

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BACKUS, CASS COUNTY, MN. JANUARY 7, 2013 7:00 PM

The City-Clerk Treasurer swore in the new mayor, Kurt Sawyer and the new council member, Richard Bean.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kurt Sawyer at 6:56 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Council members present: Thomas, Sawyer, Braker, Bean. Absent: Borst (The meeting was called to order early and council member Borst was in attendance at 7:00p.m.)

CONSENT AGENDA:

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Braker to approve the consent agenda. All in favor. Motion carried.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Sawyer opened for discussion the following 2013 City Appointments.

Mayor Pro-Tem	Steve Braker
Secretary Pro-Tem	Richard Bean
(in the event the City-Clerk is absent from a council meeting)	
Airport Commissioner	Denny Williams
Finance and Parks Commissioner	Steve Braker
Fire and Police Department Commissioner	James Thomas
Water and Sewer Commissioner	Richard Bean
Street Commissioner	Richard Bean
Weeds Commissioner	Kurt Sawyer (Mayor)
Health Commissioner	Rae Borst
Personnel Liason	Rae Borst
Official Newspaper	Pine River Journal
City Attorney	Gammello, Qualley, Person & Mallak
Official Depository	First National Bank of Walker (Backus)
City Engineers	Widseth Smith Nolting & Assoc.
Council Meeting Dates	First Monday of each month (unless legal holiday falls on first Monday – then following Monday – 7:00 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Bean to approve the 2013 Appointments. All in favor. Motion carried.

WATER/WASTEWATER REPORT: Lee Bundy, city water/wastewater operator reported that re-circulating pump in the water tower is not working. Several attempts

were made to repair the issue to no avail. It was discovered that it is not just the pump, it is also the piping and valving. The solution being implemented will be to put the pump, piping and valving at the base of the water tower as opposed to housing them in the pumphouse.

Bundy then turned to the city council for policy direction on the city's "freeze run" procedures. "Freeze run" is when citizens run water in their homes to keep the plumbing from freezing and are not charged for the water used except for the minimum charge. Currently, the "rule" is when the water temperature in the fire hall hits 36 degrees, a "freeze run" is declared. 13 people on an existing list are contacted and informed of this water temperature. If they wish to go on the "freeze run" they are to inform city hall.

The council was informed that when this procedure began, water was less expensive as were sewer charges. The council was also informed that the issues causing freezing were not the city's infrastructure, they were private plumbing issues. The council learned that with the city's new waste water project coming this summer, and the city paying by the gallon to dispose of its waste, allowing water waste would be an additional cost to the city. This also could have shortened the life of the existing drain field.

The water/wastewater operator and the city clerk asked for direction from the council as to how to handle this issue. After some discussion, the council decided that this winter would be last year for the "freeze run." The people on the existing "freeze run" list will be charged the minimum charge for water after the water temperature in the fire hall hits 36 degrees and the "freeze run" is declared. These people wishing not to be charged for this extra water use will have to inform city hall. These people on the list will receive a letter to be drafted by the city clerk and water operator informing them that this will be the last year for this ad-hoc policy. A reminder letter will be sent this spring and will be put in the city announcements throughout the year.

MOTION: A motion was made by Borst and seconded by Braker to dissolve the "freeze-run" policy, but allow it to continue for this winter season and authorize the city clerk and water operator to draft and mail a letter to those citizens affected by this change. All in favor. Motion carried.

SEH was not present due to a conflict.

PUBLIC FORUM: There was no public comment at the meeting.

POLICE REPORT: Police Chief Paul Sand was present to report that there was 8 calls in the month of December and 11 warnings on speed. The department also attended the Active School Shooter class that was offered by Pequot Lakes Police Department in light of recent events.

The chief again stressed the importance of house numbering. After some discussion, the council decided that any home in violation of the house numbering ordinance would have an identification sign installed, by the city, at the home owner's expense. The police and fire department should report any violators and the city will send a letter and then if not corrected, a follow up letter.

MOTION: A motion was made by Braker and seconded by Bean that the city will install identification signs for house numbering ordinance violators, at owners expense, after two letters have been sent to the homeowner. All in favor. Motion carried.

FIRST RESPONSE: Jason Smith requested that the city purchase two CD's on behalf of the First Responders in the amounts of \$6,000 each. One is to be designated as "Vehicle" and the other "Equipment." The First Responders have the funds available.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Borst to approve the purchase of two \$6,000 CD's on behalf of the First Responders. All in favor. Motion carried.

Smith also requested permission to make necessary purchases for equipment and medical supplies, including a replacement laptop computer for the First Responders.

MOTION: A motion was made by Bean and seconded by Borst to approve the purchase of equipment, medical supplies and a replacement laptop for the First Responders. All in favor. Motion carried.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Upon the resignation as chief from Karl Flier, Jason Smith has been appointed at fire chief for the department.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Bean to approve the appointment of Jason Smith as Chief of the Backus Fire Department. All in favor. Motion carried.

Smith also requested that the council approve a \$50 increase per year, per firefighter, for the firefighter's retirement funds, beginning in 2013.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Braker to approve the \$50 per year, per firefighter increase to firefighter retirement funds. All in favor except Bean, who abstained from voting as he is a member of the fire department. Motion carried.

STREETS AND PARKS: No report.

AIRPORT: No report.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT: The city clerk presented the TDS Telephone and Internet contract to the council for approval. There were no changes to the features offers.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Bean to approve the TDS Telephone and Internet contract and authorized the clerk to execute the document. All in favor. Motion carried.

The clerk presented a correction to the August 21, 2012 Special Meeting minutes. There was a typographical error.

MOTION: A motion was made by Borst and seconded by Braker to change the \$136,633 figure in the August 21, 2012 Special Meeting minutes to \$134,633. All in favor. Motion carried.

The clerk also requested a computer software upgrade and printer repair not to exceed \$300.

MOTION: A motion was made by Borst and seconded by Thomas to approve the computer software upgrade and printer repair for the computer in city hall. All in favor. Motion carried.

MAINTENANCE REPORT: Lee Bundy of PRASD, reported that the additional insulation was installed in the townhomes. He also reported that 3 of the light poles on Front Street had electrical issues and were being repaired. Bundy also gave a general report of duties performed regarding city maintenance.

ZONING: No report.

EDA: No report.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

The clerk presented Resolutions 2013-1 and 2.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Borst to adopt **Resolution 2013-1, and 2 Acknowledging Donations on behalf of the Fire Department and First Responders.** All in favor. Motion carried.

The clerk also presented, for approval, the Minnesota Association of Small Cities billing for dues.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Borst to approve the Minnesota Association of Small Cities dues totaling \$116.25. All in favor. Motion carried.

There being no other business to come before the council, Mayor Sawyer adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Signed: _____
Jeff Turk, City Clerk/Treasurer

Signed: _____
Kurt Sawyer, Mayor