



CITY OF NEWPORT
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CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES October 6, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Elliott called the City Council Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. on October 6, 2022.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Present (4): Mayor Laurie Elliott, Council Member Kevin Chapdelaine, Council Member Tom Ingemann, and Council Member Marvin Taylor.

Not Present (1): Council Member Rozlyn Johnson.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Member Chapdelaine motioned to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Member Ingemann. Approved 4-0.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bill Sumner, residing at 737 21st Street, addressed the Council. Mr. Sumner stated there is a Red Cross Blood drive at Newport Lutheran Church on October 14th. Mr. Sumner stated he attended the annual HPC meeting in Duluth which was paid for with scholarship money. He was honored to participate on behalf of the city. On October 12th at 6:30 p.m. there will be a history talk, "History Preserved on Tombstone: Newport's Historic Cemeteries" at the Newport Library. This is an opportunity to learn more about our city. Mr. Sumner stated the HPC is interested in what they can do to increase public awareness for the historic sites in Newport.

6. ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes- September 1, 2022 Council Workshop
- B. Minutes- September 15, 2022 Regular Council
- C. Minutes- September 20, 2022 Special Council
- D. Minutes- Planning Commission July 7, 2022
- E. Minutes- HPC June 8, 2022
- F. Resolution No 2022-38- Gambling Application
- G. Resolution No 2022-40- Fee Schedule Update
- H. Tolling Agreement
- I. List of Bills- \$238,532.76

Member Ingemann motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 4-0.

7. WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE REPORT

Washington County Sheriff Deputy Sergeant Bill Harrell had nothing formal to report.

8. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Fire Chief Steve Wiley stated September was a slower month, but they had a few motor vehicle accidents and two structure fires. Chief Wiley discussed the 1650 10th Avenue structure fire at the last Council meeting. The second structure fire was a triple house fire in Woodbury that Newport provided mutual aid for. Two of the houses were under construction and one house was occupied.

Mayor Elliott inquired if the residents living at 1650 10th Avenue were able to move back in after the structure fire. Chief Wiley stated the building inspector cleared the building except for three units. These three units include the actual fire unit and the units directly above and below that unit.

Chief Wiley stated next week is fire prevention week and the theme is "Fire won't wait, plan your escape." The Fire Department will be having an open house on Friday, October 14th from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the new building. There will be fire extinguisher training for the adults and the kids can spray the fire hose and try on fire gear. The Fire Department will also be at Newport Elementary during the day.

9. ENGINEER'S REPORT

A. Ordinance No 2022-08- Illicit Discharge

Superintendent of Public Works Matt Yokiell stated City Engineer Jon Herdegen was not able to attend the meeting, but wanted to bring Ordinance No. 2022-08 - Illicit Discharge, to Council. This is a requirement for the MS4 Permit and the updated draft incorporates the MPCA model ordinance language. Council discussed and made updates to the definitions.

Member Chapdelaine motioned to adopt Ordinance No. 2022-08 with the definitional changes that staff already inserted. Seconded by Member Taylor. Approved 4-0.

10. SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

A. Library Window Restoration

Superintendent Yokiell stated they started minor repairs to the 160-year-old library windows, the decorative arch above the main entry doors, and the back exit. Once these repairs were started, they found larger issues and the need for major restoration. Superintendent Yokiell received a quote for \$17,085 for the repairs. He spoke with Bob Vogel with the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) who is in favor of moving forward with the restoration project. This includes pulling out and going through the existing windows and trying to retain the historic value of the library. Mayor Elliott stated the pictures in the packet helped clarify the issues and it makes sense to move forward with these repairs. Superintendent Yokiell stated the contractor's grandfather attended school in this building and is working at a reduced rate because he deeply appreciates this building.

Member Ingemann motioned to approve the continuation of the window restoration project at the historic library. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 4-0.

Superintendent Yokiell stated the new Pioneer Park playground has been open for about a week and there have been lots of kids playing on it. Public Works will complete surface restoration for the grass areas but first needs to finish with hydrant flushing. Mayor Elliott stated she is excited for the community and happy to hear that people are enjoying the new playground.

Superintendent Yokiell stated the Compost Site will be open an additional day on Saturday, November 19th for residents to drop off brush and leaves. Mayor Elliott stated this request came from a resident who explained that the leaves are dropping a little later this year. Superintendent Yokiell thanked Carol for working at our Compost Site.

