



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 10, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

Present: Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Deirdre Kvale, Michelle Jerde, Jahn Dyvik, and Tom Skjaret

Staff Present: City Administrator: Scott Weske; Public Works Director: Sean Diercks; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MAYOR'S COMMENTS - LONG LAKE NEWS, MEETING REVIEW AND UPDATES

Mayor Miner offered the following comments and updates:

In a work session prior to the regular meeting, Council and staff discussed potential water and sewer rates in comparison to related operations expenditures for the water and sewer funds, and began considering whether rates need to be increased for year 2020 and beyond.

Long Lake Fire firefighters have been busy responding to a recent under-construction fire in Woodland, assisting with the industrial fire in Becker, and then last week at a house fire in Orono in which there had been the first fatality experienced by the Department in over 100 years.

Hennepin County emergency managers will be meeting the following day to get involved in preparation for impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Police Chief Risvold will be in attendance to help the City keep up to speed.

APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Skjaret, seconded by Jerde, to approve the Agenda as presented. Ayes: all.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council member Kvale sought and received clarification on a couple of claims paid, and complimented Finance Officer Nowezki on her work to-date in preparing and organizing the vendor claims and payroll reports for Council approval.

Council member Skjaret requested that Consent Agenda Item F be pulled for discussion as a regular item to follow Open Correspondence.

The Consent Agenda consisted of:

- A. Approve Minutes of February 18, 2020 City Council Meeting
- B. Receive Unofficial Draft Minutes of February 11, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting
- C. Approve Vendor Claims and Payroll

- D. Approve the 2019 State Pay Equity Implementation Report and Authorize its Submission by the City Administrator
- E. Adopt Resolution No. 2020-06 Conditionally Appointing Candidate Thomas Davis to the Position of Paid On-Call Firefighter for the City of Long Lake Fire Department
- F. ~~Authorize the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Water Patrol Unit to Issue a Seasonal Use Permit to the Long Lake Rowing Crew for Use of Long Lake in 2020 (Consistent w/Updated Conditional Use Permit)~~

A motion was made by Skjaret, seconded by Dyvik, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Ayes: all.

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

No one appeared to address the City Council during Open Correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Authorize the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Water Patrol Unit to Issue a Seasonal Use Permit to the Long Lake Rowing Crew for Use of Long Lake in 2020 (Consistent w/Updated Conditional Use Permit)

City Clerk Moeller noted that this action item is a request by the LLRC for approval of their annual water use permit, with hours of operation to be consistent with the previously issued CUP. She explained that their requested hours of operation are indeed as allowed by the CUP, and that the LLRC works within the permitted hour blocks as they schedule their organized activities; however, they are not on the water for the duration of all hour blocks on each day. Moeller added that if there is concern about evening hours of operation, a reasonable condition to issuance of the Water Patrol permit could be to add that for their three weekday evenings, their schedule be amended to allow rowing from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm or sunset, whichever occurs earlier.

Council member Dyvik expressed concern about the visibility of rowers and their equipment in low light conditions, and indicated he would favor limiting their evening operations to one hour before sunset similar to personal watercraft.

Amy Johnson, Long Lake Rowing Crew, explained how limiting their evenings to being off the water one hour before sunset would negatively impact their masters group. She indicated that they will add lights to the rowing shells, they will continue to follow MnDNR published guidelines, and rowers will be wearing high visibility colors this year.

Mayor Miner indicated he would be in favor of adding "8:00 pm or sunset, whichever occurs earlier".

A motion was made by Skjaret, seconded by Kvale, to authorize the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Water Patrol unit to issue a Seasonal Use Permit to the Long Lake Rowing Crew rowing club for use of Long Lake in 2020, contingent upon the applicant meeting all conditions of permit issuance imposed by the issuing agency, with the added condition that their up to 3 weekday evenings schedule be amended to allow rowing from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm or sunset, whichever occurs earlier. Ayes: Kvale, Miner, Skjaret. Nays: Jerde, Dyvik. Motion carried.

Updates From Long Lake Rowing Crew (LLRC) Regarding Potential Boathouse Project for Summit Park in Orono – Rob Berrell, President

Mayor Miner introduced LLRC President Rob Berrell, stating that he had invited him to provide an update on the LLRC's discussions with Orono regarding their boathouse proposal for Summit Park.

