



CITY OF NEWPORT
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CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
June 15, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Elliott called the City Council meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. on June 15, 2023.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Present (5): Mayor Laurie Elliott, Council Member Kevin Chapdelaine, Council Member Tom Ingemann, Council Member Marvin Taylor, and Council Member Bill Sumner.

Not Present (0): None.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Member Sumner motioned to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 5-0.

5. 2022 AUDIT PRESENTATION- Jim Eichten MMKR

Jim Eichten, CPA for MMKR, presented to Council on Newport's annual audit for 2022. There were two findings as part of the audit. The first being segregation of duties for staff which is explained by the small number of administrative staff employed by the city. The second finding related to late release of escrow during the City Hall and Public Safety Building project. Mr. Eichten explained to the Council the law was recent and it was the responsibility of the project manager to request the release of funds. Council was also informed that staff was made aware of the release of escrow procedures during the audit and adjustments to staff operations were made to account for future projects.

Mr. Eichten informed the Council that the financial position of the City is strong. There was a loss on some investments due to the downturn in the market. However, the loss is recoverable and will not affect the operating budget of the city.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

7. ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Tolling Agreement Extension**
- B. Resolution 2023-30- Pioneer Day Donations**
- C. Annual Appointment Update**
- D. List of Bills- \$119,085.79**
- E. Financial Statement- May 2023**

Member Sumner motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Member Ingemann. Approved 5-0.

8. WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE REPORT

Washington County Sheriff's Deputy Sergeant Bill Harrell thanked the City and Council for the use of the Cedar Lane home. The investigations unit was able to use this home for training on June 15th. Sergeant Harrell discussed the upcoming 4th of July holiday and reminded residents to give a description of the location if are reporting illegal fireworks.

9. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

City Administrator Joe Hatch gave an update as Fire Chief Steve Wiley was absent. Administrator Hatch stated the Fire Department is planning to burn the 1651 Cedar Lane home on August 19th for a training exercise.

10. ENGINEER'S REPORT

City Engineer Jon Herdegen provided an update on the Sanitary Sewer Lateral Lining project. The lateral televising work is complete, and staff is distributing televising videos to property owners interested in additional lining work. Engineer Herdegen explained that some of the lateral connections are constructed such that the initial 10-foot liner cannot be installed without a cleanout (blindly). Staff is working with the contractor to conduct additional cleaning to determine which service laterals will need a cleanout to install the initial liner and work with the Public Facilities Authority to determine if a portion of the cost of the cleanout can be funded through the State grant.

Engineer Herdegen stated that two properties were assessed for improvements back in 2014 when the city reconstructed 15th Street from 7th Avenue down to Cedar. There was one segment of sanitary sewer that was lined. The sewer was not replaced, but the lateral lines connected to the sewer underneath the road were replaced since curb and gutter went in. According to the city's assessment policy, the city cannot assess a property twice for the same improvement within 10 years. Engineering reviewed the videos of these two properties and found there is a small leak. Engineer Herdegen inquired if the city would pay the cost to line these two properties since they cannot be assessed. The additional cost will be approximately \$3,500. Council discussed and agreed Engineer Herdegen will bring a formal document to a future meeting and will adjust the assessment role to make sure those two properties are not included.

11. SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

A. Newport / Saint Paul Park Vacuum Truck Agreement

Administrator Hatch brought the Vacuum Truck Agreement to Council on behalf of Matt Yokiell, Superintendent of Public Works. The agreement is between St. Paul Park and Newport and outlines ownership and the purchase responsibilities for this truck. The agreement includes insurance cost, storage, access to the vehicle, cost sharing, and maintenance responsibilities. The City Attorney has reviewed this agreement and St. Paul Park has already approved it. Administrator Hatch is requesting a motion by Council to approve this agreement.

Member Ingemann motioned to approve the Newport / St. Paul Park Vacuum Truck Agreement. Seconded by Member Chapdelaine. Approved 5-0.

12. ADMINISTRATION REPORT

A. Solar Contract Amendment

Assistant to the City Administrator Travis Brierley stated the city was approached by iDeal Energies to install a larger solar array. This array will cost the city approximately \$22,000 plus interest over 20 years. The advantage is the savings is greater than our cost. Mayor Elliott stated Public Works clears off their solar array during the winter and inquired if the City Hall solar array will be cleared. Assistant Brierley stated that Public Works will if time allows. Member Sumner inquired why this larger array was not originally planned. Assistant Brierley stated space concerns. Once they investigated, it was determined there was additional space that allowed for a larger system. Mayor Elliott inquired where the additional funds will come from. Administrator Hatch stated we do not write a check for this additional amount. It will be a smaller amount that we get reimbursed for from the energy capture. The city will see a large benefit that we will be able to recoup.

Member Chapdelaine motioned to approve the Solar Contract Amendment. Seconded by Member Ingemann. Approved 5-0.

B. July City Council Meeting

Administrator Hatch stated the Council typically cancels the first meeting in July for the holiday.

Member Ingemann motioned to cancel the July 6th City Council Meeting. Seconded by Member Sumner. Approved 5-0.

Administrator Hatch stated a new outdoor weather siren will be added at the corner of 8th Avenue and Ford Road to replace the current siren on the old Fire Hall. Mailers went to everyone in the community letting them know about his upcoming change.

Assistant Brierley stated staff has been working on continual improvements with our website to keep residents better informed. Assistant Brierley stated staff set up a webpage for the Area Study as well as a webpage for the Later Lining Improvement Project. Residents and business owners are encouraged to participate in surveys and social pinpoint to give thoughts and suggestions for the area study focusing on the commercial corridors along Hastings and 7th Avenue. Member Sumner inquired if social pinpoint is anonymous. Assistant Brierley said online it will be anonymous, but on the back end you enter your information so staff and consultants can reach out if necessary. Mayor Elliott inquired how long the survey and social pinpoint will be available. Assistant Brierley stated approximately four weeks.

13. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Elliott stated she had a meeting with a Met Council Representative and County Commissioner Karla Bigham to discuss potential funding for I/I problems and potential funding for trail expansions. Mayor Elliott thanked our donors for our Pioneer Day event. The city is seeking additional volunteers for Pioneer Day and residents should call City Hall to get more information on ways they can help.

Member Chapdelaine stated the next watershed meeting is on street sweeping and the significant role it has on keeping debris out of the river.

Member Sumner stated he is serving on the Pigs Eye Lake Commission that will rehabilitate an old dumpsite across from Battle Creek Park. Member Sumner attended the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) meeting the public lecture and invited residents to stop by the HPC tent at Pioneer Day. Member Sumner attended a community advisory panel that discussed support they have given to the Newport Fire Department for air tanks.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Member Chapdelaine motioned to adjourn the City Council meeting. Seconded by Member Sumner. Approved 5-0.

The City Council meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m. on June 15, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted:
Jill Thiesfeld,
Administrative Assistant II

Signed: *Laurie D. Elliott*
Laurie Elliott, Mayor