**City of LeRoy MN – Council Meeting Minutes, November 7, 2022**

A regular meeting of the LeRoy City Council was called to order by Mayor Ed Koppen on Monday, November 7, 2022, at 6:30 PM at the LeRoy Community Center with the following members present: Mayor Ed Koppen, Council Members Ashley Huntley, Harold Shipman, Brian Thiel, Gerald Payne, Maintenance Employee Nick Sweeney, and City Clerk Patty White.
Also attending: Axel Gumbel, Cole & Kristin Wilcox, Ron Purkapile, Chase Huntley, Troy Knutson, and Deputy Tim Donovan. All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda:

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

Police Report:

* Deputy Donovan presented an oral police report. He reported the deputies have been busy, but there has not been any alarming activity going on. Koppen questioned if the deputies could make note of where street lights are out and pass that information to city hall. Council noted appreciation for the different times they see a deputy presence here in LeRoy. Deputy Donovan was thanked for his time and report.

Public Input Time:

* Troy Knutson questioned what a nuisance is. He questioned how the council determines what a nuisance is, whether it based on street conditions, properties, etc. He noted he has a family member that has received a letter from the city and from the city attorney. He commented that properties may be run down, but those properties are still livable. Huntley questioned Mr. Knutson what he is seeking from the council. Mr. Knutson reported there is nothing hazardous stored on the subject property (305 N Strong); there are people working on getting the property cleaned up. Payne noted the main reason for the letter was to get the yard cleaned up. Mr. Knutson questioned if there was a committee or someone designated that drives around looking for possible nuisance properties. Thiel noted the council hasn’t fully addressed some of Mr. Knutson’s questions and cannot fully answer these questions at this time.

Standing Committee Reports:

* Shipman reported Prairie Visions met and is discussing signage for the trail. The 25th anniversary of the annual bike ride will be held on June 17, 2023, and will begin and end here in LeRoy. Prairie Visions annual Pat-on-the-Back dinner will be held on Monday, November 17, 2022, at Sweet’s Hotel.
* Huntley reported the LeRoy Area Ambulance Service responded to 25 calls in October. The annual cookie walk will be held on Saturday, December 3, 2022. Thiel reported he had attended a SEMLM meeting that addressed rural ambulance services. He will give a more detailed report at a future meeting.
* Payne reported Wildwood Grove will be reopening the back memory care in mid-November. There have been inquiries for available units at WWG. Payne felt this unit should reach capacity soon.
* White reported, on behalf of Fire Chief Hovde, on the city tanker. The truck has a blown head gasket; he is not sure if the motor was affected by this. Once more is known, they may be able to replace both head gaskets, replace the motor with a new or remanufactured motor, or replace the tanker. The department does not see replacing the tanker as being feasible. The new rescue rig has been put into service. Huntley noted the fire department is city owned; the ambulance is set up as a joint powers entity.

State Highway 56 Project:

* Council reviewed the letter from Jones, Haugh, & Smith pertaining to MnDOT’s request of the city to obtain additional temporary easements. It was questioned what the amount of the city’s cost participation will be for the retaining wall replacement. That figure has not been determined yet.
* Motion by Huntley to authorize acquiring the eight (8) additional parcels and agreeing to move forward with a cost share on the retaining wall, going with Option #3 for the retaining wall. Second by Payne. Motion carried 5-0. It was noted in a separate discussion with MnDOT, they have reduced the amount of storm sewer participation that the City will be required to pay for.

Proposed 2023 Budget & Levy:

* White reminded council the annual Truth in Taxation hearing will be held at 6:30 PM on Monday, December 5, 2022. The hearing will be held at the beginning of the regular December council meeting.

Set Date & Time for Special Meeting to Canvas Ballots from General Election:

* White noted council needs to meet between day three and day ten following the general election to canvas the ballots of the election. Motion by Payne, second by Thiel to call for this special meeting to canvas the ballots on Monday, November 14, 2022, at 10:30 AM at the LeRoy Community Center. Motion carried 5-0.

Renew Tax Abatement Program:

* White reported the tax abatement program is set to expire on December 31, 2022. It was noted that four new home constructions have benefited from this program. Motion by Thiel to pass Resolution 2022-09, a resolution renewing the Tax Abatement program. Second by Payne. Motion carried 5-0.

