

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, December 20, 2023, in the Council Room at 400 Railroad Avenue for the said City.

Other Council members present were councilors Keith Heitzman, John R. Harlander, Al Amdahl, and Adam Rushmeyer. Other's present were Joseph Mergen, Supervisor, Public Works Department, Jeremy Mathiasen, city engineer with the firm Stantec, Inc., St. Cloud, MN, Police Chief Ozzie Carbajal, Tom Schneider, Interim City Administrator, Gary Winkels, Public Works Department Assistant, Tim Hennagir, Staff Writer with the Star Post, and Bruce Winter, resident.

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 approve/authorize payroll (3935-3950), electronic payments, transfers, and the payment of the following bills: Check Numbers 73171-73200. 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 December 6th and hearing none declared them approved.

Open forum/public comments: none.

Mr. Mathiasen appeared before the council to present a revised map of the proposed 2024 Roadway Improvements (mill and overlay) that included the location of streets to be bid on as alternates as requested by the council at the last meeting. Mr. Mathiasen noted the project can be bid on in February 2024 and presented a proposed Professional Services Agreement for engineering services in the amount of \$58,320+/- for the said project. After due discussion, a motion was made by Al Amdahl and seconded by Adam Rushmeyer to approve the Professional Services Agreement for the said project. All voted for the motion and it carried.

Councilor Keith Heitzman, Albany Golf Club Liaison, presented to the council the club's checkbook register. After due discussion, a motion was made by Keith Heitzman and seconded by Al Amdahl to approve electronic payments, transfers, and the payment of the following checks 40632-40642. All voted for the motion and it carried. Mr. Heitzman informed the council that the clubhouse interior demolition is progressing and interior walls have been erected in conjunction with plumbing improvements.

Mr. Schneider informed the council the golf club's refuse enclosure located in the southwest corner of the city parking lot will be rebuilt with either concrete block or wood post frame in the spring of 2024 and paid for by West Central Sanitation, the company who damaged the enclosure in the spring of 2023. Mr. Schneider noted West Central Sanitation was unable to hire a concrete contractor to rebuild the enclosure with concrete block in 2023. Mr. Harlander recommended the new enclosure be built with concrete block as per the original construction and not wood post frame. Mayor Tom Kasner, with the consensus of the council, directed Mr. Harlander to contact a local contractor to install concrete block refuse enclosure similar to the original and forward the cost to West Central Sanitation.

Mr. Mergen informed the council he inspected the 2014 80kw standby diesel generator owned by the school district that will be going out to bids on December 21st located at 300 3rd Avenue. Mr. Mergen noted he found the generator has not been operational for quite some time due to the building being vacant for the past several years. Mr. Mergen noted there are additional expenses to relocate the used generator; whereby it may be wise for the council to consider purchasing a new standby generator for the lift station in the Albany Business and Industrial Park, 389 Huskie Drive. Mayor Tom Kasner, with the consensus of the council, directed Mr. Mergen to present to the council information to purchase a new standby generator at the lift station and NOT to submit a bid for the used generator at 300 3rd Avenue.

Mr. Amdahl updated the council on the Albany Area Community Education activities offered to the public and noted many are well attended.

Mr. Schneider informed the council the 2023 omnibus tax bill included \$210 million in one-time public safety aid that will be distributed by the State of Minnesota to cities on December 26th. Mr. Schneider noted the city of Albany’s one-time aid is \$122,613+/- . Mr. Schneider also noted the aid may only be used to “provide public safety”. Mr. Schneider informed the council the legislature expected most of the funds to be used by the police and fire departments and questioned how the city would like to disperse the funds. Mr. Harlander informed the council the police department has not had a capital equipment fund for several years due to budget constraints and has no fundraising options. Police Chief Ozzie Carbajal noted his department’s proposed new equipment needs are to upgrade weapons, portable radio, squad car, and accessories in the amount of \$50,000+/- . Police Chief Ozzie Carbajal also noted the 2019 Dodge Durango squad would be sold to another nearby department or traded to the Albany Chrysler Center. Mr. Harlander updated the council on the fire department’s revenue sources and noted he is appreciative of the volunteer firemen annual fundraising efforts. After due discussion, a motion was made by Keith Heitzman to set aside \$100,000 public safety aid to the police department and \$22,613 to the fire department. The motion died for lack of a second. After due discussion, a motion was made by Adam Rushmeyer and seconded by John R. Harlander to designate \$122,613+/- public safety aid to the police department and authorize the expenditure of \$50,000 for the aforesaid new equipment. Voting for the motion Mayor Tom Kasner, councilor’s John R. Harlander, Adam Rushmeyer, and Al Amdahl. Councilor Keith Heitzman voted against and the motion carried. Mr. Schneider informed the council he will open a capital equipment fund for the police department with the remaining funds.

Mr. Schneider also presented to the council the proposed 2023 levy, 2024 Budget, and the amount of property taxes the city proposes to collect to pay for the costs of services the city will provide in the year 2024. Mr. Schneider noted the truth and taxation public hearing was held on December 6th. Mr. Schneider informed the council the proposed budget includes \$42,000 which will be set aside in a new street repair fund. After due discussion and careful consideration, a motion was made by Al Amdahl who introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION 2023-28
APPROVING THE 2023 TAX LEVY, COLLECTIBLE IN 2024
Total Levy: \$1,524,701
(General Government: \$1,002,756)
(PIR Bonds debt service: \$453,145)
(Tax Abatement: \$86,800)

The motion for the foregoing resolution was seconded by John R. Harlander and after a full discussion thereon and upon a vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Mayor Tom Kasner, Councilors Al Amdahl, John R. Harlander, Adam Rushmeyer, and Keith Heitzman, and none voted against the same whereupon the said resolution declared duly passed and adopted. The full text of the said resolution and 2024 Budget is on file for public inspection during regular office hours at City Hall.

The Council took notice of a resolution to certify the location of the election polling place for the year 2024 as required by Mn State Statute. After due discussion, a motion was made by Mayor Tom Kasner who introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION 2023-29
A RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE THE POLLING PLACE FOR 2024
Albany City Hall
400 Railroad Avenue, Albany, MN 56307

The motion for the foregoing Resolution was seconded by Keith Heitzman and after a full discussion thereon and upon a vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Mayor Tom Kasner, Councilors Al Amdahl, Keith Heitzman, Adam Rushmeyer, and John R. Harlander, and none voted against the same whereupon the said Resolution was declared duly passed and adopted. The full text of the said Resolution is on file for public inspection during regular office hours at City Hall.

Mr. Schneider presented to the council a proposed resolution to decertify Tax Increment Finance District No. 16 as recommended by Jason Murray, the City’s Economic Development Consultant, with the firm of David Drown Associates. Mr. Schneider informed the council the fund balance in TIF District No. 16 at the end of the year is \$8,901; whereby the excess increment should be returned to Stearns County for redistribution to the taxing jurisdictions. Mr. Schneider noted the purpose of the district was to assist a local business in the Albany Business and Industrial Park and the obligations have been paid in full. Mr. Schneider also noted the council is required to complete a Confirmation of Decertified TIF District form and submit it to the Stearns County Auditor by the end of the year. After due discussion and upon the recommendation of Mr. Murray, a motion was made by John R. Harlander who introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION 2023-30
APPROVING THE DECERTIFICATION OF
TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT NO. 16
OF THE CITY OF ALBANY

The motion for the foregoing resolution was seconded by Adam Rushmeyer and after a full discussion thereon and upon a vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Mayor Tom Kasner, Councilors Al Amdahl, Adam Rushmeyer, and Keith Heitzman, and none voted against the same whereupon the said resolution declared duly passed and adopted. The full text of the said resolution is on file for public inspection during regular office hours at City Hall.

Mr. Schneider also presented to the council a proposed resolution to decertify Tax Increment Finance District No. 5, a 25-year Redevelopment District, as recommended by Jason Murray, the City’s Economic Development Consultant, with the firm of David Drown Associates. Mr. Schneider informed the council the fund balance in TIF District No. 5 at the end of the year is \$7,997; whereby the excess increment should be returned to Stearns County for redistribution to

the taxing jurisdictions. Mr. Schneider noted the purpose of the district was to assist in the demolition of a motel formally known as Sand’s Motel to construct a new motel at 820 Shamrock Lane; whereby the statutory duration of the district will expire at the end of the year. Mr. Schneider also noted the council is required to complete a Confirmation of Decertified TIF District form and submit it to the Stearns County Auditor by the end of the year. Mayor Tom Kasner, with the consensus of the council, directed Mr. Schneider to sign the said confirmation of decertification form on behalf of the city.

Mr. Schneider presented to the council the proposed 2024 Albany Schedule of Fees and Charges, “Appendix A” beginning January 1, 2024. Mr. Schneider informed the council the only amendments to the fee schedule are to increase the Assessment Search fee from \$15/search to \$30/search and miscellaneous changes to fire department equipment charges due to new equipment being purchased. After due discussion, a motion was made by Mayor Tom Kasner and seconded by Al Amdahl to approve the 2024 Albany Schedule of Fees and Charges, “Appendix A”. All voted for the motion and it carried. The Albany Schedule of Fees and Charges 2024 is on file for public inspection during regular office hours at City Hall.

The council took notice of a proposed 2024 Agreement between Tri-County Action Program, Inc., and the city of Albany for transportation services in the year 2024. Mr. Schneider informed the council the service is available to all residents each week on Tuesday during the hours of 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Mr. Schneider also noted the annual cost to the city is \$850, no increase. After due discussion, a motion was made by Adam Rushmeyer and seconded by Keith Heitzman to authorize Mayor Tom Kasner to execute the said Agreement on behalf of the city. All voted for the motion and it carried.

The Council took notice of a LG230 MN Lawful Gambling application (bingo/raffle/pull tabs) to be held April 13, 2024, submitted by the Albany Lions Club at Shady’s Hometown Tavern, 461 Railroad Avenue. After due discussion, a motion was made by John R. Harlander who introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION 2023-31
APPROVING LG230 MINNESOTA
LAWFUL GAMBLING APPLICATION**

The motion for the foregoing resolution was seconded by Adam Rushmeyer and after a full discussion thereon and upon a vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Mayor Tom Kasner, Councilors Adam Rushmeyer, John R. Harlander, Al Amdahl, and Keith Heitzman, and none voted against the same; whereupon the said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted. The full text of the said resolution is on file for public inspection during regular office hours at City Hall.

Mr. Schneider informed the council Molly Thompson, the city Auditor, and Jason Murray, the city financial advisor, recommended the transfer of \$172,000 of unreserved tax increment financing (TIF) funds as per the 2022 City Comprehensive Audit. Mr. Schneider recommended the funds be set aside in a new street repair fund. After due discussion and consideration, and upon the recommendation from the said consultants, a motion was made by Mayor Tom Kasner and seconded by Keith Heitzman to direct Mr. Schneider to transfer \$172,000 of unreserved tax increment funds to a new savings account designated for future street repairs. All voted for the motion and it carried.

Mr. Schneider presented to the council the following Park fund balances:

- North Lake revitalization fund: \$20,000
- Designated North Park maintenance funds: \$29,022
- Undesignated Park fund: \$122,000
- North Park Improvements/TH#238 Ped. \$9,249

Mr. Schneider informed the council the aforesaid fund balances will be provided to the Park Board at their first meeting in 2024 in addition to an update on the improvements that were completed in North Park in 2023.

Mr. Schneider also informed the council Gary Winkels, who was hired as the new Administrator-Clerk-Treasurer, will assume his new position on January 1st. Mr. Schneider noted he will assist Mr. Winkels for the next several months to make sure the transition in his new role as Administrator-Clerk-Treasurer goes smoothly.

Mayor Tom Kasner presented the following proposed 2024 appointments:

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| Acting Mayor | John R. Harlander |
| Weed Inspector | Mayor Tom Kasner |
| Assistant Weed Inspector | Joseph Mergen |
| Auditor | Schlenner Wenner Co. |
| City Attorney | Jovanovich, Dege & Athmann, PA |
| Emergency Management Director | Ozzie Carbajal, Police Chief |
| Assistant Emergency Management Director | Gary Winkels |
| Community Education Liaison | Al Amdahl |
| EDA Board members | John R. Harlander, Mayor Tom Kasner |
| Equipment Commissioner | Keith Heitzman |
| Fire Department Liaison | Mayor Tom Kasner |
| Albany Golf Board Liaison | Adam Rushmeyer |
| Health Officer | Stearns County Public Health |
| Labor Commissioners | Keith Heitzman, Mayor Tom Kasner |
| Official Depositors | Stearns Bank, Magnifi Financial |
| Official Publication | Star Post |
| Park Board Liaison | Al Amdahl |
| Planning Commission Liaison | John R. Harlander |
| Police Commissioner | John R. Harlander |
| Street Commissioner | John R. Harlander |
| Utility Commissioner | Keith Heitzman |
| Township Liaison | John R. Harlander |
| Fire Department Relief Association Ex-Officio | Mayor Tom Kasner, Gary Winkels |

Mayor Tom Kasner announced the next regular council meeting for 6:30 PM or as soon as thereafter on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, and adjourned the meeting at 7:25 PM.

Tom Schneider
Interim City Administrator