

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, October 18, 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, Susan Dege, city attorney, JoAnna Bigler, Patrol Officer, Tim Hennagir, Staff Writer, the Star Post, and Tom Schneider, Interim City Administrator.

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 Adam Rushmeyer and seconded by Keith Heitzman to approve/authorize payroll (3870-3886), electronic payments, transfers, and the payment of the following bills: Check Numbers 73030-73068. 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 October 4th and hearing none declared them approved.

Open forum/public comments: none.

Mayor Tom Kasner informed the council the hiring committee interviewed seven (7) candidates for the position of Administrator-Clerk-Treasurer. Mayor Tom Kasner noted the recommendation by the hiring committee to consider a conditional job offer to Gary Winkels, 29613 Co. Rd 17, Albany, MN for the said position. Mayor Tom Kasner noted the hiring committee discussed in great length the qualifications and municipal experience of each candidate after each interview and unanimously selected Mr. Winkels for the said position. Mayor Tom Kasner also noted if the council accepts the recommendation by the hiring committee the next step would be for the council to authorize the interim city administrator to negotiate compensation terms. Mr. Schneider also informed the council if Mr. Winkels accepts the position the city will publish a notice for a job opening in the Public Works Department and noted Mr. Winkels would not start as the Administrator-Clerk-Treasurer until his replacement is hired in the Public Works Department which it tentatively mid to late December or early January. After due discussion and careful consideration, a motion was made by John R. Harlander and seconded by Keith Heitzman to approve a conditional job offer to Mr. Winkels for the position of Administrator-Clerk-Treasurer. All for the motion and it carried. After due discussion, a motion was made by Mayor Tom Kasner and seconded by Al Amdahl to authorize the interim city administrator to negotiate compensation terms with Mr. Winkels to be considered at the November 1<sup>st</sup> council meeting. All voted for the motion and it carried.

Mr. Mathiasen informed the council the Stearns County Highway Department conducted a public informational meeting for the proposed 2024 County Road 157 improvements on October 17th at Albany City Hall. Mr. Mathiasen reported nearly twenty-five residents attended the meeting. Mr. Mathiasen noted there is a proposed sidewalk installation on the north side of

the roadway and if special assessments are considered similar to other reconstruction projects, public hearings, and notices to benefitted properties is required pursuant to proceedings for local improvements Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 429. Mr. Mathiasen also noted either the county's engineering firm or Stantec is required to draft the construction plans for the city utilities to be reconstructed. Mayor Tom Kasner with the consensus of the council, noted the council will consider authorizing Stantec to prepare a preliminary engineering feasibility study for the city utility reconstruction improvements at the next council meeting and the city will adhere to the proceedings for local improvements Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 429. Mr. Mathiasen noted representatives from the Stearns County Highway Department may be attending the next council meeting for additional discussion.

Mr. Mergen presented to the council a revised street map and preliminary cost estimates to mill and overlay several streets in need of immediate repairs as discussed at the September 20<sup>th</sup> council meeting. Mr. Mergen noted the original estimates were nearly \$1.6 million and the proposed revision if completed over a period of six years would be a total of \$600,000+/- . Mr. Schneider noted if the street repair improvements are completed over a period of years the proposed tax levy included in the 2024 Budget can be reduced. Mayor Tom Kasner noted the proposed street repairs and costs will be discussed at the December 6<sup>th</sup> public hearing for the 2024 Budget and property tax levy.

Mr. Mergen informed the council the Stearns County Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) conducted an on-site inspection on October 11<sup>th</sup> related to the North Park improvements (walk/bike trails/pickleball courts/dog park, boardwalk, observation pier/dock, etc.). Mr. Mergen noted a final inspection report will be mailed to the city in a few weeks which will specifically outline any corrections that will have to be completed by improvements which impacted wetlands. Mr. Mergen also noted the inspection went very well with the TEP group.

Councilor Keith Heitzman, Albany Golf Club Liaison, presented to the council the Albany Golf Club's checkbook register. After due discussion, a motion was made by Keith Heitzman and seconded by John R. Harlander to approve electronic payments, transfers, and the payment of the following checks 40566-40598. All voted for the motion and it carried. Mr. Heitzman informed the council the golf course is closed and the clubhouse improvements will begin in November.

The council took notice of a request by Albany Area Gymnastics, 441 Huskie Drive, to change the date of their cash raffle from October 29<sup>th</sup> to November 12<sup>th</sup> due to unexpected delays with getting the permit approved by the State, tickets printed, and not having enough time to get the tickets sold. Mr. Schneider noted the council had approved the Lawful Gambling LG220 Exempt Permit application at the September 6<sup>th</sup> council meeting. Mayor Tom Kasner, with the consensus of the council, had no issues with the request to change the date of the raffle.

Mayor Tom Kasner announced the next regular council meeting for 6:30 o'clock or as soon as thereafter on Wednesday, November 1st and adjourned the meeting at 7:25 PM.

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Tom Schneider  
Interim City Administrator