Land Use Permits:

* There were no land use permits for council review. It was noted some construction is happening at a home that has not applied for a land use permit yet. White will follow through on this.

Communications File:

* Council reviewed a letter from Mediacom pertaining to rate increases. A thank you from the L-O FFA was read thanking the maintenance employees for sweeping the bike trail for their Fall Frolic for Food 5K run. Cole Wilcox was recognized and thanked for doing this. Koppen reported on the upcoming closing of the Mayo Clinic Health System pharmacy here in LeRoy. The pharmacy will be closed at the close of business on Wednesday, November 30, 2022.

North Business Alley Between Mather and West Street:

* The party that had requested this item to be included on the agenda was not in attendance. Council noted this is a business alley. This alley cannot be designated for use only by the people living along this alley.

Street Project for 2022-Sanitary Sewer Review:

* Sweeney reported he has made contact with a representative from Insituform. He is working with them to come to LeRoy to look at the proposed sections of sanitary sewer that could/should be lined or replaced.
* Payne questioned who decided to put down blacktop on the streets slated for mill and overlay. Sweeney reported Heartland came to core out the poor areas; they then paved these areas and put down the leveling coat. Sweeney noted Heartland will come back in the spring to finish this project. Sweeney also noted he is not real happy with what has been completed with the leveling coat. Shipman noted that this could partly be the council’s fault with their decision to not want the project completed yet this fall due to the colder temperatures prior to this part being done. As the weather turned nice, the entire project probably could have been completed this fall.
* Shipman questioned about the storm sewer catch basin by LeRoy Lumber. Sweeney reported he does have this area coned off; he noted the proper way to fix this will be addressed during the Hwy 56 project.

Radar Speed Signs:

* White reported the signs have been ordered. Original shipping information shows them to be delivered in six to eight weeks. Thiel questioned about installation. This will be addressed when the signs arrive.

Pickup:

* Sweeney reported he and Wilcox had looked at a 2017 Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD pickup. This pickup has low miles of 33,247 and is 4WD. Motion by Shipman to proceed with the purchase of this pickup using funds from water capital outlay and sewer capital outlay. Second by Thiel. Motion carried 5-0.

Well House Controls:

* Sweeney reported the clear well floats have been installed and are working. Normans Electric Service (NES) will mount the city’s variable frequency drives (VFDs) for the well and high service pump on the wall next to the existing control panel. This would allow the existing contactors to remain to provide backup if you lose a VFD. The cost to do this is $3,375. Temporary level controls for the wet well along with the installation of a load side line reactor would cost approximately $2,800. Some of these items will not be available until the middle of January, 2023. Sweeney noted this company (NES) does work for surrounding communities and have come with favorable recommendations. Shipman noted the city needs to continually keep the water system updated.

Community Center Kitchen Proposal/Community Center Utility Room:

* Koppen reviewed the consensus of the council at the October 3, 2022, city council meeting to investigate the upgrade of electrical outlots, the installation of one farmhouse sink, and LED lighting in the kitchen at the Community Center.
* Shipman reported Spiff Slifka, CEDA representative for the LeRoy EDA, is looking into a matching funds grant for $25,000. Payne noted two local organizations have offered to provide the matching funds for this grant if it is awarded. Payne questioned if this grant application should proceed. Koppen noted these funds could be used for utility room improvements to address public safety. It was thought the grant was being written for kitchen improvements. Thiel felt what was discussed was to proceed with what was approved by consensus of the council at the October meeting was to not preclude anything else being done.
* Payne had been told a three-compartment sink needed to be installed to have this done according to code. Koppen still noted he wanted to look into public safety for the utility room.

Wildwood Grove Facility:

* Koppen questioned council if they look at the actual WWG building as being a city building, and if so, if any building repairs and/or maintenance should go through the city public buildings committee. Thiel noted there is already an entity in place, namely the LeRoy EDA that oversees the WWG operations and building repairs and maintenance for WWG. Koppen again questioned if the council should over-see of this for public buildings.
* Payne noted he personally felt the EDA has the best handle on what is needed at WWG and what needs to be done. He questioned why muddy the waters more when the EDA already reports back to council on WWG.
* Payne noted the roof area needs to be repaired, or the insurance company will cancel the insurance on the building. White noted she has not read anything from LMCIT about the possible cancellation of insurance on the building if this area is not repaired. Payne noted quotes are being compiled to see what the entire replacement of the roof will cost based on using asphalt shingles or steel. Payne noted the operations at WWG are running smoothly.

