

**City of Long Prairie
Council Meeting
7:00 P.M., Tuesday, September 4, 2012**

The Long Prairie City Council met in regular session at City Hall, 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 4, 2012. Mayor Don Rasmussen called the meeting to order with the following present: Council members Art Rowan, Tony Towle, Lilah Gripne, Bob Klick, and City Administrator/Clerk David Venekamp.

Council member Klick motioned Towle seconded to approve the council minutes of August 20, 2012. Motion unanimously carried.

Chief of Police Kevin Langer asked the council to increase the pay of the part time officers. The department is having difficulty in finding part time officers due to the low pay. The Sheriff's Department part time wages and other surrounding departments are paying more than Long Prairie. Part time officers are filling those hours instead of working for the city. The city currently pays \$16.75 per hour; whereas, the county's salary for a starting officer is \$18.27. Langer stated he would like the council to increase the part time officers' wage to be the same as step 1 of the full time officer's wage which is \$17.88. Beginning in 2013 the pay would increase to \$18.15. Langer stated when the part time officer reaches 2080 hours of service to the city, they would then advance a step on the current wage for that year. Several of the surrounding departments, as well as the county, provide a step increase for their part time officers when they reach 2080 hours of service.

Council member Rowan motioned Gripne seconded to follow the union wage scale for full time officers and to increase the part time police officers wage to \$17.88; beginning in 2013, it would increase to \$18.15 with the understanding that any officer who puts in 2080 hours would advance to the next step of the current union wage scale of that year. Roll call: Yes; Rowan, Towle, Gripne, Klick, Rasmussen. Motion unanimously carried.

Council member Rowan motioned Klick seconded that the increase for the part time police officers would be effective on the current pay period. Motion unanimously carried.

The council discussed the request from Marlene Clark for a driveway easement on a parcel of city owned property (#36-4001100) which lies on the north side of County Road 5, across the street from Cathedral Press. Marlene Clark is representing the property owner who owns land north of the city's land. It appears the property owner's driveway crosses the city property and also loops around the northern portion of the city property. Clark's request indicates her property owner would cover all the costs involved in obtaining the easements, which would include surveying and legal fees.

Council member Rowan motioned Klick seconded to grant an easement for the driveway running north and south from County Road 5; however, the council would not be willing to grant an easement for the portion of the driveway that loops east to west, on the north edge of the city's property. Motion unanimously carried.

The council reviewed a request by Studio E Architects, which is the architect firm representing Todd County, for the possibility of ramping the city's sidewalk on the north side of 2nd Avenue South between Second Street South and Third Street South. The county is looking at adding an entranceway between Annex I and Annex II which would require an elevated ramp in order to meet handicapped accessibility. The architects had proposed to remove portions of the sidewalk and ramp the sidewalk up to the new entrance. The consensus of the council was that they are agreeable to the county ramping up the sidewalk to meet the new entrance to the annexes subject to the county obtaining a variance for the setback requirements of the entrance.

Council member Gripne motioned Klick seconded to approve payment request #13 from Di-Mar Construction for \$272,464.75 for work at the wastewater treatment facility. Roll call: Yes; Rowan, Towle, Gripne, Klick, Rasmussen. Motion carried.

Council member Towle motioned Klick seconded to approve St. Mary of Mount Carmel Church's gambling application to the state for a raffle to be held on October 21, 2012. Motion unanimously carried.

The council reviewed an agreement for engineering services for design of the runway apron taxiway at Todd Field Airport. The agreement is with Bolten and Menk which would provide design specifications for the improvement project.

Council member Rowan motioned Gripne seconded to adopt the following resolution authorizing the city to enter into a grant agreement for airport improvements excluding land acquisition:

**RESOLUTION #12-09-04-10A
AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
GRANT AGREEMENT FOR AIRPORT IMPORVMENT
EXCLUDING LAND ACQUISITION**

It is resolved by the City of Long Prairie as follows:

1. That the State of Minnesota Agreement No. 01866, "Grant Agreement for Airport Improvement Excluding Land Acquisition," for State Project No. 7701-28 at the Long Prairie Municipal Airport is accepted.
2. That the Mayor and City Administrator are authorized to execute this Agreement and any amendments on behalf of the City of Long Prairie.

David Venekamp
City Administrator/Clerk

Donald Rasmussen
Mayor

Motion unanimously carried.

The city council reviewed the city's housing rehabilitation program. The city has received three different grants from the Minnesota Department of Energy and Economic Development which

allowed for rehabilitation of low to moderate income family's homes. For those individuals who qualified for the program, it would provide a ten year loan which would be forgiven if the owner lived in the home for ten years.

Venekamp stated the city has nearly completed their 2011 grant funding cycle and should be done by the end of October. In total, the city has rehabbed 46 homes over the three grants.

Venekamp asked, if the city is eligible for another funding cycle, would the council be interested in applying for funds. There would be a fee for the preparation of the grant application by Pettipiece & Assoc. which is not grant eligible. Consensus of the council was, if the city is eligible, that they should continue to apply for the housing grant funds.

City Administrator Venekamp reviewed the 2013 city budget. The budget calls for a levy of \$597,251 which is \$18,108 more than the 2012 levy of \$579,143. This is a 3.1% increase over the 2012 tax levy. Of the \$18,108, \$5,083 is levied for additional bond debt payments and \$13,025 is for general operations. Venekamp stated the council will be decertifying the tax increment district #2-1 which was originally started for Hart Press back in 1985. The decertification of the district will put Hart Press's (RR Donnelly's) property valuation back on the tax roll which should offset the proposed increase in the tax levy. The budget includes several things; such as, the establishment of a revolving loan fund for industrial development, seal coating street improvements for streets south of T.H. 287, and additional part time help for the police, public works, and park departments. Venekamp stated the council must adopt the levy and also set a public comment period prior to adoption of the final tax levy and budget.

Council member Rowan motioned Klick seconded to adopt the following resolution adopting the proposed 2012 tax levy:

**RESOLUTION #12-09-04-11
ADOPTING THE PROPOSED 2012 TAX LEVY, COLLECTIBLE
IN THE YEAR 2013**

Be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Long Prairie, County of Todd, Minnesota, that the following sums of money are proposed to be levied for the current year, collectible in 2013 upon the taxable property in the City of Long Prairie for the following purposes:

Levy Purpose	
General Fund	\$ 310,251
2006 G.O. Bond	162,000
2010 G.O. Bond	<u>125,000</u>
Total Levy	\$ 597,251

David Venekamp
City Administrator/Clerk

Donald Rasmussen
Mayor

Motion unanimously carried.

Council member Rowan motioned Klick seconded to set a public comment period on the city's 2013 budget and tax levy for 7:30 p.m., December 3, 2012. Motion unanimously carried.

Council discussed the possibility of removal of the shrubs and bushes in front of the National Guard Armory. The bushes are in need of trimming or removal in order to help protect possible damage to the exterior foundation of the building.

Fire Chief Jim Kreemer stated the department has received a \$2,500 grant from the State Board for training.

Police Chief Kevin Langer stated they had 262 incidents for the month of August. The county did an alcohol compliance check for the local businesses and all of the businesses passed.

Don Rasmussen stated the Airport Commission is working on possible improvements at the airport. The council also discussed the League of MN Cities regional meeting in Perham for September 20th.

Council member Klick motioned Gripne seconded to adjourn. Motion unanimously carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

David Venekamp
City Administrator/Clerk

Don Rasmussen
Mayor