

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
COOK CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 25, 2007 – 6 PM – CITY HALL**

PRESENT: Mayor Harold Johnston, Mayor-Elect Dick Edblom, Councilors Karen Hollanitsch, Dan Manick, Elizabeth Storm and Councilor-Elect David Danz

ABSENT: None

OTHERS: Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer Theresa Martinson, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Lynda Hanninen, Ambulance Director Penny Buckingham, Jon Minne - RLK Kuusisto Engineers, Cook News Herald, The Timberjay, Voyageur Sentinel, Gary Hauta, Chris Aho, Lee Phillips, Judy Anderson, Local 49 Operating Engineers Representatives Dale Long and Dan Kingsley

Mayor Harold Johnston called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Administrator Theresa Martinson performed the Oaths of Office for Dick Edblom as Mayor and David Danz as Councilor for the City of Cook.

The Council members thanked out-going Mayor Harold Johnston for his dedication and years of service to the City of Cook.

Lee Phillips present at 6:06 PM.

Jon Minne – RLK Kuusisto Engineers presented the Council with elevated water storage location alternatives. Jon Minne and Maintenance Superintendent Bud Ranta chose sites close to water mains. Mr. Minne did an evaluation of property ownership, ground elevation, flood plain and types of soils.

Jon Minne stated that the new water tower can go anywhere within the distribution system. He commented from an engineering standpoint that the two preferred sites are Site C (near McDonald's) and Site D (the old baseball field). There is a difference of elevation between the two sites. Site D is owned by the City of Cook. Site C has good soils and the water mains are easily looped. Zup's owns the property for Site C and it would need to be purchased or an easement would need to be given.

Councilor Manick questioned what type of water tower would be the best option.

Jon Minne replied that the pedesphere tank is the most cost effective. The anticipated cost of the new water tower is \$1,000,000. A new water tower was listed as a priority in the Capital Improvement Plan. The current water tower is not in compliance with standards or storage.

Mayor Dick Edblom questioned why the City is testing the water meters.

Mr. Minne stated that he has reported to the bonding company that the project is not finished and that the City of Cook is not satisfied. The contract with Labco is still open and will not be closed until the City is satisfied.

Maintenance Superintendent Bud Ranta purchased a flow meter to test the water meters to assure residents that the meters are accurate.

Jon Minne commented that he would prefer that Labco respond quicker to the City's requests and that Labco needs to certify that all of their contractors have been paid.

Gary Hauta was present to inquire what steps would need to be taken to have a sign erected to congratulate the 2002 Cook Knowledge Bowl Team State Champions. Mr. Hauta stated that the Mayor in 2002 had suggested a sign like the volleyball team sign be erected. Mayor Edblom stated that the girl's volleyball team sign was privately done. It was suggested to Mr. Hauta that he speak with the school or the Cook Chamber of Commerce for input. Mr. Hauta thanked the Council and commented that he just needed a place to start inquiring.

Lee Phillips was present to speak to the Council regarding Timberdays. The Chamber of Commerce would like to hold a mush ball tournament at the Doug Johnson Recreation Center. He stated that food would be served and that they would like to have a beer wagon. Mayor Edblom stated that it would be a great idea to have a mush ball tournament but does not agree with having a beer wagon at the park where families bring their children. Lee Phillips stated that soft drinks and water would be sold, but the revenue from the beer sales is what would offset the expenses of the tournament. Teams will pay to enter, but this money in turn will be paid out in prize money. Councilor Danz asked Lee Phillips what happened to the mud run. Mr. Phillips stated that the Baptist Church purchased the property where the mud run was held. He stated that the Chamber has special insurance for events and alcohol sales.

Motion by Danz, second by Manick to allow the Cook Chamber of Commerce to have a beer wagon for fundraising at the Doug Johnson Recreation Center during the mush ball tournament the weekend of Timberdays.

Aye: Councilors Danz, Hollanitsch, Manick and Storm

Nay: Mayor Edblom

MOTION CARRIED

Dale Long and Dan Kingsley – Local 49 Operating Engineers Representatives were present to request voluntary recognition by the City Council for the maintenance and police departments to unionize.

Councilor Danz questioned if the Council had a choice in the matter. Dan Kingsley stated that it is a choice matter. He stated that the Local 49 Operating Engineers are looking for voluntary recognition. After recognition is given, a meeting would be held to negotiate contracts.

Councilor Danz stated his main question was pay for the employees. Dan Kingsley responded that pay is a negotiated rate and that the City Council would have to be in agreement.

Councilor Manick questioned about the health care costs and commented that the City does not have family health care benefits. Dan Kingsley commented that the health care expense for the union is family coverage. He stated that in an attempt to do a fair comparison the 2007 rate for the union coverage was used. Councilor Storm questioned what the medical premium increases for the union are. Dan Kingsley replied the premium went from \$700.00 to \$750.00 this year. The previous increase had been from \$680.00 to \$700.00.

Dale Long stated that the union has a training center in Hinckley that could assist the City of Cook with training new employees at little or no cost.

Councilor Danz stated that the staff is what makes our city work. He questioned the pros and cons of the union issue.

Dale Long stated that having a union is a good way to retain employees and to attract employees.

Dan Kingsley stated that the big advantage to employees in the union is the family medical coverage. He stated that the Local 49 Operating Engineers are a 13,000 plus member union.

Mayor Edblom questioned what would happen if the City Council did not recognize the union. Dan Kingsley stated that there would be an election if the employees voted yes for the union. The Bureau of Mediation would determine who is eligible to join the union and would request that negotiations be started.

Councilor Storm requested a copy of a union contract. She also requested that this issue be tabled until the Council reviews the material.

