

CITY OF MARINE ON ST. CROIX CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, November 9, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nyenhuis at 7:00pm. Nyenhuis, Pardun, Ward, Anderson (Zoom) and Miller present.

Citizens: Glen Mills, Scott Spisak, Isa Bubany, Gerry Mroska, Gwen/Larry Roden, John Goodfellow, Lynn Bjorkman, Tom Warth, Mary Burke, Kitzie Vadheim, Mary Fernstrum, Jim Maher, Matt Anderson, Steve Anderson, Mike Bultsuma, Jody Nyenhuis, Gayle Knutson, Kristina Smitten, Tom Omdahl, Julie Warren, Ross Higgins, Harold Teasdale, Dorothy Deetz, Roger Lyle, Curt Moe, Todd Mestad, Michael Towers, Evan Johnson, Bill Smitten, Larissa Mottl, Anna Hagstrom, Cheryl Johnson, Bill Hickey.

Mayor Nyenhuis noted that there has been a change in seating arrangement at the Council table in order for the Mayor to have better eye contact with the rest of the Council members and therefore the City Clerk and Mayor have changed seats.

Approval of the Agenda – Nyenhuis moved and Ward seconded to approve the agenda with the addition of the utility boxes added under old/new business.

Nyenhuis moved and Miller seconded to approve the agenda as amended.

Nyenhuis yes

Anderson yes

Miller yes

Pardun yes

Ward yes

All in favor, motion passed

Citizens Considerations –

Jim Maher – Marla Update – Jim Maher and Lynn Bjorkman were in attendance on behalf of the Marine Library Association. Mr. Maher stated that Marla has been in discussions with Washington County regarding the management of the Jordan bequest. The bequest is currently managed by Washington County and has slowly been losing value, and Marla is proposing moving those funds to a St. Croix Valley Foundation endowment fund. The County would still be able to control the distributions of the funds, however the funds would be managed more effectively. Because of the current agreement between the County, Marla and the City, there will need to be a signed document by the City however that document is being reviewed by the County Attorney. There was a question of whether the City would still be involved in the distribution of the funds. That would be a question for the Attorney as part of the process, however the belief is that since a third party would be controlling the funds, they could be distributed directly to Marla by the St. Croix Valley Foundation without having to be funneled through the City.

Jim Maher also questioned if there is a better way to divert the water by the outdoor lockers this winter as it has been a safety hazard in the past. Public works will look at that.

Planning Commission – Chairman Spisak reported on the October meeting. The Commission is continuing the code review. There will be a December workshop in hopes of wrapping things up. Currently there does not seem to be much the City can do regarding the substandard structure section in the river district, which would affect the rebuilding of the Marina. There are options in the Legislature which would require some lobbying efforts, and the Chairman will get the Council additional information if they are interested in pursuing.

Robbi Strandemo and Sabastian Corby were granted a variance in 2021 to allow a building on a substandard lot. They are coming up on the two-year sunset clause and have not been able to begin their new home project. They are requesting a two-year extension for the variance.

Anderson moved and Miller seconded to approve the variance extension per Planning Case 102621-01 for Robbi Strandemo and Sebastian Corby.

Nyenhuis yes

Anderson yes

Miller yes

Pardun yes

Ward yes

All in favor, motion passed.

Public Safety – Chief Mills reported there three medical calls last month. The committee met with May Township to discuss the May Fire Contract. The new contract allows for a 5% annual increase compared to the previous 3% increase and the cost charge per house from increased from \$160 to \$190. Mayor Nyenhuis would like to see the look charging for outside of calls. Anderson would also like to see false alarms addressed as well.

Miller also noted that May Township has agreed to consider contributing to future capital expenditures as well.

Miller moved and Anderson seconded to accept the May Fire Contract covering January 2024 through December 2026 as presented.

Nyenhuis yes

Anderson yes

Miller yes

Pardun yes

Ward yes

All in favor, motion passed

Roads – Isaih Bubany reported Fahrner Asphalt is requesting final payment for the Broadway Street Micro Surfacing. MnDOT installed the speed reduction signs on the north and south end of Highway 95.

Pardun moved and Anderson seconded to approve the Contractor payment request #3 to Fahrner Asphalt Sealers in the amount of \$900.08 for the Broadway Street Micro Surfacing.