Mr. Berrell indicated that the LLRC's boathouse project continues to be an exploration in what is possible to arrive at a more permanent home solution for the group. The LLRC Board is committed in ensuring the long term success and viability of the club, and has been mainly working with the Orono Parks Commission regarding a potential partnership at Summit Park since November. The LLRC had become aware of Orono having intentions of enhancing Summit Park recreational facilities and had wondered whether the rowing crew could be a part of that. The LLRC presented a preliminary boathouse project proposal at an Orono Parks Commission meeting, exploring what the building could look like and where it could go. There was some vocal concern voiced by neighbors, and the meeting had turned into a back and forth discussion to work through a lot of questions. The Parks Commission had charged the LLRC with getting involved with stakeholders, neighbors and park users. The LLRC has held meetings with park area neighbors, lakeshore owners, and has held a lot of individual meetings at which they worked to clear up a lot of miscommunication. After a second meeting with the Orono Parks Commission, the LLRC came away with a list of criteria and questions the Commission would need addressed in order to determine whether they would be making a recommendation to Council regarding the proposal. The LLRC met again with the Parks Commission and provided a presentation to address those items, discussing their community involvement and volunteerism; permanent amenities they could add to the park such as public restrooms and sharing in the purchase of playground equipment; extending health benefit opportunities offering more indoor community fitness with indoor rowing equipment; and shared examples of other public/private partnerships involving other rowing clubs with agencies. The LLRC had met again with the Orono Parks Commission this past Monday, and at the end of the day, the Commission did move to recommend the project move forward to the City Council subject to conditions including continuing community outreach, and participation in master planning for Summit Park. It is likely their next meeting would be in an Orono Council work session for Orono's Council to provide their guidance and input on how the LLRC could continue to move forward with their proposal. Mr. Berrell noted that it is still extremely early in the process, as the LLRC would be looking at a minimum of a year for fundraising efforts prior to building, and it could be two to three years before anything would come to fruition at Summit Park. He commented that he has read communications that have been circulated among residents, some of it gets to be inaccurate, and the LLRC is trying to hold as many meetings as possible to be transparent as they explore this opportunity to have a long term presence on the lake. He welcomed Council to reach out to either Amy Johnson or himself with any questions they may have or hear of, as they would appreciate the opportunity to clear up any miscommunication that may occur.

Mr. Berrell responded to Mayor and Council questions regarding whether the LLRC had any other site opportunities they were currently considering; whether the number of rowers and the amount of rowing shells would be maintained at the same level; whether they would be looking at hosting any regatta events; the adequacy of parking spaces to serve a proposed 6,900 sf building and LLRC use without detriment to other users; water and sewer availability; this history of the parkland and whether any deed or gift restrictions apply to use of the Summit Park property; whether the LLRC has considered moving operations to Summit Park without constructing a boathouse building; whether the LLRC has considered moving operations to other lakes; and if the LLRC has given thought to whether they will get to a point where they will outgrow Long Lake.

Council member Skjaret reflected upon his disappointment that Orono does not feel they are responsible to participate along with Long Lake, Medina, the Long Lake Waters Association, and the MCWD in contributing to studying the lake and working towards water quality improvements, though three-quarters of the shoreline is in Orono. It would be a challenge for Long Lake to support any activity contributing more to the pollution of the lake, as that's a big issue for lakeshore owners. He pointed out that he sees rowing activities near Summit impacting water quality by traveling up and down an unprotected shoreline where there has been very little activity to date. Another challenge would be that as the LLRC saw last year, the Long Lake Council had quite a discussion to arrive at

amending the CUP in a way to allow for additional hours of operation. The CUP would not follow the LLRC to their new location, and the City does not yet know whether it will have regulatory authority to place limits on hours of lake use.

