

WILLMAR CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES BUILDING
WILLMAR, MINNESOTA

December 5, 2001
7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Willmar City Council was called to order by the Honorable Mayor Pro Tempore Douglas Reese. Members present on a roll call were Mayor Pro Tempore Reese, Council Members Ron Christianson, Bruce DeBlieck, Denis Anderson, Nancy Houlahan, Rick Fagerlie, Jim Dokken, and David Chapin; Present 8, Absent 1 – Mayor Lester Heitke was excused from the meeting.

Also present were City Administrator Michael Schmit, City Attorney Richard Ronning, Police Chief Jim Kulset, Fire Chief Marv Calvin, Public Works Director Mel Odens, Finance Director Steven Okins, Planning and Development Services Director Bruce Peterson, Community Education and Recreation Director Steve Brisendine, and City Clerk Kevin Halliday.

Proposed additions to the agenda included consideration of a request to conduct a WSA Snocross snowmobile race.

The Municipal Utilities Commission Minutes of November 26, 2001, were removed from the Consent Agenda.

Council Member Fagerlie offered a motion adopting the Consent Agenda which included the following: City Council Minutes of November 21, Kandiyohi Area Transit Minutes of October 30, and Planning Commission Minutes of November 28, 2001. Council Member DeBlieck seconded the motion, which carried.

The Council discussed Municipal Utilities Commission Resolution No. 63 approving a \$100,000 capital call request for En-Tel Communications and their concerns of funding activities to compete against private companies. Several Council Members voiced reservations, yet acknowledging that it is funding local jobs and local expenditures. Following a lengthy discussion, Council Member Anderson moved to approve the MUC Minutes of November 26, 2001, noting that this approval included only the \$100,000 current contribution and it does not include the proposal to the Allied Power Board of Governors for the additional capital call of approximately \$700,000 per member during the year 2002. Council Member Christianson seconded the motion, which carried.

At 7:17 p.m. Mayor Pro Tempore Reese opened the Truth-in-Taxation hearing on the proposed 2002 Budget. City Administrator Schmit presented details of the \$16,117,458 total expenditure budget which included the new position of Planner in the Planning and Development Services Department and an Assistant Engineer in the Engineering Department. The proposed tax levy of \$1,917,749 was a reduction of 25 percent from the prior year.

Ken Warner, President of the Willmar Chamber of Commerce, commended the City Council for the proposed reduction in the levy and for the foresight of adding the Planner position. Mr. Warner acknowledged the importance of the \$20,000 proposal for a campground and asked if the proposal would not be site specific at this time. Mr. Warner was offering the services of the Convention and Visitors Bureau to conduct research as to the best location for campers and the

amenities desired by campers.

Wendell Swanson, representing the Glacial Trail Travel Club, presented a petition from camper members desiring to see the campground at Robbins Island. Mr. Swanson stated that Robbins Island offered trees, the lakes, a short walk to town, and a reasonable walk to the restaurant on the golf course, all items of interest to campers. Patrick Curry, also with the Glacial Trail Travel Club, requested consideration of the campground at Robbins Island.

Upon hearing all those who wished to be heard, Mayor Pro Tempore Reese closed the hearing at 7:55 p.m. and acknowledged that the Council will address the issues in greater detail in the Finance Committee Report.

Mayor Pro Tempore Reese acknowledged that no one had signed up to address the City Council during its scheduled Open Forum.

The Public Works/Safety Committee Report of November 26, 2001, was presented to the Council by Mayor Pro Tempore Reese. There was one item for Council consideration.

Item No. 1 Police Chief Kulset announced to the Committee that Willmar had been selected to receive a \$2,000 mini-grant as an award for its successful participation in the 2001 Safe and Sober Challenge Program. The \$2,000 mini-grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, is proposed to be used for the purchase of either stop sticks or a doppler hand-held radar unit.

The Committee was recommending to the Council adoption of a resolution accepting the mini-grant. Resolution No. 1 was introduced by Mayor Pro Tempore Reese, seconded by Council Member Christianson, read by Mayor Heitke, and approved on a roll call vote of Ayes 8, Noes 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 1

AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARD

WHEREAS, the Willmar Police Department desires to protect the health of its citizens by improving traffic safety and participating in the Safe & Sober Challenge; and

WHEREAS, under the provision of the Highway Safety Act (P.L. 89-563), the Minnesota Department of Public Safety has federal funding to promote traffic safety; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety had judged the Willmar Police Department's efforts to decrease impaired driving and increase seat belt use to be exceptional, and wants to reward those efforts by providing additional funding for the department;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Willmar Police Department enter into an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety for the period from December 1, 2001, to June 30, 2002.

The Chief of Police of the City of Willmar is hereby authorized to execute such agreements as are necessary to implement the project on behalf of the Willmar Police Department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chief of Police of the City of Willmar is hereby authorized to be the fiscal agent and administer the grant on behalf of the Willmar Police Department.

