

**MINUTES OF THE  
WATERTOWN CITY COUNCIL**  
Regular Meeting Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Mayor Steve Washburn  
Deborah Everson  
Lindsay Guetzkow  
Adam Pawelk  
Michael Walters

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

*Please note that, pursuant to the authority provided by Minn. Stat. Sec. 13D.021, subd. 1(1), the City Administrator and the City Attorney have determined that in-person meetings of the City Council are not practical or prudent due to the COVID-19 public health pandemic and the declared national, state, and local emergencies. Further, the City Administrator and the City Attorney have determined that it is not feasible nor practical or prudent due to the health pandemic to have members of the public, city staff, or members of the City Council in attendance at the regular meeting location. Meetings of the Council will be conducted by electronic or telephonic means. Under Minn. Stat. Sec. 13D.021, subd. 3, to the extent practical and possible, the City Council will allow individuals to monitor the meeting electronically as provided below:*

*Meeting Link: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Hri9DvgoQbqpSb\\_y5GbuwA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Hri9DvgoQbqpSb_y5GbuwA)*

*Meeting ID: 380-100-491*

*After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.*

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Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the Watertown City Council was called to order at 6:32 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, 2020 in the Council Chambers of City Hall by Mayor Steve Washburn.

Council Members present online using Zoom.com: Washburn, Mike Walters, Deborah Everson, Lindsay Guetzkow, and Adam Pawelk.

City Staff present at City Hall: City Administrator Shane Fineran and Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Tschudi.

City Staff present online: City Engineer Andrew Budde and Utilities Superintendent Doug Kammerer.

Guest present: Brad Falteysek from Abdo Eick & Meyers.

Those who signed on: Ben Hayle, Brad Kipp, Cathy Sorensen, Donald Fineran, and Missy Meidinger.

2. Adopt Agenda

WALTERS MOVED, EVERSON SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.

3. Consent Agenda Discussion and Approval

**All items listed under the consent agenda are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion on an affirmative vote by roll call of a majority of the members present. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member or citizen so requests, in which event, the item(s) will be removed and discussed prior to the adoption of the consent agenda.**

EVERSON MOVED, GUETZKOW SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.

- A. Adopt a motion to approve City Council Work Session Meeting Minutes from March 10, 2020
- B. Adopt a motion to approve City Council Regular Meeting Minutes from March 10, 2020
- C. Adopt a motion to approve City Council Emergency Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2020
- D. Consider Resolution #2020-42, Authorizing Closure of Fund 323 and Transfer to 101 General Fund for 2019 Budget
- E. Consider Resolution #2020-46, Approving Temporary 3.2 Beer License for the Watertown Lions for Watertown Red Devils games
- F. Consider Resolution #2020-48, Accepting Donation and Directing Use for Fire Operating Fund
- G. Motion to Approve Pay Application #1 for the Sanitary Sewer Stabilization Project to Barber Construction

4. Open Forum

5. New/Old Business

- A. 2019 Final Audited Financial Statements (Presenter: Brad Falteysek, Abdo Eck Meyers)

Falteysek shared the 2019 final financial statements with City Council.

Walters pointed out the debt per capita for Watertown was almost half of other cities. He noted the tax rate for Watertown is also lower than nearby cities.

Guetzkow is pleased to see Watertown in a strong position again for 2019.

EVERSON MOVED, GUETZKOW SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-49, ACCEPTING AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2019. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.

- B. Luce Line Trail Alternate Alignment (Presenter: Andrew Budde, City Engineer)

City Engineer Andrew Budde said the city is planning a connection to the Luce Line Trail from Highway 25. This will be done using grant funds from the DNR and some city funds. One item of feedback from the DNR was to look at a straight alignment for the trail rather than a hairpin turn design. Budde shared a map of the trail design with council. He noted there will be a two to one grade with the new design and the length will be protected with a fence. Budde said the straight shot should be a safer option than the hairpin turn.