Nyenhuis yes

Anderson yes

Miller yes

Pardun yes
All in favor, motion passed

Personnel – No report.

Parks & Rec –

Mill Stream Charette Open House – Ward stated the open house for the future of the Mill Stream will held Monday, November 13th at 6:30pm at the Village Hall.

North Meadow Grant Review – Gerry Mroska was in attendance to advise the grant which he applied for on behalf of the City and Jackson Meadow was approved. The grant will expire June of 2027 and is for \$48,000 of which \$4500 is an in kind match. Nyenhuis believes as this meadow is managed better, the costs will diminish.

Ward moved to accept the DNR grant for the North Meadow in the amount of \$48,000 and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the contract.

Nyenhuis yes

Anderson yes

Miller yes

Pardun yes

All in favor, motion passed

Hollow Grant Update – Kristina Smitten and Larissa Mottl, Stantec, were in attendance to update the Council on the grant progress. The committee, consisting of John Goodfellow, Julie Warren, Bill Miller, Wendy Ward, . Nyenhuis would like to clarify that there was no formal committee formed for this project so this is rather a work group.

Smitten reported the management plan is still being worked on, however the hope is to have it ready for Council by November 30th to review and then approve at the December meeting.

The RFP was issued of which 5 responses were received. The group narrowed those down to three and then agreed on a recommended contractor. One of the group members questioned if it would be an issue that the lowest bidder was not selected. After consulting with the City Attorney, in order to comply with State Statute for “best practices” bidding procedures, a new RFQ must be sent to the two lowest bidders. Ms. Smitten is requesting the Council approve the process of requesting quotes to the low bidders subject to any changes directed by Stantec or the City Attorney. Ms. Smitten is also requesting the Council authorize the City Attorney and City Clerk approve the contractor once recommendation is made by the work group. Clerk Peterson stated she is of the understanding that the approval and authorization must be done by the City Council. Pardun suggested the Council move ahead with that recommendation as part of the motion and then confirm with the City Attorney. Council member Pardun also questioned if the current management plan as it has been revised, still follows the plan presented and approved by the DNR. Ms. Smitten stated it does. John Goodfellow believes strongly that some of the citizens are not convinced that the outcome will be oak centric as described. He also would like to see a one day delay in the RFQ until there be additional consensus.

Nyenhuis moved and Pardun seconded to the City approve the issuance of requests for quotes to the two low bidders for the Hollow project subject to any changes directed by Stantec or the City Attorney and in addition, the City Council authorize the City Clerk and the City Attorney to approve the bid per review and recommendation of the work by the committee and Stantec.

*Nyenhuis yes
Anderson yes
Miller yes
Pardun yes*

All in favor, motion passed

Ms. Smitten is requesting approval to burn the south prairie in November.

Nyenhuis moved and Ward seconded to approve to burn the southwest corner of the Hollow.

Cemetery – No Report.

Water/Wastewater Systems – No report.

City Properties –

Dumpster Enclosure - Mayor Nyenhuis presented three options for dumpster enclosures for the dumpsters across from the Brookside. The costs range from \$55,000 - \$35,000 and the current proposal does not allow space for porta potties. He has also proposed a porta potty enclosure at the corner of Maple St and Judd Street. Ward believes the porta potties do need to be addressed but does not believe his suggested location is ideal.

Gwen Roden stated that the garbage company cannot get the dumpsters realigned and the door will not shut after the trash is collected. She also believes that having porta potties downtown are very important.

Anderson encouraged continued work on the design that would offer porta potties and mirror what was built at the boom site.

Ross Higgins, Brookside, would like to make sure the enclosure is functional. They currently have approximately \$3500 left in their grant funding and would consider contributing that to the cost of the enclosure with a few conditions. He would also like to see the porta potties remain in that location. He would also like to see an ADA compliant unit placed in that location.

Porta Potty Enclosure – Nyenhuis submitted a proposed drawing of a white porta potty enclosure that could also be used as a downtown business sign. This would be located at one of the parking locations at Marine Mills at the corner of Maple and Judd.

Miller reviewed the history of wanting to place a downtown sign in either Flagpole park or Gazebo park. He believes the City should consider those areas again now that the City owns that property. He also does not agree that the proposed location is ideal and would like to see other City greenspace considered.

Anderson does not believe signage is useful to the town. He would like to see that money reappropriated.