Dated this 5th day of December, 2001.

/s/ Douglas Reese
MAYOR PRO TEMPORE

/s/ Kevin Halliday
Attest: CITY CLERK

The Public Works/Safety Committee Report of November 26, 2001, was approved as presented and ordered placed on file in the City Clerk's Office upon motion by Mayor Pro Tempore Reese, seconded by Council Member Christianson, and carried.

The Finance Committee Report of November 26, 2001, was presented to the Mayor and Council by Council Member Anderson.

HRA Executive Director Dorothy Gaffaney was present to review with the Committee the agency's proposed July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002, Fiscal Year Budget. The HRA was requesting a \$85,738 levy to support its \$522,318.44 General Administration Expenditures. Following a brief discussion, the Committee was recommending to the Council approval of the request as presented.

CEO Lawrence Massa and CFO Leroy Meyering appeared before the Committee to present information regarding the 2002 Rice Memorial Hospital General Operating Budget. Mr. Massa reviewed the highlights of the proposed \$64,000,000 Budget, noting a \$2.25 million (3.57 percent) net income relatively flat average daily census projections, and average fee increases of 5 percent. Following a discussion of budget and related Hospital issues, the Committee accepted the Rice Hospital report as information only.

Mike Nitchals, General Manager of the Willmar Municipal Utilities, was present to review with the Committee the Utility's proposed 2002 Capital Budget. Mr. Nitchals reviewed in detail proposed 2002 capital expenditures and discussed various studies under way including electric division service and rates, seasonal and off-peak considerations, and short- and long-term power supply issues. Mr. Nitchals also noted the Utilities was reviewing its status as an independent Utility and concluded his remarks by noting the need for a small 2002 revenue bond to complete a number of electric and water transmission projects. Following discussion, the Committee received the report for information only.

Mayor Heitke provided to the Committee a general overview of the City's 2002 Budget. In his comments the Mayor talked about recent property tax reform efforts and the impact of new legislation on local funding; his decision to withdraw the proposed Council Chambers from consideration; related excess sales tax revenue issues; the Community Vision 2020 Project and its four major focus areas of Economic Development, Diversity and Tolerance, Recreation and Culture, and Life-long Learning; proposed positions in Planning, Engineering and Police; and concluded his remarks by highlighting major capital projects and reviewing the impact of the Budget on local property taxes.

City Administrator Schmit walked through a detailed summary of the Mayor's Proposed Budget dividing the presentation and discussion into operating and non-operating issues. The following items were discussed in detail and recommended to the Council for approval:

1. Excess Sales Tax Revenues - leave any excess sales tax revenues in the Library

Debt Service Fund until such time as the final amount is known.

2. Planning Position - funds for the Planning position be left in the Budget, but authorization to hire be delayed pending discussions with the County regarding the feasibility of consolidating Economic Development, Planning and Zoning functions.
3. Fire Department Pumper Unit - appropriations reduced from \$370,000 to \$350,000 pursuant to recent cost refinements.
4. Library Operational Funding – maintain funding at \$228,800 plus City’s share of building maintenance.
5. Intergovernmental Transfer – reduce amount by \$16,000 to reflect recent agreement with MUC.
6. Council Chambers – remove from consideration as per Mayor’s request.
7. Assistant City Engineer – include funding as proposed.
8. Police Department Clerical Position – include funding to increase position from one-half time to full time.
9. Transit – include \$6,000 for City’s share of new bus purchase.
10. City Hall – reduce capital outlay by \$2,000.
11. Levy – it was the consensus of the Committee to recommend the 2002 levy be set at \$1,917,749.

Following discussion, Council Member Anderson offered a motion to set the City levy at \$1,917,749, set the Housing and Redevelopment Authority levy at \$85,738, and to have the proposed budget of \$16,117,458 be approved at the next Council meeting to be held on December 19, 2001. Council Member Fagerlie seconded the motion.

Council Member Christianson inquired as to the history of the Assistant Engineer position as proposed in the budget and what happened to all the prior assistant engineers. Staff provided a general review of the position’s history and noted the potential reduction in outside professional services with in-house staff developing smaller projects.

Council Member Reese added an amendment to the motion directing the \$20,000 campground allocation be moved from Civic Center to Park Development. Council Member Houlahan seconded the motion, which carried. The original motion, as amended, then carried.

Mayor Pro Tempore Reese noted that the Kandiyohi County Board was supportive of establishing a task force to study the feasibility of consolidating the Economic Development and Planning and Zoning functions. The County Board was suggesting the task force consist of the Mayor, two Council Members, County Board Chair and two County Commissioners. Mayor Pro Tempore Reese suggested that he serve on the task force along with the Mayor and Finance Committee Chair Anderson, and he offered the same as a motion. Council Member Anderson seconded the motion, which was defeated. The makeup of the task force will be referred to the Mayor for selection.

The Finance Committee Report of November 26, 2001, was approved as presented and ordered placed on file in the City Clerk’s Office upon motion by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Fagerlie, and carried.