Council member Dyvik thanked Mr. Berrell for meeting with him a month ago. He has been a supporter of the LLRC, but he has concern that Long Lake is a multi-recreational lake, it is not a big lake, and it needs to be able to support multi-recreational uses without one growing big enough to negatively impact the other users. He had heard from some individuals that one of their issues was the size of the building proposed. The opinion he has heard from people is that Summit Park would become a rowers park and not as multi-use friendly. His own concern is the traffic on the lake and that it will ultimately grow. Though the LLRC's intentions may be to keep the club "as is" in size, five years from now the facility could change hands and traffic growth could be problematic. Some sportsmans groups have voiced concern about having Long Lake identified as a rowers lake. Orono can do what they want with their park, but he is concerned about where this proposal may lead in future. He would like to see there be some reasonable regulations incorporated in their agreement with Orono for use of the parkland, and he would feel better if that included a cap to membership numbers. He noted that the boathouse would make rowing more accessible to public users and the project creates more opportunity for growth in rowing outside of the LLRC's organized activities.

Mr. Berrell responded to Council member Dyvik's comments regarding the LLRC coexisting with waterskiiers, fishermen and paddle boarders; and stated that the building they hope to construct wouldn't allow for the room for the club and equipment to substantially increase in size. He noted that the LLRC is open to entertaining whatever will help their project in Orono move forward. He also indicated that he honestly thinks the summer is so short that he sees dry land training/indoor rowing growing in popularity, not necessarily rowing on the water.

Amy Johnson, LLRC, spoke to questions regarding capping membership and indicated that if the club were to agree to a cap on their membership, they would want an agreement that their permitted water hours remain the same. When discussing the number of boats the LLRC has, that does not mean those boats are all on the water at one time. The LLRC would like to acquire an eight-man race boat, which is one they do not already have. She commented that the LLRC has recognized from day one that Long Lake is a small one, and rather than trying to grow further, they want to maintain a community-focused group in a small environment. Ms. Johnson responded to Council questions regarding how many rowers are in a boat, and how many shells are out with a coaching boat.

Mr. Berrell thanked Council for their time and constructive feedback, and committed to keeping the Long Lake Council updated. He confirmed that they had scaled down their original 9,000 sf building proposal to a 6,900 sf building in response to concern about size. The architect had revised their concept, reducing the size of the upper level and the massing. Having enough room for their winter training equipment was a priority. Responding to a question about fundraising, he indicated the LLRC would be exploring potential grants, fundraising with private donors and crowdfunding opportunities.

Council member Dyvik inquired whether LLRC officers are members of the Long Lake Waters Association (LLWA).

Mr. Berrell replied that they had reached out to the LLWA and his wife Karen had offered to join the LLWA Board; however, the LLWA had not yet taken them up on their interest in being involved.

Summary of Discussions Regarding Potential Changes to Utility Rates and Tiers – Direction to Staff in Preparation for Action at March 24, 2020 Council Meeting

Mayor Miner stated that this agenda item was a follow up to the Council's work session discussion, and encouraged Council to provide Administrator Weske with some direction for what the Council would like to see in preparing for the next discussion of rates.

Council members expressed a desire to see some practical examples of water bills, perhaps using their own bills, calculated under the current rate structure versus calculated under proposed rate changes in order to better show what the overall effect would be. A data comparison to show current revenues/shortfalls based on 2020 rates versus projected revenues/shortfalls on proposed new rates would be of assistance. It was noted that with 4th quarter 2019 complete, year 2019 could be used to calculate comparisons. Council member Kvale voiced concern about preventing raising rates in a way to create a surplus.

Council members and Weske discussed implementing any rate changes in steps over multiple billing periods, prioritizing increases to cover debt service and operations. Weske also indicated that he would propose a substantial increase in the base fee for unmetered connections. He added that the matter of raising rates really is coming down to the City's bond rating. If the City does not have enough enterprise funds to cover its debt service, the City's bond rating will be negatively impacted which will further have a negative impact on bonding rates for necessary street projects.

Council member Dyvik indicated he would like to see some sort of projected sewer fund revenue calculations using 2019 data, showing actual 2019 numbers versus applying a proposed rate structure to the same scenario.

Weske stated he would work on putting the information together in the hopes of moving forward with smaller increases to help the City's sewer/enterprise funds get on track, and then see if further adjustment is warranted. He confirmed the City's next Metropolitan Council wastewater treatment fee notification would likely arrive in September or October.

OTHER BUSINESS

LLRC Boathouse Proposal – Council member Jerde reflected that it was nice the LLRC had come in to share information about their boathouse proposal in Orono, and she did like the fact that they seemed open to including some caps on operations.