North Park Vandalism Update:

* Huntley noted she has not heard anything from law enforcement or the courts on this.

Service Award Recognition:

* (1) Council recognized Cole Wilcox for sweeping the trail for the 5K run sponsored by the L-O FFA. (2) Council recognized the deputies working for the Mower County Sheriff Department for making the comment that LeRoy is a nice community to work in. It was also noted people like seeing the squad car at varying times during the day here in LeRoy. Axel Gumbel also noted the LeRoy Lions hand out $5.00 in LeRoy Bucks to any new deputy that is working here in town. White was directed to draft a letter to Sheriff Sandvick noting these items. (3) Gumbel gave a shout-out to all the individuals and businesses for donating 79 prizes valued at roughly $3,000 for the 2022 Advent Calendar promotion. (4) Council recognized the election workers for doing a fine job at the polls. (5) Thiel noted the community Thanksgiving ecumenical service will be held on Wednesday, November 23, at First Presbyterian Church.

Nuisance Properties-Reconsideration:

* White updated council on not receiving guidance from the city attorney due to the city attorney being out of the office for medical reasons. Koppen suggested doing a reconsideration motion for the motion that was made at the 09/07/2021. Payne noted that properties could fall under two different categories being hazard properties or nuisance properties. White suggested waiting for a reconsideration motion until the December council meeting to have the guidance from the city attorney.

Strong & John Street-Right of Way Infringement:

* Koppen commented with the changes MnDOT is planning at the East Y, his concern with traffic getting backed up at this intersection when these changes are made, that council may want to think about making improvements to John Street with blacktop and possibly also putting blacktop on North Strong Street. This would give the local people another route to turn onto Main Street if they are travelling south on East County Road.

ARPA Funds:

* There was nothing to report on the ARPA funds.

EDA & WWG Report:

* Payne reported the WWG line of credit will be coming due in mid-November. In the past, the city council has guaranteed the line of credit with the city’s investment savings account. Payne reported the line of credit is written for $150,000; currently there is roughly $60,000 still owing on the line of credit. The EDA met and agreed to request to increase the line of credit from $150,000 to $200,000. Payne noted this increase would cover the amount of the bills that are coming due. He noted WWG would stand on its own and not need to use the city funds appropriated to WWG for the debt service payment. WWG would be able to make the bond payment, pay the property/casualty insurance premium, and the work comp premium all from the line of credit. Payne reported the back memory care will be reopening in mid-November. It is being planned that WWG will transfer $15,000 per month in 2023 to the line of credit. They have been transferring $10,000 per month to the line of credit in 2022. Payne also noted the roof replacement could cost over $240,000. Payne noted if WWG did not use the city appropriated funds of $90,000 in 2022 and the same $90,000 in 2023 that these funds could be set aside in savings to be applied to the roof replacement cost.
* Huntley noted she has heard good things about WWG, but she questioned when the operation will cash-flow. She questioned if the facility will ever be self-sustaining. Huntley noted she likes the WWG facility, but she wants to monitor the financial stability of the facility.
* Koppen felt the council really does not have a choice in the request from the EDA to increase the line of credit. He would like to see a five-year projection on the operations of WWG. He also suggested the possibility of a bond issuance for capital improvements for WWG. A bond would have a set dollar figure to budget for each year. Koppen also reminded council the city had advanced $175,000 to WWG in early 2022.
* Huntley noted the city council and EDA need to be united on this. If WWG does not sustain itself, funds are requested from the city. Thiel questioned how the entire financial picture of the city is handled. Huntley questioned why the line of credit needs to be increased.
* Motion by Payne to approve the line of credit at $200,000 and use the city’s investment savings account as collateral. Second by Shipman. On a roll call of votes, Koppen, Shipman, Payne, and Thiel voted aye. Huntley cast a nay vote. Motion carried 4-1.

Being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Shipman, second by Thiel at 8:36 PM.

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 Ed Koppen, Mayor

Attest:

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 Patty A. White, City Clerk-Treasurer