The Community Development Committee Report of November 29, 2001, was presented to the Mayor and Council by Council Member DeBlieck. There were five items for Council consideration.

Item No. 1 Mike Nitchals, Dave George, and Brad Schmidt appeared before the Committee to discuss a capital call request from En-Tel Communications. The amount of the capital call was

\$200,000. As a partner in Allied Power, Willmar Municipal Utilities is responsible for \$100,000 of the \$200,000 capital call. Another capital call was anticipated for the year 2002, and should facilitate completion of their local system. The \$100,000 request has been approved by the Allied Power Board of Governors. It was noted that this matter would come before the City Council as part of the Municipal Utilities Commission minutes, which will be considered at the December 5, 2001, Council meeting. This matter was for information only.

Item No. 2 The Committee received an update from staff on possible participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. Contact with the State FEMA Office has been difficult, so information is being found on the Internet. Additional information will be provided at a future meeting, and this matter was for information only.

Item No. 3 The Committee was informed that a meeting would be held on December 3, 2001, at the City Office Building to discuss the Niehaus Housing Project. The project is proposed for North Lakeland Drive, south of Regency East Mobile Home Park. Mr. Niehaus is proposing to construct affordable housing. City participation may be requested along with assistance from the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund. Additional information will be provided at a future meeting, and this matter was for information only.

Item No. 4 The Committee reviewed a professional services proposal and budget from Bolton and Menk, Incorporated to provide professional services to design the sanitary sewer lift station for the Mills Fleet Farm site and to upgrade the lift station at the Regional Treatment Center. The proposal includes assistance through the bidding phase and the start up phase. It was noted that funds have been budgeted for the Regional Treatment Center lift station design, but not for the Mills Fleet Farm lift station design.

The Committee was recommending to the Council to adopt a resolution approving the Professional Services proposal, authorizing the Mayor and Administrator to execute the Professional Services Agreement, and to refer the financing of the Mills Fleet Farm portion to the Finance Committee. Resolution No. 2 was introduced by Council Member DeBlieck, seconded by Council Member Christianson, read by Mayor Heitke, and approved on a roll call vote of Ayes 8, Noes 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

Whereas the City of Willmar desires to retain a consultant to provide professional engineering services for design and construction of lift stations for Mills Fleet Farm and the Regional Hospital for the City of Willmar; and

Whereas a proposal has been made by, and an agreement prepared to retain, the firm of Bolton and Menk, Inc. of Willmar, Minnesota in a not to exceed amount of \$19,500.00 for said services;

Now therefore be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Willmar that said agreement be approved and that the City Administrator be authorized to execute the same.

Dated this 5th day of December, 2001.

/s/ Douglas Reese
MAYOR PRO TEMPORE

/s/ Kevin Halliday
Attest: CITY CLERK

Item No. 5 Council Member Christianson requested that the Planning Commission expedite the review of home occupation regulations. Due to changes in the economy and an increase in home occupations, Council Member Christianson thought it was time for the City to update its home occupation regulations, to make them more relevant to current economic conditions. This matter was for information only.

The Community Development Committee Report of November 29, 2001, was approved as presented and ordered placed on file in the City Clerk's Office upon motion by Council Member DeBleck, seconded by Council Member Fagerlie, and carried.

The Council considered a plat for Eastgate Second Addition, a two-lot re-plat of a portion of Eastgate Addition. Planning and Development Services Director Peterson noted it is being platted to eliminate confusion resulting from several lot splits, property sales and deeds issued, and the new plat will enable the City Assessor to recognize the lot splits. The Planning Commission has approved the plat. Council Member Christianson moved to approve the plat for Eastgate Second Addition with Council Member Fagerlie seconding the motion, which carried.

Planning and Development Director Peterson presented to the Council for consideration a request to reapportion special assessments from KLC of Willmar, Inc. for property in Eagles Landing Phase II. The reapportionment reflects a recent re-plat of three lots into four. Following discussion, Resolution No. 3 was introduced by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member DeBleck, read by Mayor Pro Tempore Reese, and approved on a roll call vote of Ayes 8, Noes 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 1

WHEREAS, a request for reapportionment of special assessments has been filed with the City of Willmar, said request being signed by all of the parties having an interest in the following-described property:

Lots 1-3, Block 4, Eagles Landing Phase II

Parcel Nos. 95-148-1410 through 95-148-1430

to-wit: KLC of Willmar, Inc.

WHEREAS, the above have waived notice of hearing and hearing on said reapportionment; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Willmar is in agreement with the suggested reapportionment set out in the request submitted by the above.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Willmar, pursuant to the request of the above that the special assessments on the above-described property be and they hereby are reapportioned as provided in the request of the above named, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the reapportionment be recorded in the records of the City of Willmar and the Kandiyohi County Auditor effective for taxes and assessments due and payable on tax statements issued in the year 2002 and thereafter.