Budde said all trees will need to be cleared in the DNR right of way along the trail. These trees are in four resident's backyards but on DNR land. Letters have been mailed to these residents.

Pawelk asked Fineran what steps were taken to reach out to the affected residents. Fineran said there were letters mailed and door hangers hung on doors.

Walters asked if it would be appropriate to plant foliage to replace what is removed along the trail. Budde said it can be done if council feels it is appropriate. Fineran said if the city added any trees, they would work with the property owners to place them on their property so the trees are not removed by the DNR in the future. Everson asked what the cost would be for trees. Budde estimated \$300 per tree for a 3-inch caliper or 6-foot pine tree.

Guetzkow asked if the trail will be city responsibility for snow removal. Budde said yes.

**WALTERS MOVED, PAWELK SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-53, APPROVING ALTERNATE ALIGNMENT FOR LUCE LINE TRAIL CONNECTION. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**C. COVID-19 Continuity of Operations and Essential Services (Presenter: Shane Fineran, City Administrator)**

Fineran explained to council that there needs to be a back-up plan for the city in the event that staff become infect with the COVID-19 virus. Due to this need, staff has drafted a resolution to identify a plan in the event that council or staff become ill. Fineran explained a second resolution has been drafted to identify the critical services throughout the city. He noted the revised hours for City Hall and reminded residents that the doors to City Hall are locked. Staff can be reached by telephone and by appointment. Fineran added that additional daytime officer patrol will be temporarily added.

Council discussed the additional police coverage.

**EVERSON MOVED, GUETZKOW SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-51, AUTHORIZING THE CONTINUATION OF CITY BUSINESS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**PAWELK MOVED, WALTERS SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-52, AFFIRMING AND DECLARING CRITICAL SERVICES IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**D. Emergency Residential Utility Rebate Program (Presenter: Shane Fineran, City Administrator)**

Fineran said at the joint EDA/Council meeting on March 23, the council expressed interest in

considering a residential utility rebate program. Fineran said the enterprise funds are in a healthy position to support a decision to assist residents in such a way. The easiest method to get residents a credit would be a flat rate to all residents. Fineran showed council various dollar amount credits and the effects on the enterprise funds for one to three months. Investment would range from about \$35,000 to \$200,000 depending on the length of time and the amount chosen.

Fineran noted a hurdle is that the city is unable to determine renters or mobile home park owners. Pawelk asked what the average utility bill is. Fineran estimated \$60-70 dollars.

**WALTERS MOVED, EVERSON SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-50, AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF WATERTOWN PROVIDE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO RESIDENTS THROUGH UTILITY REBATES IN THE FORM OF A UTILITY BILL CREDIT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$30 TO EACH RESIDENTS MONTHLY UTILITY BILL FOR THE PERIOD OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION OR FOR TWO MONTHS. MOTION FAILED 1-4, WALTERS AYE, GUETZKOW, EVERSON, WASHBURN AND PAWELK VOTING NEY.**

Guetzkow noted that the original resolution notes through the emergency declaration period with a maximum of three months. Council discussed the wording of the resolution and the period of two versus three months of relief. Fineran said council has the authority to revise the resolution. Walters stated he would like to revise his motion. Guetzkow asked if the resolution is tied to the city emergency declaration. Fineran said yes. Guetzkow noted the emergency declaration is for two months ending April 30, 2020.

Everson asked if there is a program to address renters and mobile home park owners. Pawelk agrees that the rebate presented does not currently serve the entire population of Watertown; especially the population who really need the credit. Guetzkow would like to see the council move forward with the utility credit, but she would like staff to investigate providing relief to rental and mobile homeowners. Washburn feels that people who live in apartments and trailer parks are those that could likely use the most support. He would like to see consistency in providing relief to residents. Washburn would rather deal with hardships on a case by case basis.

Council discussed strategies for capturing the entire population of Watertown to issue the utility credit.

