for \$3,300.00 and therefore there is a balance of \$70,860.00 leftover. As such, Dressel said that the purchase of the remaining two items would put the city over budget by \$14,721.85.

Dressel recommended using money available from the seal coating budget. He informed that in 2022, staff recommended not seal coating the southwest quadrant of the city due to the current seal cost and streets being still in good enough condition and/or needing to be mill and overlaid instead. Dressel stated that staff is recommending the same for 2023 as far as not seal coating.

Dressel explained that the seal coating and crack sealing budget for 2023 is \$125,592 and since staff will be making the recommendation as far as seal coating, that the savings could be applied to the purchase of the two items to cover the overage of \$14,721.85.

There was discussion about the original purchase order made in 2021 and why it wasn't honored.

Dressel guessed that with the state bid pricing process and it being submitted as a purchase order at that time, the company may have had the ability to cancel orders (per state contract) if they were losing a significant amount of money. Dressel informed that over the past two years, staffing issues and delays with parts have caused a lot of issues.

MCGUIRE MOVED APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE 1 TON TRUCK AND EQUIPMENT FROM THE LOW QUOTE BID. PAWELK SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Pawelk explained that it was unfortunate that there was a delay and subsequent cost increase. He agreed that it is a long-term need and agreed with the purchase.

5.F. Sugarbush Park Playground Phase LI

Dressel introduced this item to the City Council for review and discussion. He explained that at the January 24, 2023 City Council meeting, the City Council approved the solicitation of quotes for Sugarbush Playground Phase 2 equipment and installation.

Dressel stated that the city used state contract pricing and solicited one quote for the equipment from Landscape Structures and one quote from Flagship Recreation of installation of the equipment.

Dressel reviewed the playground equipment quoted for.

He informed that the equipment quote came in at \$49,865.40 and the installation came in at \$13,463.88. He said that total project cost is \$63,329.28. Dressel explained that the budget for the project is \$65,000.00. He said that the total project cost would be a little under that because the city would be saving some costs by providing garbage disposal in house.

Dressel estimated the project, if approved, to be installed mid to late summer. He said that after the installation of the equipment, that the city would be adding more engineered wood fiber into the playground containment area.

Pawelk informed that the Park Commission is excited for the Phase II of this project.

SCHUETTE MOVED APPROVE RESOLUTION 2023-06 APPROVING THE QUOTES FOR PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION AT SUGARBUSH PARK. THUL SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

6. Other Reports

Foster mentioned that there would be a joint City Council picture taken at 5:15 pm before the February 28, 2023 meeting.

Pawelk informed that there would be no Park Commission meeting on February 15, 2023 due to lack of an agenda.

Thul said that the Commission on Aging met at the beginning of the month. She informed that they are working on a community survey that will solicit information about senior needs within the community. She informed that the Commission is also looking at doing a Senior Prom Dance this spring.

Walters informed that he would be doing a State of the City presentation at the February 15, 2023 Chamber of Commerce meeting.

7. Claims

THUL MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 14, 2023 CLAIMS PACKET. SCHUETTE SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

7.A. Claim Packer 2-14--2023

8. Adjournment

SCHUETTE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:56 PM. THUL SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

309 Lewis Avenue South; P.O. Box 279, Watertown, MN 55388

Mike Walters, Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Margaret Reisdorf, Admin. Services Director