

**DECEMBER 4, 2023
REGULAR MEETING**

The only regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Atwater City Council was called to order on Monday, November 6, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Atwater City Hall by Mayor Mark Olson. Council members present were Shane Hagstrom, Anthony Holtz and Deb Mickle. Brian Carlson was absent from the meeting. Visitors at the meeting were Connie Halverson from Atwater Area Help for Seniors, Grant Fischer from the American Legion of Atwater, Gary Lee Davenport, and Spencer Johnson from Bolton and Menk.

Representing the city departments was Police Chief Ross Johnson, and Fire Chief Chad Busskohl, Assistant Fire Chief Mike Smith, Jason Johnson Head of Maintenance department.

The minutes of the regular meeting of November 6, 2023, were motioned for approval by Deb Mickle and Shane Hagstrom. Motion carried unanimously.

2024 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Olson opened the public hearing for the 2024 Budget and levy at 7:01. Olson asked if anyone was here to discuss the levy or the budget. No one responded. Mayor Olson then closed the public hearing at 7:02 and asked for a motion to pass Resolution 2023-24 to set the 2024 tax levy for the City of Atwater. The Motion was made by Hagstrom and second by Tony Holtz. Motion passed unanimously. The 2024 Levy is set at \$614,764.

January regular city council meeting needs to be changed due to the fact it falls on a holiday. Deb Mickle suggested January 8th sticking with Mondays. The rest of council was in agreement.

GRANT FISCHER – ATWATER AMERICAN LEGION

Fischer updated the council to let them know that the Legion is working on the Grant for the Veterans Memorial Park. They have taken two trees down and need to take down one more. They have had Brent Whitcomb take the trees down. Mayor Olson said if they wanted it down, the Legion, they could just pay for it without going through the city channels or need to pass a resolution.

GARY LEE DAVENPORT – ALLEY TRAFFIC

Davenport was concerned about the amount of traffic and the speed the cars are going down the alley behind his house. He has asked for the city to block it off at his property line – people have told him the alley is for school use, they have parked in his driveway, and worst was they drove through his yard. He is requesting a removable blockage where his property and the church meet to stop through traffic. A “no through traffic” sign and barricade will be posted.

CONNIE HALVERSON FROM ATWATER AREA HELP FOR SENIORS

Talking points of her review of the program, were hiring Steph Johnson in 2022, they have over 93 volunteers who have helped 268 older adults with in home care, rides, hospice, social events, outreach, and exercise programing varying in abilities. Equipment loan program

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and health and wellness expo. Senior dining has started again at the Community Center. The volunteers have driven over 22,000 miles this year. Kevin Stranberg meets with the board for a strategic meeting to ensure that the program will continue far into the future.

SPENCER JOHNSON – BOLTON & MENK - UPDATE

Spencer asked the council to consider Resolution 2023-26 for the approval of plans and Specs and then ordering advertisement for bids. The motion to go ahead and pass 2023-26 was made by Shane Hagstrom and second by Tony Holtz. Bids will be opened on February 14th, 2024. The motion carried unanimously. The council decided to hold a workshop on December 13 at 6 pm with Spencer Johnson and a funding representative from Bolton and Menk.

MAYOR’S REPORT

The test well on Gerald Gratz field has been sealed. He was also concerned about the price we offered to DeLite Outdoors of \$5000 seemed a little low. After a brief discussion Hagstrom made the motion to offer \$7500 to DeLite and was second by Deb Mickle. Motion carried with everyone voting in favor.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Ross Johnson read the November Emergency Services Report. Johnson drew the council’s attention to the January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025, agreement with Kandiyohi County Sheriff’s Department to provide 12 hours of law enforcement at \$540 a month, provided in the agenda packet. The motion to approve the agreement was made by Deb Mickle and seconded by Hagstrom. Motion carried unanimously.

FIRE/AMBULANCE REPORT

Fire Chief Chad Busskohl told the council that while backing fire truck #4151 they hit the ceiling furnace and there is a crack in the heat exchanger, they also want the other units to be looked at too. Most of these units are original to the building. A quote from Atwater Heating and AC, LLP for a new 125,000 BTU for \$3850 was submitted for the council’s decision. Hagstrom made the motion to replace the furnace and service the other units and was seconded by Deb Mickle. Motion carried with everyone voting in favor. There will be a Fire Reilef meeting on December 6th at 6 pm. Hagstrom and Busskohl have talked about new desks for the Fire/Ambulance office. Quotes are still in the works.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

Jason Johnson was disappointed that the road grader is in the shop again. Hennes doesn’t want to work on it because parts are hard to come by. J. Johnson spoke to Jacob Hay from the Solar Farm company; Hay explained that (due to red tape) the city may have to put in a culvert. The solar company will be removing the trees and building a road. Hay said the City would be reimbursed later. J. Johnson will contact Tony Whitcomb to get a written estimate.

