

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

June 3, 2013
7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Willmar City Council was called to order by the Honorable Mayor Frank Yanish. Members present on a roll call were Mayor Yanish, Council Members Denis Anderson, Ron Christianson, Steve Ahmann, Audrey Nelsen, Tim Johnson, Jim Dokken, Rick Fagerlie and Bruce DeBlieck; Present 9, Absent 0.

Also present were City Administrator Charlene Stevens, Police Chief David Wyffels, Finance Director Steve Okins, Community Education and Recreation Director Steve Brisendine, Planning and Development Services Director Bruce Peterson, Fire Chief Gary Hendrickson, City Attorney Robert Scott, and City Clerk Kevin Halliday.

Additions to the Agenda included a Waste Water Utility Rates upcoming hearing and Mayor's position paper on possible organizational changes.

Council Member Anderson offered a motion adopting the Consent Agenda which included the following: City Council Minutes of May 20, Rice Hospital Board Minutes of May 15, Municipal Utilities Commission Minutes of May 28, and Accounts Payable Report through May 30, 2013. Council Member Ahmann seconded the motion, which carried.

At 7:02 p.m. Mayor Yanish opened a hearing on an Ordinance Amending No. 1060 Known as the Willmar Zoning Ordinance by Amending Section 3 Relating to Garage Door Height. Planning and Development Services Director Peterson presented details of the proposed Ordinance which will increase garage door height maximums from 10 to 12 feet. This amendment allows for RV's and other recreational vehicles to be stored within garages, but limits the storage of commercial sized vehicles. There being no one present to speak for or against the proposed Ordinance, Mayor Yanish closed the hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Council Member Ahmann offered a motion to adopt, assign a number, and order final publication of the Ordinance Amending No. 1060 Known as the Willmar Zoning Ordinance by Amending Section 3 Relating to Garage Door Height. Council Member Christianson seconded the motion, which carried on a roll call vote of Ayes 8, Noes 0.

Mayor Yanish acknowledged Debra Wodash, representing CenterPoint Energy. Ms. Wodash presented to the Council a check for \$2,500 from a CenterPoint Energy Community Grant to go towards the purchase of a Thermal Imaging Camera. Fire Chief Hendrickson explained to the Council the funds will make it possible for the Department to purchase a Thermal Imaging Camera. Resolution No. 1 was introduced by Council Member DeBlieck, seconded by Council Member Ahmann, and carried on a roll call vote of Ayes 8, Noes 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 1

WHEREAS, the Willmar Fire Department has received a donation in the amount of \$2,500 from CenterPoint Energy for the purchase of a Thermal Imaging Camera;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of Willmar, Minnesota, that the City accept the donation from CenterPoint Energy and that the City Administrator be directed to express the community's appreciation.

Dated the 3rd day of June, 2013.

/s/ Frank Yanish
MAYOR

/s/ Kevin Halliday
Attest: CITY CLERK

Mayor Yanish recognized Willmar Fests Board Member Lori Tostenson who introduced the 2013 Willmar Fests Royalty: Queen of Festivals, Marie Nilles-Melcert; International Princess, Kaitlan Bloomquist; and Aqua Princess, Sarah Rodelius; and reviewed the various events for the community celebration. Ms. Tostenson thanked the Mayor and Council for past support and allowing City departments to assist with event functions. Ms. Tostenson highlighted the work of Rudy Vigil for the WRAC8 production of the Snow Queen festival held in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The Queen and Princesses provided a history of Kaffe Fest into the 1988 Willmar Fests and provided details of the T.I.A.R.A. Project for the benefit of Safe Harbor. Mayor Yanish thanked them for their commitment as Ambassadors for the City and for their attendance at numerous parades and city celebrations.

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

The Labor Relations Committee Report for May 29, 2013, was presented to the Mayor and Council by Council Member Ahmann. There were five items for Council consideration.

Item No. 1 There were no public comments.

Item No. 2 The meeting was closed for the purpose of discussing labor negotiation strategies pursuant to Minn. Stat. §13D.03 and then reopened. This matter was for information only.

Item No. 3 City Administrator Stevens informed the Committee that a vacancy would occur in the Public Works Superintendent position due to the retirement of Ron Gilbertson in July and asked for authorization to fill the vacancy. Ms. Stevens stated that the position was critical to operations and would remain the same in any of the proposed realignment strategies.