Fineran expressed his concern for trying to find mailing information for renters and mobile homeowners. There is no mechanism to verify the over 200 renters in the City of Watertown. Fineran said staff does not have the expertise and or the capacity. Washburn would like to see an analysis of the time it would take to gather the information.

**WALTERS MOVED TO TABLE RESOLUTION 2020-50. MOTION FAILED FOR LACK OF SECOND.**

**GUETZKOW MOVED, WALTERS SECONDED A MOTION TO DIRECT STAFF TO RESEARCH ALTERNATIVE METHODS TO PROVIDE RELIEF PROGRAMS TO RESIDENTS AS THE CITY CONTINUES WORKING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.**

E. Community Programming Request for Proposals (Presenter: Lynn Tschudi, Clerk/Treasurer)

Tschudi presented the Community Programming Requests sent in from local community groups. Tschudi received requests from ten organizations. There were three new groups who submitted proposals. Total funds requested from all groups is \$17,800, however the budget only allows for \$10,000 to be contributed to the community groups. Tschudi presented three financial options for council for awarding the funds.

Everson asked if the Watertown Farmers Market has ever requested funds and if they are a 501c3. Guetzkow stated that their 501c3 is being run through Community Education. Fineran also said the Market is partnering with Trinity Church as well. Guetzkow asked what the groups asked for last year and what was granted. Tschudi showed what was granted in 2019. Pawelk asked about the Delano Senior Center lunch program and the involvement with Watertown. Tschudi said there are likely Watertown residents attending lunch at the senior center, but she is not sure if they are township or city residents. Fineran said this request has come before the Commission on Aging before and he believes if the Delano Senior Center would like support from Watertown, they need to come before council.

Everson and Guetzkow to abstain from the vote for their involvement in community groups.

Washburn is in support of allocating funds to the Watertown Royalty and the Watertown Farmers Market. He feels like the Community Ed and Early Childhood and Farmers Market are all related. Guetzkow clarified that the Farmers Market is only using the Community Education for the 501c3 filing.

Council discuss the three options.

**PAWELK MOVED, WASHBURN SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-47, APPROVING COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING DISBURSEMENTS PER OPTION 3. MOTION CARRIED 3-0, EVERSON AND GUETZKOW ABSTAINING.**

**F. 2020 Cast In Place Pipe (CIPP) Project (Presenter: Andrew Budde, City Engineer)**

City Engineer Andrew Budde showed the council the map for the 2020 Cast in Place Pipe (CIPP) project. The city has budgeted \$140,900 for the project in 2020.

Pawelk asked if the timeframe for the contractors will be flexible to allow for more favorable pricing. Budde said yes.

**GUETZKOW MOVED, PAWELK SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-54, APPROVING THE 2020 CIPP PROJECT PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS AND AUTHORIZING SOLICITATION OF QUOTES. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**6. Other Reports**

Fineran reminded residents that city hall is closed to the public, but staff is open for taking calls 8 am – 4:30 pm. He reminded people the Friends for Life food shelf is still open and operating. Fineran also said the playgrounds are open but will not be sanitized so people are encouraged to practice social distancing and wash your hands. Fineran updated the senior dance is cancelled for May 2.

Pawelk updated Flagship Recreation is installing equipment at the Forest Hills playground this week.

Guetzkow updated that the Economic Development Authority authorized a utility credit at 100% for 58

businesses in Watertown for up to three months. She stated Rails to Trails is hopefully not cancelled.

Everson shared that the public communication on the EDA credit has been mailed out.

Washburn commended staff and council during this uncertain time. The COVID-19 virus has consumed the city and the country so quickly. Staff has reacted quickly to ensure the city continues to operate without interruptions.

## 7. Claims

### A. Approve March 31<sup>st</sup> Claims Roster

GUETZKOW MOVED, PAWELK SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE 2020 CLAIMS AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.

## 8. Adjournment

EVERSON MOVED, PAWELK SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:47 PM. MOTION CARRIED 5-0 AFTER ROLL CALL VOTE.