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He is also concerned about a safety issue on South Third by the School where the day care and preschool. He is concerned about the parking on the school side and for safety reasons no one should be parking in front of the day care entrance. Holtz asked if this was just during regular school hours, or during night games.

CLERKS DEPARTMENT

Clerk Smith informed the council that \$3000 arrived from Medicom for our local access channel. It was part of the franchise agreement. Smith produced samples for the shade in the community center. The council picked the fabric one and the quote for \$3700 from Linda Barrick Designs was made by Hagstrom and seconded by Tony Holtz. Motion carried with everyone voting in favor. The council reviewed the 2024 fee schedule – liquor off sale will go from \$100 to \$150 for 2024, excavation permit in the street from \$200 to \$500. Fire call charges need to go before the Township Fireboard for approval. We will no longer be letting city equipment be “for hire”. Just the salt and sand and snow removal for minimum of two hours. The final change was to the Community Center rental for fund raisers from \$25 to \$50 and rental for other rental from \$125 to \$150. Motion to accept the changes for 2024 was made by Tony Holtz and seconded by Hagstrom and was carried by all voting in favor.

2024 LICENSES AND PERMITS

Hagstrom made the motion to approve mobile home permits 2024. Motion was made by Hagstrom and seconded by Deb Mickle to approve. Motion carried.

2023 WESTBURG AND EISCHENS ANNUAL AUDIT

A proposal for the 2023 annual audit for \$16,600 was submitted for council approval. The motion to accept the proposal was made by Hagstrom and seconded by Deb Mickle. Motion carried.

MONITORING WELL ON ATLANTIC AVE EAST

Bailey Zehiher of West Central Environmental Consultants out of Morris has requested permission to put a monitoring well on East Atlantic Avenue in the right of way of the property by the Jennie-O Turkey Store 40-912-0640. The monitoring well would only be open for a sample collection and a maximum of 72 hours. They will let us know one week in advance when the collection will take place. Motion was made by Hagstrom and seconded by Tony Holtz to approve the monitoring well. Motion carried with everyone voting in favor.

RESOLUTION 2023-25 APPOINTIGN ELECTION JUDGES FOR 2024 ELECTIONS

Motion by Hagstrom and second by Deb Mickle to approve the appointment of 10 election judges. They will be required to go through 2-hour training for the Presidential Primary, the Primary in August and the General election in November. Motion passed unanimously.

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RESOLUTION 2023-27 CHARITABLE GAMBLING FOR 100 YARD CLUB FROM WILLMAR

The HandleBar submitted a second charitable gambling license for their establishment for the 100 Yard Club from Willmar. They were informed of the 1997 ordinance saying they need to contribute 50% to our designated trade area as described in the ordinance. Hagstrom asked if we could ask them for a report, Clerk Smith said of course. Motion to pass the resolution was made by Hagstrom and seconded by Tony Holtz and motion was approved unanimously.

BILL FROM BRADS PLUMBING

Mayor Olson informed the council that there was a repair needed at Wes Jacobs house when he had he had his service line replaced. Brad Plumbing repaired the curb stop for \$570. Motion to pay was made by Hagstrom and seconded by Deb Mickle. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

The following verified accounts were presented for payment, upon approval of the Finance Committee; it was moved by Hagstrom and second by Deb Mickle. Motion carried authorizing the Clerk/Treasurer to make such disbursements: December 5, 2023 (Checks numbers 32144-32166 for \$ 24,474.66. and Mid-month bills paid on December 15, 2023, were check numbers 32168 through 32190 for \$ 7,381.69. An end of the month bills was paid on December 29, 2023 totaling \$16,706.38 with check numbers being 32191 to 32214 all approved by the finance committee.

A motion was made to adjourn by Shane Hagstrom and second by Deb Mickle at 8:52 p.m.

Goldie Smith
City Clerk/Treasurer