Following discussion, the Committee was recommending the Council authorize advertisement and filling of the vacancy for Public Works Superintendent due to retirement with an internal advertisement occurring before an external advertisement. Council Member Ahmann moved to approve the recommendation of the Labor Relations Committee with Council Member Anderson seconding the motion, which carried.

Item No 4: There was no old business.

Item No. 5: Under new business, Council Member Anderson raised the idea of a Council retreat to occur in late summer or fall, ideally at an off-site location. Committee Members stated it would be important for all Council Members to participate. The Committee was recommending that the Council authorize the City Administrator to begin plans for a Council retreat to be held in fall of 2013 at an offsite location with a facilitator to be determined. Council Member Ahmann moved to approve the recommendation of the Labor Relations Committee with Council Member Anderson seconding the motion, which carried.

Chair Ahmann raised the issue of Minnesota Data Practices, adhering to the law and City policy to educate and make Council Members aware. Ms. Stevens reminded the Council that a copy of the policy had been sent electronically to them and that the purpose of the policy and the law was to protect private employee data.

Chair Ahmann raised the issue of succession planning and knowledge transfer as employees retire and stated the Willmar Municipal Utilities was implementing a program that might serve as a model for the

City.

Chair Ahmann also commented on recognition of good employee performance and how that might be best communicated. It was suggested to forward compliments and/or concerns through the City Administrator's office, which would be passed on appropriately.

These matters were for information only.

Council Member Dokken recognized City staff, Police Department and Custodian Paul Tinklenberg for outstanding service at the City Auditorium for the Memorial Day event that was moved indoors. Mr. Tinklenberg came in on his day off, stayed for the whole event and he is to be commended.

The Labor Relations Committee Report for May 29, 2013, was approved as presented and ordered placed on file in the City Clerk's Office upon motion by Council Member Ahmann, seconded by Council Member Anderson, and carried.

The Community Development Committee Report for May 30, 2013, was presented to the Mayor and Council by Council Member Fagerlie. There were five items for Council consideration.

Item No. 1 There were no public comments.

Item No. 2 Staff provided the Committee with an update on the City's historical use of tax increment financing and tax abatement tools to assist business and industry. It was noted that at one time the City had 16 tax increment districts, but as of 2012 all districts had been decertified. The Committee was informed that the City has used tax abatement to assist five businesses. One of those businesses has had their abatement retired and three of the remaining four will expire by the end of 2016. With changes to the tax increment financing legislation, tax abatement has become the tool of choice for economic development. This matter was for information only.

Item No. 3 The Committee considered a draft policy prepared by Staff for the use of tax abatement. The Council had requested that Staff draft a policy to be used to review and evaluate requests for tax abatement. The draft policy includes sections on purpose, statutory authority, eligible uses, approval criteria, evaluation criteria, project financing, and application/fees.

The Committee was recommending the Council adopt the policy as presented. Council Member Fagerlie moved to approve the recommendation of the Community Development Committee with Council Member Dokken seconding the motion, which carried.

Item No. 4 Under new business the Committee discussed the advantages of eliminating paper agendas and meeting packets. Staff informed the Committee that there will be a request in the 2014 Capital Budget for the necessary software and equipment to move to an electronic agenda system.

The Committee also requested that Staff provide an update on enforcement of residential maintenance violations. This matter was for information only.

Item No. 5 The Committee was informed that Staff is preparing information on garbage and waste disposal to be reviewed at a future meeting. This matter was for information only.

The Community Development Committee Report for May 30, 2013, was approved as presented and ordered placed on file in the City Clerk's Office upon motion by Council Member Fagerlie, seconded by Council Member DeBlicek, and carried.

Under new business Council Member Anderson reported on the upcoming hearing for the Waste Water utility rates enacted at the Work Session held earlier in the evening.

Council Member DeBlieck thanked Council Members for attending/participating in the Greater Willmar Area Vision 2040 sessions and asked them to keep their schedules open for July 23 – 25, 2013.

Council Member DeBlieck requested to be excused from the June 17, 2013, Council meeting to attend a Willmar Municipal Utilities conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

Police Chief Wyffels reported on recent flag burning incidents that had happened the previous week. Criminal damage to property and arson charges could be filed. This matter was for information only.

Mayor Yanish informed the Council that he will be mailing out his white paper at the end of the week and asked Council Members to review and comment. He will then present comments to the Organizational consultants.

Announcements for Council Committee meeting dates were as follows: Finance, June 10; and Public Works/Safety, June 11, 2013

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m. upon motion by Council Member Anderson, seconded by Council Member Ahmann, and carried.

Attest:

MAYOR

SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL