

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the Council in and for the City of Albany, Stearns County, Minnesota, was called to order by Mayor Tom Kasner at 6:30 o'clock in the evening on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, in the Council Room at 400 Railroad Avenue for the said City.

Other Council members present were: Councilors John R. Harlander, Keith Heitzman, Al Amdahl, and Adam Rushmeyer. None were absent.

Others present were: Tom Schneider, Clerk/Adm., Joe Mergen, Public Works Supervisor, Ozzie Carbajal, Police Chief, and Jeremy Mathiasen, the City Engineer with the firm of Stantec, Inc., St. Cloud, MN.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Council took notice of approval of payment of bills. After due discussion, a motion was made by John R. Harlander and seconded by Keith Heitzman to authorize electronic payments (payroll), transfers, and the payment of the following bills: Check Numbers 70722 to 70770. All voted for the motion and it carried.

Mayor Tom Kasner called for any corrections or additions to the minutes of the regular meeting of the Council held on January 20th and hearing none declared them approved.

Open forum/public comments: none

John Hannon, Library Services Coordinator, Albany/Melrose Public Libraries, appeared before the Council to present an activity report on the 2020 Albany Library operations. Mr. Hannon noted COVID-19 temporarily closed the library for two months in March and shortly thereafter curbside pickup was offered. Mr. Hannon also noted the library is open with restrictions such as limited occupancy, masks and social distancing. Mr. Hannon reported the following:

- Circulation statistics (number of items checked out) in 2020 was 49,604 items, a decrease of 33.2% from 2019. The digital circulation of eBooks, audio books, streaming music, and videos downloaded from their digital platforms increased which was likely due to COVID-19 closure forcing users to get library materials digitally. Local programming was cancelled along with all in-person programs in early March due to COVI-19.

Mr. Hannon also noted procedures for almost all library activities were reviewed and rewritten to conform to social distancing and mitigation strategies from the State and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Mayor Tom Kasner thanked Mr. Hannon for sharing the information with the Council and hope the year 2021 will be more successful.

Mr. Mathiasen appeared before the Council to inform the Council Breitbach Construction Company, Elrosa, MN, the General Contractor, for the 2020 8th Street Capital Improvements, requested the City consider reducing the amount of retainage (5%) being the majority of the work has been completed. Mr. Mathiasen noted the City is not required to reduce the retainage, but has done so in the past. Mr. Mathiasen noted a performance bond is in place for additional security to assure the project is completed. Mr. Mathiasen also noted the only remaining item is the bituminous wear course. Mayor Tom Kasner, with the consensus of the Council, directed Mr. Mathiasen to prepare a partial payment application to reduce the amount of retainage from 5% to 2.5% for review at the next meeting.

Mr. Mergen informed the Council KLM Engineering, Inc., Woodbury, MN, submitted a proposal for a dry tank cleanout and evaluation (exterior/interior) of the City's 250,000-gallon elevated water tower. Mr. Mergen noted the engineering firm has been used in the past and the evaluation is done every five years. Mr. Mergen noted the fee for the service is \$2,600 and recommended approval. Mayor Tom Kasner, with the consensus of the Council, directed Mr. Mergen to contact the engineering firm to proceed to conduct the evaluation of the water tower.

Mr. Mergen informed the Council the following bids were opened at 2:00 PM on January 29th at City Hall for the sale of the 2000 Sterling Plow Truck (surplus property): 1) Dave Gerads Construction, Freeport, MN, (\$12,500) and 2) Crysteel S. Corporation, Lake Crystal, MN (\$11,000 trade-in). Mr. Mergen noted a notice was published in the Star Post, the City’s official newspaper, on January 13th and recommended the City sell the said truck to Dave Gerads Construction. After due discussion, a motion was made by Keith Heitzman and seconded by Al Amdahl to approve the bid submitted by Dave Gerads Construction for the aforesaid truck in the amount of \$12,500. All voted for the motion and it carried. Mr. Mergen noted the new 2020 Mack Plow truck is scheduled to be delivered on Friday, ~~February 4th~~, February 5th.

Councilor Adam Rushmeyer, Planning Commission Liaison, informed the Council a notice of a vacancy on the Planning Commission was published in the Star Post on January 6th; whereby the following three applications were received: 1) Don Fischer, 2) Ron Paulson, and 3) William (Bill) Scepaniak, Jr. Mr. Rushmeyer noted each individual was interviewed on February 1st by himself, Jon Stueve, Planning Commission Chairman, and Mr. Schneider; whereby the committee recommended Mr. Scepaniak be appointed to the five-year term on the Planning Commission. After due discussion, a motion was made by Adam Rushmeyer and seconded by John R. Harlander to appoint William (Bill) Scepaniak, Jr. to a five-year term on the Planning Commission. All voted for the motion and it carried.

Mayor Tom Kasner updated the Council on the Governor Tim Walz COVID-19 regulations and restrictions. Mayor Tom Kasner noted vaccines continue to be made available to the public. Mayor Tom Kasner noted the public can go to <https://staysafemn.gov> or the Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC) for more details.

Mayor Tom Kasner announced the next regular Council meeting for 6:30 o’clock in the evening on Wednesday, February 17, 2021, and adjourned the meeting at 6:55 PM.

Tom Schneider
Clerk/Adm.