

**City of Long Prairie
Council Meeting
7:00 P.M., Tuesday, February 19, 2013**

The Long Prairie City Council met in regular session at City Hall, 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 19, 2013. 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 Dave Venekamp.

Council member Klick motioned Gripne seconded to approve the council minutes of February 4, 2013. Motion unanimously carried.

Jerry Vearrier, owner of Hotel Apartments which was formerly the Poppen Apartments, asked for permission to allow apartments on the main floor of his building located at 115 Central Avenue. Jerry stated the building contains apartments and at one time Poppen's did graphics on the main floor of the building. Over the years, the front part of the building's main floor was used as a computer handyman location. Jerry stated the computer business has moved out of the building and he has converted the space into two residential apartments.

Law enforcement was called to the building and at that time it was noticed the commercial space had been converted into two apartment units. City ordinance prohibits the changing of a commercial use on the main floor of a building in the downtown area to a residential use.

Jerry stated the reason for converting the apartments was to have an income off of the commercial space. Jerry felt it would be difficult to rent the space due to its condition and size and therefore, felt apartments were a better use of the space.

The council questioned Jerry why he did not ask the city if he could do this and also why he never obtained any permits (building/electrical/plumbing) for the apartments. Jerry stated he did not realize he needed any permits for this work.

The council discussed the purpose of the ordinance is to prohibit the downtown commercial area from turning into apartment sites which would lead to less businesses. The additional apartments would change the downtown business climate into a residential type area. The council also stated the additional apartments would pose problems with the lack of off-street parking for the apartments. The council stated they were not interested in changing the ordinance at this time because other businesses would follow suit and want to change their commercial areas into apartment areas.

The council indicated that, even if they were to change the ordinance or to allow Jerry to have these apartments, he would still need to have the state electrical, plumbing, and building inspector review the apartments. It may also call into question whether or not the rest of the building would need to be inspected for code violations.

The council reviewed a city purchasing policy which is an FAA requirement for grant recipients. In the past, the city has followed the state statutes on purchasing; however, the FAA requires a written policy for the city.

Council member Gripne motioned Klick seconded to adopt the city purchasing policy as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

The council reviewed a grant oversight policy for the handling of FAA grant projects. FAA requires the city to have a written policy showing how the FAA grants are handled.

Council member Gripne motioned Klick seconded to adopt the grant oversight policy as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

The council discussed a possible citywide scrap metal pickup as proposed by Scrap Central of Parkers Prairie. Dennis Hanson of Scrap Central is proposing a weekend community scrap metal pickup which would be free to the citizens and those in the surrounding area.

The council discussed the possible locations for the pickup as well as dates. The consensus of the council was to contact Mr. Hanson to setup possible dates and times for the pickup.

The council reviewed an email from Dianne Peterson who is the daughter of Bud Peterson. Bud Peterson was the owner of a parcel of property formerly known as Riverside Park (parcel #36-0004500 - also known as Mosquito Park). Mr. Peterson has passed away and Dianne has inherited the property. Dianne is willing to donate the 2.8 acre parcel of land to the city. Dianne has indicated she has no use of the parcel. In the past, the city has contacted her father about the possibility of donating the land to the city for a possible park. In donating the property, Diane is not asking for any recognition on the donation.

The council discussed the fact that, over the years, the park board has tried to obtain the parcel of property for development into a park. The land was initially owned by the city in the 1930's and was developed by a federal grant and WPA work crews. At that time, there was a sportsman's lodge built as well as some cabins and a tower on the property. The area was flooded for winter skating events. The council suggested that, if the park is developed, it would be developed in such a way that, should the property be flooded, it would not be a problem with any of the structures or improvements at the site.

Council member Towle motioned Rowan seconded to accept the donation of the parcel of land (parcel #36-004500) as offered by Dianne Peterson. Motion unanimously carried.

City Administrator Venekamp stated the training for city employees for the mapping service presented by Bolton & Menk is Tuesday, February 26th at 1:00 p.m.

Council member Gripne stated the police department received a \$1,000 donation from the Todd Wadena Coop which will be used for the purchase of the defibrillators in the department. The

department is also looking at changing parking tickets and fines. The last time the ticket amounts were changed was back in the mid 1990's.

Council member Gripne motioned Rowan seconded to adjourn. Motion unanimously carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

David Venekamp
City Administrator/Clerk

Don Rasmussen
Mayor