11. ADMINISTRATION REPORT

A. Resolution No 2022-39- FEMA Signature Authorization

Assistant to the City Administrator Travis Brierley stated Resolution No. 2022-39 is to update the signature for FEMA Grants. This would authorize Assistant Brierley to be the Interim City Administrator and sign on behalf of the city for FEMA Grants as the previous City Administrator retired.

Member Ingemann motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2022-39 – FEMA Signature Authorization. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 4-0.

B. Library Advisory Committee Meeting Location

Assistant Brierley stated the Library Advisory Committee would like to move their meetings back to the library as their meetings are no longer televised.

Member Chapdelaine motioned to approve moving the Library Advisory Committee meeting location to the library. Seconded by Member Ingemann. Approved 4-0.

Mayor Elliott inquired if Assistant Brierley could talk briefly about early voting and where residents can go. Assistant Brierley stated early voting and absentee voting is all handled through Washington County. The closest location for Newport Residents is the Cottage Grove Service Center. The general election will be held on November 8th. The city is always in need of additional election judges, and they can contact Assistant Brierley if interested.

12. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

A. City Administrator Hiring and Contract

Mayor Elliott stated there is an employment contract before Council for Joseph Hatch, who was offered the City Administrator position. Mayor Elliott stated Member Ingemann and Mayor Elliott were appointed to a subcommittee to negotiate the contract with Mr. Hatch. The contract has been reviewed by the City Attorney as well as Mr. Hatch. The high points of this agreement include a start date of November 14th. It includes performance reviews at 6 months, 18 months, and 30 months. The starting salary would be \$104,323. This agreement includes personal paid days off (PPO), rather than vacation and sick leave. The city would put 80 hours into Mr. Hatch's PPO bank when he starts employment and then earnings of 160 hours per year for year one. Newport does not have a short-term disability program, so one was written into this contract. Mr. Hatch will get the standard holidays that the administration department receives.

Assistant Brierley stated staff is looking to hold the Open House for the new building on November 16th from 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. This would allow Mr. Hatch to be part of the open house and meet our residents.

Member Ingemann motioned to approve the employment agreement with Joseph Hatch. Seconded by Mayor Elliott. Approved 4-0.

Mr. Hatch thanked the Council for the opportunity to collaborate with them and the community. He is excited to work with Assistant Brierley and the rest of the staff. He is passionate about public service and thankful for this opportunity.

Assistant Brierley stated Member Johnson was unable to attend the meeting, so she emailed her Council report. The email stated there are two new volunteers (Sue and Leslie) at the library. They have three additional volunteers going through the background check process. On Monday's from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. there is a Morning Rap Session. On Tuesday, October 18th they have Paws to Read where kids can read with Charlie, the friendly dog. Every Wednesday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. there is a craft group. Every Saturday at 1:00 p.m. is story time. At this time, the library has changed peer tutoring from a set schedule to appointment only. Residents who would like extra help with schoolwork are encouraged to contact the library and can setup a time. On Thursday, October 27th from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. there is free Pumpkin Painting. This event is first come first server however residents that call ahead can reserve a pumpkin. The library will be handing out treats on Halloween from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The library calendar is posted on the city's website.

Mayor Elliott stated that Buckthorn Removal Day is coming up on October 29th from 9:00 a.m. to noon. This is held at Bailey School Forest which is at 1751 Wild Ridge Trail. There is a waiver that needs to be signed to volunteer. Mayor Elliott congratulated the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) on their 30-year anniversary and HPC Members Jo Bailey and Beverly Bartl who have served all 30 years. Mayor Elliott toured the parks with Superintendent Yokiell as the Parks Board will be talking about next priorities in relation to playground equipment and other activities. Mayor Elliott thought Pioneer Park was exciting. It was the first project following the community survey where 90% of our residents' supported upgrades to our playground equipment. Mayor Elliott met with staff to talk about our CIP. Staff is working on prioritizing projects and getting them into the correct years. This item will come to Council at the first workshop in November so they can make changes or adjustments.

Member Taylor reminded residents that the school districts facility planning process will be rebooting after the failed referendum on August 9th. Part of this process will be community listening sessions starting October 17th – November 3rd. If you go to South Washington Counties facility planning page on their website, you can find the eight different sessions you can attend. They are looking for general feedback that will help guide the process when it picks up steam again in early 2023. Please get involved early as it is one way to have an impact on this process.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Member Chapdelaine motioned to adjourn the City Council Meeting. Seconded by Member Ingemann. Approved 4-0.

The City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. on October 6, 2022.

Respectfully submitted:
Jill Thiesfeld,
Administrative Assistant II

Signed: _____
Laurie Elliott, Mayor