Dale Long responded that the Local 49 Operating Engineers are here to represent the employees.

Discussion was held regarding newspaper bids. Administrator Martinson requested the Cook News Herald and The Timberjay submit bids.

The Timberjay submitted a bid with the rate of \$2.49 for legal notifications and a display rate of \$2.85 for any advertising and want ads.

The Cook News Herald submitted a bid with the rate of \$7.50 a column and with the rate of \$7.50 a column for a display. The Cook News Herald commented that their circulation is higher than The Timberjay's.

Mayor Edblom requested to review the publication dollars that have been expended for the last two years.

Councilor Manick stated that the bids will be accepted for what they are.

Administrator Martinson stated that a resident requested that the Minutes be printed in the newspaper. She stated that the Minutes are posted at the Library, post office and City Hall for review. The Council previously authorized that only legally required documents would be published.

Motion by Hollanitsch, second by Danz to publish a notice in both the Cook News Herald and The Timberjay and bill according to the bid rate of the respective newspaper.

MOTION CARRIED

Discussion was held regarding mayoral appointments. The Fire and Ambulance Department representative is Councilor Hollanitsch. Councilor Danz will be the alternate. Councilor Storm requested to be the weed inspector.

Motion by Hollanitsch, second by Manick to approve Councilor Danz as the Fire and Ambulance alternate and to approve Councilor Storm as the weed inspector. **MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion was held regarding the Blight Committee. Service requests/comments will be sent with the water billing for January, 2007. Administrator Martinson stated that the Police Department will be working on blight in the spring. She also stated that the Police Department has a commission and if there were blight issues they could be addressed through that commission or through the Blight Committee.

Motion by Hollanitsch, second by Manick to accept the Consent Agenda as follows:

- A. Approval/correction of Regular Council Minutes of December 28, 2006
- B. Approval/correction of Public Hearing Minutes of December 28, 2006 (Sunday Liquor)
- C. Approval/correction of Special Council/Airport Commission Minutes of December 21, 2006
- D. Acceptance of the December Police Department Report
- E. Reporting of the December Liquor Store Sales

	<u>MTD</u>	<u>YTD</u>
2006	\$87,173.15	\$1,240,020.97
2005	\$85,840.02	\$1,194,552.12
(+/-)	\$ 1,333.13	\$ 45,468.85

- F. Bill Presentation
 - Paid since last presentation \$62,253.45
 - Presented for payment \$51,338.15
- G. January Airport Operator's Report
- H. Airport Commission Minutes – January 18, 2007
- I. Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes – January 17, 2007
- J. 2007 Mayoral Appointments
- K. 2007 Journal of City Council Meeting Dates
- L. 2007 Journal of Airport Committee Meetings
- M. 2007 Journal of Park and Recreation Committee Meetings

- O. Non-audit services performed by Walker, Giroux & Hahne approval form
- P. December and January Cook Chamber Minutes

MOTION CARRIED

Councilor Storm requested that discussion of purchase of gasoline be added to the agenda.

Councilor Manick requested discussion regarding billing fees for garbage be added to the agenda.

Motion by Manick, second by Storm to add discussion of gasoline and garbage fees to new business on the agenda. **MOTION CARRIED**

Councilor Hollanitsch updated on the Airport Commission. Notices will not be sent out unless there is a change regarding the meeting.

Councilor Manick updated regarding the Parks and Recreation Commission wanting to establish a policy for renting the recreation center. The proposed fees are as follows:

- \$250.00 security deposit
- \$30.00 for rental of the building for two hours
- \$50.00 for rental of the building for four hours

Motion by Storm, second by Hollanitsch for Administrator Martinson and the Parks and Recreation Commission to establish a policy for rental of the recreation center.

MOTION CARRIED

Discussion was held regarding the failed control panel at the water plant. Councilor Manick questioned whether the expense of a new control panel is in the budget. This was an unforeseen repair. Councilor Manick questioned if there is projected revenue for the water rates. Water and sewer rates are reviewed and adjusted based on operating and capital improvements.

Administrator Martinson stated that she would like to commend the maintenance department for their work in manning the water system while the panel issue was resolved.

A variance request from William Whiteside was received and reviewed and recommended for approval by the Planning & Zoning Board. Variance request of 9 feet on the north side yard setback and 3 feet on the south side yard setback.

Motion by Danz, second by Storm to approve the Variance Request from William Whiteside for his property located at 507 South River Street, Gustafson Addition, Block 5, Lots 19 & 20 of 9 feet on the north side yard setback and 3 feet on the south side yard setback. **MOTION CARRIED**

Councilor Storm updated on the Emergency Preparedness Operations Plan. The plan covers any potential emergency that may happen in the City of Cook. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) gives assignments to City personnel and elected officials in the event of an emergency. Administrator Martinson requested review and any changes to the plan.

Motion by Hollanitsch, second by Storm to approve the Emergency Preparedness Operations Plan for the City of Cook. **MOTION CARRIED**

Administrator Martinson stated that there will be a conference call on January 26, 2007 regarding an update from the Hwy 1 committee. The committee has been working with the State of MN regarding labor market analysis.

Councilor Storm questioned whether the City has ever put the purchase of gasoline for City vehicles out for bid. Gasoline bids would be extremely hard to control. Departments utilize all of the facilities within the community.

Discussion was held regarding garbage fees. Each resident gets billed \$5.00 for garbage. This fee covers the cost of the service from Udovich. The revenue from the City garbage bags are used to cover the tipping fee at the transfer station. Future discussion should be held to research whether the City should continue with the current system.

Motion by Storm, second by Danz to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Hanninen
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer