

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING ----- JANUARY 21, 2025

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Karst. The following Council members were present: Heitman, Koski, and Austin. Council member Ozark attended via phone. Council members Nistler and Carr were absent. Chief Weber was in attendance. Candy Lagerquist was also in attendance. City Clerk Amundson and City Attorney Pekovitch attended via Google Meets. There was no media representation.

Mayor Karst led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment on any Agenda Item: NONE

Council member Koski made a motion approving the consent agenda including the payment of claims for January 21, 2025 in the amount of \$55,021.47, the Valley Court claims in the amount of \$35.98 and the minutes of the January 6, 2025 Regular Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin, and carried unanimously.

Council member Koski made a motion approving the November 2024 Financials. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin, and carried unanimously.

Mayor Karst mentioned the interview for Kirsten Johnson was held last week with Council Member Nistler, Utility Billing Clerk Buechler, City Clerk Amundson, and him. The committee would like to offer her the part-time position which would be Monday, Thursday, and Friday. There was discussion on another person who was interested in the position, but they wanted to work part-time will full insurance benefits, and that would cause issues with the union insurance because part-time employees would pay a pro-rated amount towards insurance. Candy inquired if a background check had been completed on the applicant. Mayor Karst said the committee is familiar with the incident that happened with her previous employer. She has been with her current employer for 5-6 years and there have been no issues. Council member Koski asked City Clerk Amundson how she felt about the applicant. She said she is good with it, as the city does have a probationary period and if things aren't working out within that time period, they can be terminated for any reason the city sees fit. Candy asked how long the city's probationary period is. Mayor Karst said it's typically one year, but we usually know if it's not going to work out by six months. Council member Ozark said if the committee's recommendation is to hire her, then he will make a motion based off of the recommendation. Council member Koski seconded the motion. Chief Weber commented could a motion be made to hire pending a background investigation, since it seems that most of the council members do not know who she is. There was discussion on what the job will consist of. It would be City Clerk Amundson's assistant, entering claims, and then mailing the checks after they approved by council. Candy wanted to know who signs the checks. Mayor Karst and City Clerk Amundson sign them. Council member Ozark inquired on if background checks have been done on any city employees. He also said if we are going to do one on this applicant, then we need to do it on everyone. City Attorney Pekovitch said to start the normal process of background checks on all city employees and the police department can do background checks for us. Also, for anyone who is driving city equipment to make sure they have a clean driving record. Council member Austin said we need to do our due diligence especially when anyone is handling money, bills, or credit card charges. Mayor Karst said there is a motion on the table to hire. It can be voted on to approve, can be voted down, or Council member Ozark and Koski can amend their motion to include giving a conditional offer with a background check being completed. Council member Ozark suggested that it should be done with all city employees. The personnel committee can take that on, as we have all city employees charging at the hardware stores and other places and as Council member Austin mentioned to do our due diligence. Council members Ozark and Koski amended the motion to give a conditional offer with a background check. Motion passed. The next steps in the process will be determined after the report comes back.

Mayor Karst stated the meetings in February will be the 3rd and Tuesday the 18th due to the Presidents Day Holiday.

Unfinished Business – Levee Safety Committee Report – NONE

Committee Reports: There were no reports for Personnel or Cemetery. Chief Weber said Grant Writer Ryan is working on the next round of funding for the VOCA grant and will be submitting it. There is an ordinance committee meeting following the council meeting. Mayor Karst reported on the water committee meeting. He said that DPW Skubinna would like to revise the water/wastewater supervisor job description and they are recommending an ordinance to keep the water in the property owners name for rentals.

Department Head Reports:

Chief Weber said Officer Williams will be going to the academy, the interview process for a new officer will take place on February 13th, and he will be going to Helena next week for the legislature.

Mayor Karst talked about the propane removal at the BNSF building that is set to be torn down, the status of the bids for the Jaycee Building, the Rundle Building is still waiting on another quote for their sidewalk replacement, and including VRBO's in TBID.

Public Comment: NONE

Council member Austin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Heitman, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

Stacey A. Amundson

Stacey Amundson
City Clerk-Treasurer

Rod Karst
Mayor