

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
COOK CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 22, 2009 – CITY HALL – 6 PM**

PRESENT: Mayor Dick Edblom, Councilors Karen Hollanitsch, Elizabeth Storm, Jody Bixby and Dan Manick

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: The Timberjay, Cook News Herald, Candi Nylund, Dan Nylund, Josh Nylund, Reuben Rosnau, Jerry Storm, Geri Wilkinson, Bob Champa, Karen Lind, Donna Snyder, Dale Bixby, Lois Pajari, Shirley Bixby, Mark Barnett, Tom Ojanen, Lisa Ojanen, Kevin Abramson, Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer Theresa Martinson and Deputy-Clerk/Treasurer Cindy Palm

Mayor Edblom and Councilors Bixby, Hollanitsch, and Storm were sworn in under Oath of Office for newly elected council terms.

Mayor Dick Edblom called the regular meeting of the Cook City Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Councilor Storm recognized Cook resident Geri Wilkinson for her years of council meeting attendance. Councilor Manick informed the residents that the reason he is on the council is because Geri Wilkinson encouraged him to run for a council seat.

Bob Champa questioned an excess levy for a police department. He feels that the city council should not be able to determine if the residents have a police department. An excess levy would place the cost on the residents and let them decide if we should have police protection. Councilor Manick questioned why we are reducing services and not transferring funds from the liquor store. Mayor Edblom researched the levy through the League of Minnesota Cities who based their research on the current economic times. The cost of the excess levy would be cost prohibitive to the residents. There would be too many additional costs in exercising the levy option. Mayor Edblom also reminded residents that the budget and tax levy are approved and final for 2009.

Geri Wilkinson questioned the need for a police officer in Cook. She commented that our officer was not on duty 24/7 to prevent crime and wanted to know who covered the city then. In most cases she feels that the officer does not prevent crime but is present after the crime has happened. Mayor Edblom reminded that when our city police was off-duty the sheriff's deputies were present in the area and utilizing the office space in the city.

Bob Champa asked the council what they knew about the deputy response time when Frank's Pharmacy was recently broken into. Councilor Manick was concerned about the response time due to the increased area that the deputies are covering because of the police cuts in area towns.

Donna Snyder questioned how Cook was covered when our local officer was not on duty or working in another community.

Mark Barnett (Lake Vermilion Trading Company) spoke on behalf of John Franks (Franks Pharmacy) in regards to the recent break in at the pharmacy. Mr. Franks would not attend the council meeting because he feels that the council doesn't listen. Mayor Edblom commented that Franks Pharmacy has had numerous break ins over the years and that they have an alarm system. He also commented that unless the businesses are patrolled 24/7 then they are still at risk for break ins.

Councilor Bixby urged business owners to invest in security systems. She commented on how Subway owners Tom and Lisa Ojanen have gone above and beyond to install a security system while the city has had a police officer in Cook. Bixby commented that residents and business owners should group together and form a neighborhood watch system.

Councilor Manick made a motion to reinstate the police department officer position and reduce the office assistant position. According to *Roberts Rules of Order* this cannot be done.

MOTION DENIED

Bids were accepted for naming the official newspaper. Presented rates were as follows: The Timberjay's legal rate was \$3.25/column inch and the Cook News Herald was \$2.40/column inch. The Cook News Herald is the apparent low bidder.

Motion by Bixby, second by Storm to approve the Cook News Herald as the official city legal newspaper for 2009. **MOTION CARRIED**

Motion by Storm, second by Hollanitsch to approve the consent agenda as follows:

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Approval/correction of the Regular Council Minutes of December 18, 2008
- B. Approval/correction of Special Council Minutes of December 18, 2008 – Truth in Taxation Subsequent Hearing (2009 Levy & Budget Adoption)
- C. Approval/correction of Special Council Minutes of November 26, 2008 – (2007 Audit and Recreation Attendant)
- D. Reporting of the December Liquor Store Sales

	<u>MTD</u>	<u>YTD</u>
2008	\$92,405.83	\$1,326,523.31
2007	<u>\$88,208.27</u>	<u>\$1,268,351.54</u>
	\$ 4,197.56	\$ 58,171.77

