

PROCEEDINGS OF LOWDEN CITY COUNCIL –REGULAR & PUBLIC MEETING HEARING

MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2016 5:30PM CITY HALL MEETING ROOM

The regular and public hearing meeting of the Lowden City Council was called to order by Mayor Ashley Hansen.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council members present on roll call: Conrad, Stewart, Hamdorf, Dewell, Kim Jones.

Visitors: Scott Fields, Susan Hall, Dale Axline, Crystal Walker, Tom Walker, Don Brookmeyer, Jack Burham, Warren Wethington, Bill Norton, Dennis Sloan.

M/S Dewell, Conrad to approve Consent agenda including minutes, bills and financial reports one Ayes: All.

Mayor Hansen requested to open the Public Hearing for the FY17 City Budget. M/S Stewart, Hamdorf to close regular council session and open public hearing. Ayes: All.

Mayor Hansen opened the public hearing and asked for visitor comments regarding resolution 16-01, FY17 City Budget. No comments were received. Council then had a short discussion on the budget. M/S Conrad, Stewart to approve **Resolution # 16-01 FY17 City Budget**. Ayes: All.

Park Mowing Bid – Aaron Horman, Park Board was unable to attend the council meeting but spoke with the City Clerk regarding the bids for mowing the park in 2016. 3 bids had been received. The Park Board recommendation was to accept the lowest bid. City Clerk informed council of the park board's request. Council then discussed the three bids. The bid from Skip Hansen was accepted at \$5400 for April-October, 2016 this would include mowing and restroom cleaning. M/S Conrad, Hamdorf to accept the Park Board's decision and go with the lowest bid. Ayes: All.

Cemetery mowing – Mayor Hansen informed council that 2 bids had been received for mowing and basic cemetery maintenance for the 2 year contract. The Cemetery Board had met to discuss the bids prior to the council meeting. The cemetery board voted to accept the lowest bid. The lowest bid was from Charles Carlson for \$1,500 per month from April – October, 2016 and \$1,500 per month for April – October, 2017. M/S Stewart, Conrad to accept the lowest bid for the cemetery contract. Ayes: All.

Kirk Steinke, Public Works reported that he along with the Mayor, City Clerk and Councilman Conrad had attended a recent meeting at Wheatland City Hall to vote on a new garbage truck which is shared between Wheatland, Grand Mound and Lowden. He said this purchase would not change our current monthly payment of \$2125.00 per month this year but we may have a small increase in the following years. The Wheatland City Clerk had secured a loan agreement for 3.50% in the amount of \$83,000 for a term of 60 months plus and an extended warranty

was added to this cost. The bid from Elliot Equipment was accepted and they will also take the old garbage truck as part of the trade. The trade offered and accepted was \$70,400.00.

City Clerk, reported to council that HP Office Printer had broken down during last month's water bill printing. OMC was called to repair the printer. The fusion belt had worn out. The cost to replace the belt was approximately \$450.00. The printer was purchased some time ago and did not have a maintenance contract. After discussion with the repair technician he also noticed a lot of wear and tear on other components of the machine due to age and usage. OMC brought out a Toshiba OKI printer for the city to use to get the water bills printed and also to see if council would consider a new printer as the old one even with the fusion belt repair would not fix the other issues. City Clerk, shared with council the costs of purchasing a new printer. Council discussed the options. The cost to purchase was \$2210.00 plus a maintenance agreement. M/S Dewell, Stewart to purchase a new printer from OMC with a maintenance agreement. Ayes: All.

City Clerk, discussed the need to have a battery back-up on the hard drive of the computer and also a new monitor which is old and small and is not adjustable and has no speakers which are needed for the security cameras. Recent power outages had caused disruption and this would allow the clerk time to shut down all the equipment and not to lose data during unexpected power outages. Council discussed the needs and options provided by F&B Communications. Councilman Hamdorf said the clerk should visit with F&B to look at the monitor sizes and that the city should purchase a small APC 350 Battery Backup (up to 15 minutes runtime) at a cost of \$69.99. Council man, Stewart asked about the monitor size needed. The options were 23.6, 24" and 27" LED Monitor w/speakers which supports DVI & VGA. Councilman, Hamdorf said the monitor should be the clerk's choice as she has to work with the equipment and the cost between the sizes was not a huge difference. The costs ranged from \$149.99 - \$249.99. M/S Jones, Hamdorf for clerk to purchase a battery back-up and new monitor. Ayes: All.

Councilman Hamdorf discussed the generator request for the city and fire station. A discussion on costs and warranties continued from the previous month. Councilman Hamdorf said he and the City Clerk had completed a grant application for Alliant Energy but we would hear anything until the summer on whether we were successful. The grant applied for was \$26,000. Councilman Hamdorf said he is also working on a government surplus resource but had more work to do on this. He also indicated an automatic transmission switch would be needed. Sheriff, Warren Wethington said EMC was a good resource. Discussion tabled until Councilman Hamdorf has an update.

Nuisances – Clerk reported that 13 Nuisance Abatement notices had been mailed over the last couple of weeks with various issues from loose animals, junk vehicles, machinery, building equipment etc. Councilman Hamdorf asked if a notice could be placed in the newspaper, F&B and website regarding the large number of issues with residents letting dogs run loose around the town. Most of the letter's sent to residents over the last 6 months were in regard to this issue. The city has an ordinance regarding dogs at loose and can impose fines. Council

instructed clerk to post notices with F&B, website, and post office and instructed public works and clerk to start imposing the fines as necessary. Scott Fields asked council what they are going to do about Dennis Sloan's properties. The properties are a hazard, he said he and others were going to get a petition against the City of Lowden to take care of the issue. Councilman Hamdorf said he is aware of the issue and said we have ordinances in place that we need to follow. Councilman Hamdorf discussed with council members and Councilman Conrad asked Mr. Sloan what he was doing to clean up the properties and discussed that we had addressed this issue on multiple occasions with him. Councilman Hamdorf said the properties were in worse condition now. Mr. Sloan asked for 2 permits to be approved for adding closed in-areas on his home. Councilman Conrad said the camper he agreed to move is still in the same place and that he has not cleaned up as instructed in various communications and no permits would be approved until the issues were addressed. Councilman Hamdorf said that the attorney should be contacted again and to move forward with legal proceedings. M/S Hamdorf, Dewell to continue legal proceeding regarding 705 Jefferson Avenue and the new property owned by Mr. Sloan at 904 Hall Avenue and. Ayes: All.

Building Permits – 3 building permits were discussed by council – Brookmeyer, JKE Enterprise, Dennis Sloan. Council reviewed documentation and approved JKE Enterprise garage. The 2 Permits for Dennis Sloan were denied and Brookmeyer permit was tabled for a further discussion. Councilman Hamdorf added that the city would not be issuing any permits that do not meet the ordinance requirements. Mr. Brookmeyer also asked council to re-measure the curb and gutter area at his home and his request to pour a concrete driveway to the curb to be considered. M/S Hamdorf, Jones to approve JKE Enterprise permit. Denied Dennis Sloan's permits and denied Brookmeyer permit for a garage until a further discussion on the set-back occurs later in the month along with the re-measure of the curb and gutter and driveway request. Ayes: All.

Maintenance Man's Report – Public Works, Kirk Steinke reported to council that the 6' pump that had received storm damage was actually covered under an insurance policy, the policy covered everything but the deductible of \$1,000. Steinke said he would need to do jetting on 5th St. & Harding. The man hole is also bad and infiltration was occurring. He had looked at options to replace the sewer line, spray fiberglass epoxy. The DNR suggestion was to work with an Engineer. Councilman Hamdorf asked if a camera view would be worth the cost. Steinke thought this would be useful to do. Councilman Conrad said get a quote for the next meeting. Steinke will do the research and present his research at the next council meeting. Steinke also reported on the vandalism that been occurring across town with regard to the street lights and also a picnic table thrown in to the creek. Councilman Stewart asked what time the park closes. Steinke said the park closes at 10pm. Alliant will be pursuing any costs to their equipment but our security camera's had identified the person's responsible for the damage on Main Street and as a result we were able to give this information to the Cedar County Sheriff. Steinke asked if council had thought about the bleachers in the park and the need to add railings. He said the prior council had begun to discuss this along with the softball and baseball lights that were

damaged in the storms late last year. Council instructed Steinke to obtain quotes and to work with Aaron Horman, Park Board. Discussion tabled for a future meeting.

Steinke reported on needing cold patch for the roads, we have a number of potholes that need attention and he had tried a stronger patch which had good results on a few areas. Steinke said he could purchase a ½ pallet or full pallet of the stronger cold mixture and it would be a more permanent fix than what they had used in the past. Estimated cost of the pallet would be \$750.00. Councilman Conrad said we should get a full pallet and that he should go ahead and purchase. Steinke reported that the chainsaw they currently have is no longer in good working order. He said it's too small and it doesn't run well. He reported he had checked on a Farm Boss Model 271 and 291. Approximate cost of the Farm Boss 291 was \$479.00 plus the cost of the storage case. We may be able to use Fema funds for this and he will investigate. Steinke also reported that the gas tank the city now has in place needs to go on cement risers to avoid damage from rain. Council instructed him to get a quote on this. Steinke said the cities 1 ton truck also needs replacement. \$20,000 has been put aside towards this purchase already. He said the plow is in poor condition and a hole in the floor of the vehicle needs to be repaired. He said he looked in to a Chevy with the state with a 9ft plow, class 4 hitch at a cost of \$43,321.10. We cannot trade our vehicle but could do sealed bids to those interested in purchasing the old one. The current vehicle has 60,000 miles on it. Council asked Steinke to remove the plow to see if it could be welded and to report back to council at the next meeting in April.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Hansen said the Employee Handbook for city employees has not been revised since 1992 and in many sections it was very outdated. She discussed briefly the need for its update and informed council that the City Clerk would begin to revise section by section with herself and bring before council the proposed changes. M/S Hamdorf, Conrad to begin working on revisions for the Employee Handbook. Ayes: All. Mayor Hansen also asked council thoughts on changing the city hall cleaning times. She sees the need for cleaning city hall and the council rooms as once per week for 1 hour (4 times a month) instead of 2 times per month for 2 hours each time. This would not change the current salary arrangement. Council said she should just coordinate the change with Laurie Wendt, the current person who cleans city hall.

City Clerk reported that she will have 2 routine audits during March and April, one with the insurance company and the other with IPERS, the employee retirement system.

M/S Hamdorf, Stewart, to adjourn meeting at 7:20pm. Ayes: All.

Next regular meeting will be Monday, April 4, 2016 at 5:30pm at City Hall.

Ashley Hansen, Mayor

Sarah Carlson, City Clerk