

Minutes

December 7, 2010

Special Meeting

Water & Budget

1) The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Mayor Charles Neff.

a) Council Members present were Charles Neff/Mayor, Bob Dablow, Burl Ingebretsen, Mark Hanson, and Shelley Poehls.

b) Others present were Wendy Otte/Clerk, Norm Nyland, Rich Hayes, Lois & Vern Arntson, Carmen Hutchins, Nick & Amanda Dablow, Mark Hansen (Hawkins), Dan Hanson (Ulteig), Jessica Wagner (Ulteig), and Jarrod Christen(Ulteig).

2) The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

We took a moment to remember and thank all who serve our country.

Council, city employees, and attendees were introduced.

3) Water – Rich was asked to explain issues we are having with the water. We have been having high amounts of iron in the water, Rich has been shocking it with chlorine which discolors the water. The clear well is crystal clear so the problem occurs after it leaves the clear well. On Monday the Rich will open the filter tanks and check those. On Friday night & Saturday we had a problem which the water tower and clear well ran dry, due to the booster pump shutting down. Rich has been working with Mark (Hawkins) who noticed the pumps are too large, which has been causing the booster pump to shut down. We will be replacing the current pumps with roller pumps.

Water Discussion - Vern Arntson said the tower running dry would have been a major issue for the Fire Department. Lois Arntson said their water has smelled like bleach at times or you couldn't see through it. Lois also asked if they could be informed when hydrants will be flushed as it causes problems with their water softener if they don't shut it down. Carmen Hutchins was concerned if the water is safe to drink, she was told it is. She also mentioned the discoloration being so bad she cannot see her children's legs in the bathtub. She said it has been really bad the last few months, it can be clear in the morning then brown at night. She also said it is hard on her appliances, but her main concern is a long term fix. Nick & Amanda Dablow brought in photos of the water sitting in their sink which was very orange. They have been having problems with the discolored water for the entire four years they have lived in their home, but it has gotten much worse recently. They said the water has been ruining fixtures in their home. They sometimes have to waste 2 or 3 washer loads before they are able to do laundry. Nick also said that when hydrants are flushed their water is terrible for hours after. Nick was asked if he was willing to let his water run a small amount when they are home and he will only be charged the base rate for water until there can be a solution.

Jarrod (Ulteig) said we need a starting point, fixing the chlorine feed pumps, proper chemicals, Rich needs to be sampling the water daily, and we may have to flush hydrants again. Charley stated one of the problems were having is that was an experimental plant

that cost us nearly nothing, the company that made it is no longer producing them we are kind of on our own now. We can't afford a full time treatment plant officer, Rich has another full time job he can't babysit at the treatment plant, we are under some disadvantages that a larger city wouldn't have. We are doing the best we can and we will continue to work on it. There was talk of phosphates, but Mark (Hawkins) said it's best to wait until spring to start on that after the issues we have now are cleared up. Charley asked why we flush if it doesn't seem to clear up water in the homes. Jessica (Ulteig) said it should that's why this problem is confusing. Charley asked if there was a solution for being on a cul-de-sac. Dan (Ulteig) said it depends on which way the water is drawn, outside of flushing or use there is no way to clear out a certain area. Jarrod (Ulteig) said the system we have was sold as an automated system sometimes you need to manually run it to make sure it's working properly. No doubt we can get there in the next few weeks. Mark (Hawkins) said, in Rich's defense the system ran great the first year, but with the incorrect pumps there will be problems. We want to fix it and not go home until it's good. Council would like a time-line of when we can expect the issues to be cleared up. An exact time line isn't possible, because once things get going there could be other issues to deal with. Mark (Hawkins) will look into getting the new pumps in, we will have to make sure the pumps stay primed and do a lot of testing. Rich will be doing tests at 3 homes 2 to 3 times a week to see if the water stays consistent in those homes. Rich was asked to bring in test results to the next council meeting on December 21st.

Council will keep the citizens informed as best they can, there was talk of setting up a list-serv to notify residents by e-mail. If anyone feels they are using excess water due to discoloring let us know and we can look into some type of credit. Thank you all for coming.

End of the water portion of the meeting.

4) 2011 Budget

We need to adopt a resolution for our tax levy. We are at about a 15% increase for taxes this year, but the only alternative to lower would be to cut services or personnel. Last year we ended up borrowing from reserves as we did not levy enough.

A MOTION was made by Mark Hanson to adopt a resolution of a 15% increase for the tax levy. It was 2nd by Bob Dablow and the motion carried.

We also need to make a motion to approve the 2011 General budget that we went over at the last budget meeting.

A MOTION was made by Bob Dablow to approve the 2011 General Budget. It was 2nd by Burl Ingebretsen and the motion carried.

Charley stated that he really appreciates how we have been able to work through the budget each year a lot of hard decisions had to be made and nothing has gotten ugly.

Bob added that on Saturday when we had the well run dry the Fire Chief was upset that he wasn't informed. Charley brought up looking into some type of pager system to better notify Rich and others if there is an issue at the treatment plant.

5) Adjournment

A **MOTION** was made by Bob Dablow to adjourn. It was 2nd by Shelley Poehls and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Wendy Otte, City Clerk

Approved 12-21-10