- E. Bill Presentation
Paid since last presentation \$ 162,453.74

- F. Maintenance Department December Report
- G. Minnesota Department of Health Fluoridation Reports
- H. December Airport Operator's Report
- I. Parks and Recreation Minutes – January 19, 2009
- J. Cook Chamber of Commerce Minutes of January 5, 2009
- K. Cook Chamber of Commerce Minutes of December 1, 2008
- L. 2009 Appointments
- M. 2009 Journal of City Council Meeting Dates
- N. 2009 Journal of Safety/Emergency Preparedness Committee Meetings

MOTION CARRIED

COMMISSION AND STAFF REPORTS:

Councilor Manick reported that a memorial fund in memory of Kirk Makela has been designated for the Parks and Recreation Building. The fund has received donations of \$1350.

Councilor Manick reported that the Arrowhead Library System will cover \$1500 for automation costs for 2009. The Library Board has recommended that hours not be reduced due to the mandated 20 hours required by ALS for telecommunications and other library support. When funds are exhausted in salaries, the equipment fund should be used.

The airport property acquisitions need to be completed to qualify for grant funding. The council wants to move to the next phase of completing land appraisals, making an offer to property owners, sign a purchase agreement and receive reimbursement from the FAA. In order to move forward the council needs to sign the contract with Short Elliott Hendrickson as the consultant on this project and pay a fee of \$3500.00 to complete legal descriptions of portions of Tracks 19, 20, 21, 25 and 26 as shown on the Airport Layout Plan. The city's financial responsibility would be \$175.00 as the grant would be 95/5 funding.

Motion by Storm, second by Manick to approve amending the contract between Owner City of Cook and Consultant S.E.H. dated March 22, 2004 to include Legal Descriptions for property to be acquired at the Cook Municipal Airport. Services include legal descriptions of portions of Tracks 19, 20, 21, 25 and 26 as shown on the Airport Layout Plan. **MOTION CARRIED**

OLD BUSINESS:

Mayor Edblom met with RLK Engineer, John Jamnick, and reported that Spectrum Community Healthcare is negotiating on property near the Pioneer Apartments. Spectrum will add tax base to the city and create employment opportunities. This business will provide two levels of assisted living care and will contract with the Cook Hospital to provide meals. They intend on building in the Spring of 2009.

The city will work with another attorney who specializes in bonding litigation for the water meter/radio project.

The Riverstreet Streetscape project is a county road so St. Louis County will receive the funds. The city is committed to this project and has already delayed its one time payment of \$60,000 so will have to pay it in 2009. A committee will be formed for this project.

The city will receive \$500,000 in grants for the Well Replacement project by March of 2009. Administrator Martinson is seeking \$1,000,000.00 in grant funding for the Water Tower project. The city will have a one-time payment of \$65,000 to be paid in 2009. Additional expenses will be incurred because of the floodplain and purchasing new equipment mandated by the state. Water samples for the well project were submitted for testing and came back negative for arsenic levels within acceptable state standards. The city water source is running on one well and if it collapses our water source is gone.

Councilor Storm reported that Local Government Aid (LGA) was received in full for 2008. LGA for 2009 may be cut 70% and the League of MN Cities is lobbying aggressively to prevent this from happening.

NEW BUSINESS:

Iron Range Resources (IRR) has offered a Community Business Partnership Grant Program to provide matching funding 2:1 for commercial business renovations. These funds would be provided to businesses through the city similar to a revolving loan fund. The deadline to apply is February 1st, 2009 and if the city does not apply then the funds will be unavailable.

Motion by Manick, second by Hollanitsch to approve Resolution 090122 authorizing the Mayor to make application to the Iron Range Resources Community Business Partnership Grant Program for \$100,000. **MOTION CARRIED**

Margaret Swanson sent a donation to the Cook Chamber of Commerce to purchase flags and add improvements to River Street. A thank you has been sent on behalf of the city.

COUNCIL FORUM:

Councilor Manick questioned if any research had been started regarding increasing city sales tax and assessing a levy on residents and businesses. These projects will be deferred to the February council meeting at which time a study session will start at 5:00 p.m. prior to the regular council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Storm, second by Bixby to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM
MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Palm
Deputy-Clerk/Treasurer