

City of Long Prairie
7:00 P.M., Tuesday February 20th, 2024
City Council Meeting Held in Person & Via-Teleconference

The Long Prairie City Council met in person and by phone at City Hall, 7:00 pm, on Tuesday February. Acting Mayor David Wright called the meeting to order with Council members Jim Kreemer, Clint Krueger, and Lilah Gripen were present. Others present were City Attorney Joe Krueger, Police Chief Ryan Hanson, Fire Chief Dan Laumeyer, Jeremy Sovich, Amanda Hinson, Officer Trevor Larson, Bob Klick, Deb Laumeyer, Kent Louwagie, Lisa Wright, Steve Hinson, Otis Ostendorf, Duane Breiter, and Chris Haasser.

Council member Kreemer motioned Gripen seconded to approve the consent agenda as amended:

- (a) Approve Agenda for February 20th, 2024.**
- (b) Approve Council Meeting Minutes from February 5th, 2024, with corrections to comments made by Acting Mayor Wright regarding the postponement of the hearing for the tax abatement request.**
- (c) Approve Council Work Session Minutes from February 13th, 2024.**
- (d) Approve Bills from January through February 16th, 2024.**
- (e) Approve Council Meeting Minutes from January 16th, 2024, with corrections to signature section removing Council member Gripen and adding Mayor Dixon.**
- (f) Move Old Business Item #1: Review 4th Street Abatement Request, ahead of the Public Comment Section.**

(Old Business)

Acting Mayor Wright read an email received from Skip Duchesneau regarding the Tax Abatement Request for the 4th Street Apartments. They intend to move forward it the building project, but due to the lack of participation the developer is withdrawing their request for a tax abatement for the 4th Street Apartments.

Council Member Gripen motioned seconded by Krueger to accept the withdrawal from DW Jones Inc. for the abatement request of the 4th Street Apartments. Motion passed.

(Public Comment)

Steven Hinson addressed the city council regarding concerns with R-Way Manufacturing.

(Council Reports)

Public Works: Council Member Krueger presented the council, the daily water/ wastewater rounds and samples are going fine. Public Works has been busy with trimming trees, sweeping streets, and equipment maintenance. In the next few weeks we will be plowing snow as needed, repairing/painting picnic tables, patching potholes, and cleaning the chlorine contact chamber at the wastewater treatment plant.

Public Safety: Acting Mayor David Wright provided an update on the Police and Fire Departments. Police Department 166 calls over the last two weeks. Justin Gothier is continuing to complete the DARE program with both the LPGE Elementary and St. Mary's schools.

February 8th Officers Morazan and Harden attended the job fair at Alexandria Technical College. Gothier and Morazan completed driving training in St. Cloud. The Fire Department will be holding a cancer and health training course on Wednesday February 21st for the department. Saturday, February 24th the Polar Plunge will be held at Lake Charolotte.

EDA: Action Mayor Wright commented on the upcoming EDA meeting which will be Wednesday February 21st. Items to be discussed include the Childcare Center, Todd County EDA Coordinator, and downtown Revitalization Grant update.

Liquor Store: Council member Kreemer reported on liquor store activities. Nathe's Refrigeration has the equipment to replace the cooler system, waiting on scheduling a time for the work to be completed. The assistant Liquor Store Manager position has been going smoothly as Ian has become more comfortable with various manager tasks.

Library: Council member Gripne stated that on Saturday February 24th, from 10:00-11:00 am Jeff Lucas will speak on his book which overviews the history and changes the city of Long Prairie has seen.

(New Business)

The City Council reviewed the proposal for a City Administrator/Clerk Position and a Finance Director Position. Through discussion, the council decided not to move forward with both positions. The council discussed job position options and the possibility of using a consulting firm. The council will have the City Administrator/Clerk Position open for applications and post the advertisement in the local news publications, website and League of Minnesota Cities website.

Council member Kreemer motioned seconded by Gripne to open the position for the sole position of City Administrator/Clerk, to post the position with the League of Minnesota Cities and other local publications. Motion passed.

The City Council reviewed the community service officer position request. The council discussed the importance of creating this position. Through discussion, there were additional questions raised regarding the funding for this position. Chief Hanson will obtain the financials and discuss potential increase revenue due to ordinance violation fees. Other questions were raised about the equipment the officer would need and use in this position. The council was asked that a budget be presented to the city council prior to a decision being made.

Council member Kreemer motioned second by Krueger to table the community service officer position to allow for time to obtain the financials for the department and to review equipment needs for this position. Motion Passed.

The council discussed the Temporary Liquor License for the Long Prairie Lions. It was mentioned that this license had already been approved at an earlier meeting.

Acting Mayor Wright motioned seconded by Kreemer to remove the Temporary Liquor License for the Long Prairie Lions from the agenda. Motion passed.

Acting Mayor Wright motioned seconded by Gripne to approve the Fire Department Mutual Aid Contract with Todd & Wadena Counties. Motion passed.

The City Council reviewed the proposal for seal coating roads in 2024. City Engineer Kent Louwagie provided an explanation to the council regarding the options presented.

Acting Mayor Wright motioned seconded by Kreemer the recommendation at this time is to approve the seal coating to be completed in the referenced areas in Figures 1 & 2, labeled as areas, 1 (Pink), 2 (Orange), and 3 (Blue) and to allow for city staff to solicit quotes. Areas may change pending the possible receipt of the Local Road Improvement Grant. Motion passed.

Acting Mayor David Wright closed the meeting at 8:10 pm for employee disciplinary review for Dan Laumeyer.

Acting Mayor David Wright re-opened the meeting at 8:51 pm. Acting Mayor Wright announced the result of the closed meeting was that Mr. Laumeyer will be suspended without pay until he receives his CDL license.

There being no further business, motioned by Kreemer seconded by Gripne to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m.

Ted Gray, Interim City Administrator/Clerk

David Wright, Acting Mayor