Dorothy Deetz, resident, agrees with Council members Anderson and Miller on both the signage and location of porta potty. She would like to see the potties located behind the Brookside.

Hall rental parking – Miller reported after discussion with City staff, official Village Hall parking signs were ordered in order to allow renters parking locations when they rent the hall. D

Stonehouse Museum Grant – Ward presented a cyclical maintenance plan and a Condition Assessment and Maintenance review summary. Mr. Bill Hickey, , reviewed that assessment summary.

Proposed School Property Committee – Pardun submitted a proposal for a Marine Multi-Generational Education District Advisory Committee. The purpose
Pardun believes the citizens at large will be very important and will be requesting resumes to the City Clerk by November 23rd.

Pardun moved and Miller seconded to approve the creation of a Marine Multi-Generational Education District Advisory Committee as presented.

Cell Tower – Anderson reviewed the lease negotiation process between the City and Vinco. There was no agreement on a commencement date for rent, landlord remedies or . Anderson stated that he and Pardun are very committed to continuing . Miller questioned a response from Vinco that came in late addressing some of those concerns that Anderson mentioned. Anderson stated that response did come in after the deadline and

Gerry Mroska stated his cell signal seems to be better with T-Mobile lately.

Anderson moved not to accept the land lease and agreement between the City and SMC Vinco.

Log Cabin – The roof is complete.

Community Events – The enchanted forest will happen again this year. The trees will be delivered this Saturday and decorating day will be November 25th.

EDA – No report.

Citizen Committee Reports–

Forest Advisory – Ward thanked the Forest Advisory committee, John Goodfellow, Kitzie Vadheim, Joe Schmidt, Peter Foster,

Kitsie presented a slide show reviewing all of the 2023 projects and noted that the committee would like to propose the City create a memorial tree policy in 2024 as well.

Mill site Committee – No Report.

Consent Calendar – *Nyenhuis moved and Ward seconded to approve the Minutes of 10/11/23, Treasurer's Report of 10/23, List of Bills for 11/9/23, Public Works Maintenance Report, Planning Commission Minutes, \$3,000 Log Cabin donation, FEMA Grant Resolution.*
Pardun moved and Anderson seconded to approve the Contractor payment request #3 to Fahrner

Nyenhuis yes

Anderson yes

Miller yes

Pardun yes

All in favor, motion passed

Old/New Business –

Utility Box Article – Miller noted that when the utility box project was originally presented, it was stated there were be no maintenance costs in the future, which is different than what the article in the Messenger stated.

City Attorney Attendance – Miller believes there have been several issues in past meetings that required City Attorney guidance and he questioned if Council would like to see the Attorney begin to attend meetings regularly. The charge would be a flat rate of \$195 per meeting. Ward supports the idea. Pardun does not believe there have been very many issues that would actually require the attorney and he believes the attorney would be used as a babysitter more than legal counsel. Anderson agrees with Council member Pardun and believes if the meetings were run closer to the Robert Rules of Order then there is less of a need, however there may be a meeting in which the Council may want him in attendance. Nyenhuis would like to pause the conversation for now with the understanding that if there is an agenda item that the Council may want the attorney present, that he be requested to attend.

Newsletter content – Miller noted that there has been some question as to what type of content should be in the City newsletter. He believes there are articles he believes are not City related and should not necessarily be included. Nyenhuis will be the point person moving forward, so if any Council person has concerns with content, they should let him know.

Agenda On-going Subject Criteria – Miller agrees with approving the agenda at the beginning of the meeting. However why if there is an item that was brought up as part of a previous agenda item, he would like to be able to discuss it without being shut down. He also believes there should be more consistency with how the agenda is handled. Ross Higgins, agrees with Miller, and stated that just a few meetings ago he requested to read a statement that did not require Council action, he was told he could not speak.

Roberts Rules of Order – Miller would like the Council to review the rules and understand how meetings should be run. Clerk Peterson purchased a book on Roberts Rules of Order for the Council to read.

Citizens of the Year – There have been three nominations thus far, the Civic Club members, Charlotte Wilcox and Mary Skamser (posthumously). The Council will discuss and make a selection at the December meeting.

Mayor Notes/Clerk's Report – .

Adjournment – Nyenhuis moved and Ward seconded to adjourn at 10:08pm. All in favor, motion passed.

Minutes taken by Lynette Peterson, City Clerk