**City of LeRoy MN – Council Meeting Minutes, February 4, 2019**

A regular meeting of the LeRoy City Council was called to order by Mayor Brian Thiel on Monday, February 4, 2019, at 6:30 PM at the LeRoy Community Center with the following members present: Mayor Brian Thiel, Council Members Kathleen Gottschalk, Ashley Huntley, Gene Miller, Jan Whisler, Maintenance Supervisor John Jones, and City Clerk Patty White.   
Also attending: Deputy John Wade, Craig Jacobson, and Axel Gumbel. All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council reviewed the items included in the consent agenda. Motion by Huntley, second by Gottschalk to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

No one present had anything to bring forward during public input time.

During Standing Committee Reports:

* Council reviewed the library board meeting minutes. Thiel updated those present on the board member status. The question arose at the library board meeting that the expenditure guideline showed the library closing 2018 with unspent funds of approximately $5,000. The library board questioned if these funds could be appropriated to them in 2019 for any projects. Council discussed this at length. White noted that the final figure of unspent budgeted funds will not be known until the books for 2018 are closed.

Police Report:

* Deputy John Wade handed out the written police report. He noted is has been slow as of late; this could be attributed to the cold weather. Council thanked Deputy Wade for this report.

Library Board Appointments:

* These appointments will be reviewed after the library board meets for their February meeting.

RFP-City Auditor Services:

* Council reviewed the tabulation of the seven RFPs that were received. A motion was made by Miller to accept the bid from Smith Schafer for the audit years of 2018, 2019, and 2020. Second by Huntley. Motion carried 5-0.

2019 Wage/Benefit Package-Employee Reviews:

* It was noted that personnel reviews have been completed for Jones, Sweeney, and White. The written reviews were presented for council review. These employees were recommended to receive pay increases according to a schedule that will be presented later at this meeting.
* Motion by Gottschalk, second by Miller to accept the employee reviews. Motion carried 5-0. Thiel thanked the employees for their service and hoped they would continue with their service to the City of LeRoy.
* Thiel handed out a payroll summary sheet showing projected pay increases for all employees. This information had been compiled with limited input from non-council members of the Personnel Committee.
  + Council discussed the differing percentage increases; Thiel explained the rationale behind this that with equal percentage increases for all, the gap between higher paid and lower paid employees increases proportionately, not equally. Furthermore, some employees also receive overtime pay which further spreads the differences between their pay rates and other employees not subject to overtime.
  + A new position was included for an Administrative Assistant. Miller noted he would like to see the administrative assistant position out of this scope at this time. By consensus, this position will not be discussed until planning begins for the 2020 personnel budget.
  + Huntley questioned about the percentage differences between employees; she noted all the reviews were satisfactory and not show that any employee needed improvement. Huntley felt all raises should be at least equal to 2.8%; she does not agree with any increase in pay for any employee less than 2.8%. Motion by Miller to increase employee pay to the following scale: Jones to $20.50 per hour, White to $21.50 per hour but paid as a 40 hour per week salary, Sweeney to $15.00 per hour, Barnes to $13.85 per hour with these employees also receiving medical, dental, life insurance, and retirement benefits. Part-time custodians and library staff will be increased to $10.85 per hour with no added benefits. All pay increases will be retroactive to January 1, 2019 pending written reports of annual performance reviews of the full-time staff for the permanent and confidential personnel files. Second by Whisler. Motion carried 5-0.
* Council further discussed the Personnel Committee:
  + Huntley questioned what the Personnel Committee really does; she noted she does not agree with having two members from the community at large serving on this committee. She commented the council does not get to know what is discussed at these committee meetings.
  + Thiel noted these two community members have industry experience in personnel issues.
  + Gottschalk agreed with Huntley’s sentiments.
  + Miller felt the personnel committee is an advisory committee; the city council is still the governing body.
  + Whisler noted this is all with good intent, but he expressed concern when it comes time to hire city employees when the council has not been integral in the interviewing process.
* Motion by Huntley to dissolve the Personnel Committee and have the city council do their due diligence if an issue arises. Second by Gottschalk. On a roll call of votes Huntley, Gottschalk, Miller, and Whisler voted aye. Thiel cast a nay vote. The motion carried 4-1.
* Council further discussed the recommendation of a part-time assistant person for city hall.
  + White questioned how this position works into the budget.
  + Thiel responded that it will result in an increase in annual employee expense, but will better serve the residents of the city to have regular and predictable open hours at City Hall.
  + Huntley noted she does not see this position as being needed at this time.
  + Gottschalk suggested tabling this and discuss it more towards budget time.
* Motion by Miller, second by Whisler to not have this administrative assistant position at this time. On a roll call of votes Gottschalk, Huntley, Miller, and Whisler voted aye. Thiel cast a nay vote. The motion carried 4-1.
* Miller questioned about health insurance for Rhonda Barnes to see if a plan with better benefits for her and at a lower cost for the city might now be available as a Medicare wrap-around of some sort. White noted she had contacted PEIP, the insurance agent for the city health insurance with questions about switching Barnes to Medicare with a Medicare supplement; she has not received a response from PEIP yet.

City Police Protection:

* Whisler and White had meet with the Adams mayor and city clerk to discuss the possibility of entering into some type of sharing agreement with Adams and their police department. It was noted that Adams is in the early stages of discussion about what to do for police protection; this possibility will continue to be pursued. Whisler expressed concern that if LeRoy did go with a joint venture with Adams for police protection and it didn’t work out, “would Mower County still be a possibility for police protection?” Thiel reported he had recent conversations with Chief Deputy Mark May and Mower County Administrator Trish Harren about this topic. Both of them welcomed the idea of increase Mower County Sheriff’s coverage to both Adams and LeRoy and will study how to provide seven-day coverage for a stated number of hours specifically within the communities with deputies on a standard schedule instead of the unusual and less than seven-day coverage that LeRoy now has. All these issues will need to be researched.

Land Use Permits:

* There were no land use permits for council review.
* White noted tax abatement has been requested from Harlan and Nancy Olson for the new construction being proposed on the lots they own on Atkins Street. Motion by Miller to hold a public hearing on a tax abatement request to be held on Monday, March 4, 2019, at 7:00 PM. Second by Huntley. Motion carried 5-0.

Communications File:

* Jones reported there was a broken water main on South West Street; that break has been repaired.
* Thiel reported he was involved with an email exchange with Jay Mitchell from Mayo; there is nothing in the prospects for telehealth or a same-day clinic here in LeRoy.

Streets:

* Jones noted there will be more potholes to fill in the spring due to the winter weather.
* Whisler and Jones will be in contact with Four-Season Maintenance to get on their list.
* Thiel noted he would like to see street issues (patching, wear, etc.) better documented for future maintenance.

Sewer Maintenance:

* Jones has tried to make contact with Empire Pipe, the company that videotaped the sanitary sewer mains, to explore the possibility of lining some of the sanitary sewer main that lies beneath Main Street. He will bring this information to council when it is received.
* Miller questioned about doing a complete street reconstruction project. He suggested having East County Road completely redone including water and sewer mains. He would like to see this project maybe done as a fall project this year and fully completed in the spring of 2020. Whisler didn’t feel the city could assess just those residents abutting on East County Road since this is a high-use street and a high-use sewer main. Thiel questioned council if they would want East County Road to be more of a thoroughfare through town or done as a regular city street. Jones and White were directed to contact the city engineer to start preliminary work on an East County Road project.

Being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Gottschalk, second by Huntley at 8:15 PM.

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Brian Thiel, Mayor

Attest:

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Patty A. White, City Clerk-Treasurer