Dog Walking Reminder – Council member Skjaret asked that fellow dog walkers please clean up after their pets.

Meetings With Legislative Representatives, Fire Service District Discussions – Weske indicated that he, Fire Chief Van Eyll, and Administrator Scott Johnson from Medina had met with Senator Osmek to seek support for state legislation to provide taxing authority for fire protection districts. They will be meeting on Thursday with Representative Hertaus as well. Weske noted that it sounded as if there could be some possibility for a taxing authority similar to Cloquet's district, but staff would know more after Thursday's meeting. Mayor Miner commented that Chief Van Eyll is working on setting up a trip for the Cloquet fire service district Chief to come speak at an Orono schools auditorium potentially in early May or late April, with representatives of Long Lake and a lot of the City's neighbors to be invited to attend to learn more about how Cloquet works as a taxing district. Council member Kvale questioned whether Orono had expressed interest in signing on under a taxing district. Mayor Miner replied that they seem to be willing to explore the concept, which has gotten more traction than current contract conversations. Orono has still not yet officially responded to the letter Mayor Miner had sent regarding the contract.

Parking Ordinance – City Clerk Moeller reported that staff has begun working on an overhaul of the lengthy “Traffic and Vehicles” chapter of City Code, and as part of that effort, staff was interested in hearing whether Council may be open to allowing on-street parking overnight on City streets as long as Council has authority to order establishment of no parking zones where needed, and as long as language addressing snow removal operations is in place. Council members discussed the idea and were open to allowing on-street overnight parking as long as language addresses snow removal concerns and Council can limit on-street parking where necessary. Moeller noted that in the future when the project is complete and an ordinance is ready to be acted upon, following ordinance adoption, it will be necessary for Council to make motions establishing a number of no parking areas.

Memorial Day “Murph Challenge” Proposal – Moeller had been contacted by FitHaus, who has been hosting a hero-style workout challenge event on Memorial Day at locations in Excelsior and Wayzata over the past six years. FitHaus is in the process of preparing a Special Event Permit application to apply to host this year’s event on Memorial Day in Nelson Lakeside Park. Recognizing that a ceremony takes place on Memorial Day at the park’s Veterans Memorial, the event organizers have committed to accommodate the traditional ceremonial activities or to work around them during their event. The “Memorial Day Murph Challenge” benefits Minnesota veterans, with 100% of proceeds going to the Minnesota Military Family Foundation. Moeller will be working to connect organizers of the Memorial Day observance ceremony with FitHaus event organizers so an event application can be made with consideration to the ceremony.

Seasonal Weight Restrictions – Public Works Director Diercks advised that seasonal weight restrictions had gone into effect the previous Friday, and all residential streets in City limits are posted at four tons per axle. No exceptions will be given. These restrictions do not apply to the industrial park and Wayzata Blvd W.

Public Works Offices – Public Works staff are in the process of sprucing up the office areas, and are working to obtain proposals to replace the flooring.

County Road 112, Phase 3 Meeting – Diercks had attended a first electronic meeting with Hennepin County for discussion of very preliminary design of Phase 3 from Willow Drive westward to County Road 6. As far as he knew, the County still intends to bid the contract in 2021. Thus far, the only items specific to Long Lake relate to addressing an old interconnect no longer in use at the intersection of Willow Drive/Wayzata Boulevard W, and reconfiguring the intersection a bit to hopefully add a right turn lane for traffic heading east.

Watermain Breaks – Diercks noted that things have settled down on watermain breaks, and now the bills are coming in for the repairs.

Patching Work – Public Works has begun doing some patching work on streets, buying cold mix by the bag and filling holes until such time as the asphalt plants open.

Presidential Primary Election – Council member Skjaret thanked Moeller for her work in organizing the City’s Presidential Nomination Primary election. Moeller gave thanks to her election judges for their work, and for making it a great day. She also shared a few anecdotes about how election day had gone.

COVID-19 Preparedness, Sharing Staffing – Diercks indicated that amidst all the publicity about the COVID-19 virus, the Minnesota Department of Health has been asking municipalities about staff sharing should the need arise as they are developing their preparedness plans.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 8:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Moeller
City Clerk