**City of LeRoy MN – Council Meeting Minutes, September 7, 2021**

A regular meeting of the LeRoy City Council was called to order by Mayor Ed Koppen on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 6:30 PM at the LeRoy Community Center with the following members present: Mayor Ed Koppen, Council Members Harold Shipman, Daisie Fox, Gerald Payne, Maintenance Employee John Jones, and City Clerk Patty White. Council Member Ashley Huntley arrived at

6:49 PM.
Also attending: Axel Gumbel, Rita Hiller, and Jason Boynton of Smith Schafer. All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2020 Audit Report:

* Jason Boynton of Smith Schafer presented the 2020 audit report. He noted the city received an unmodified “clean” opinion for 2020. He recommended to council to review the water and sewer rates; council may need to consider a rate increase. Council thanked Mr. Boynton for this report. Motion by Shipman, second by Huntley to accept the 2020 audit report. Motion carried 5-0.

Consent Agenda:

* Shipman requested that council be notified when the clerk is going to be out of the office. Shipman also questioned why they did not receive training on the Chromebooks. White noted she was instructed at the last council meeting to get the Chromebooks set up and distributed to the council members. She did provide an information sheet on the use of the Chromebooks.
* Shipman questioned about the bill for mowing at 510 N Broadway. Shipman did not remember approving this service. The maintenance employees will take care of this mowing. Payne questioned about the tree trimming/removal of the trees and shrubs around the mausoleum. Council felt this should have already been completed. Jones noted he will get this taken care of in the near future.
* Shipman and Payne questioned why Jones was listed as having helped move the bikes from the Wheels-to-Go building to Wildwood Grove when Jones did not help with this. Jones noted he did help move the bikes initially from the building to LeRoy Lumber and also helped with loading the bikes from the W-T-G building that were donated to a bike shop.
* Shipman questioned when the John Deere garden tractor was last serviced. Jones did not have that information available. Shipman also questioned when the John Deere tractor was last serviced. Jones noted the tractor gets serviced each fall.
* Payne questioned if council can move to closed session to discuss employee annual reviews prior to when the annual reviews are completed. White reminded council that if an employee is going to be spoken about in a closed session, they are to be notified about this. At that time, the employee can request the meeting to remain open.
* Fox questioned about a part-time person to fill in at the clerk’s office. Koppen noted he is not against this, but he noted council will need to review what you want this employee trained for. Funding for this position would also need to be addressed. Koppen noted he has not had any issue with the city maintenance employees or city clerk using their accrued personal time. He noted that more service requires more funding.
* Koppen noted surprise that the maintenance department does not have a computer in their office. Council felt a computer would be prudent. Koppen reported he received a request that the hanging flower baskets continue to be watered and kept up. Jones noted the LeRoy Garden Club tells the maintenance employees when to take the flower baskets down. Koppen commended Jones and two firefighters that assisted him with the flooding that took place a week ago. Koppen noted that council gets caught up in what irritates them, but they don’t always realize all that gets done to protect the city. Koppen expressed his gratitude to Jones for all his work during the flooding. Motion by Shipman to authorize the purchase of a laptop computer for the maintenance department. Second by Fox. Motion carried 5-0.
* Motion by Huntley, second by Payne to approve the items included in the consent agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

Police Report:

* There was no police report due to the absence of the assigned deputy.

Public Input Time:

* No one present had anything to bring during public input time.

Standing Committee Reports:

* Rita Hiller presented a public notice from the City of Brownsdale about an address change. Koppen reported to Mrs. Hiller that the EDA had decided to leave the address for Wildwood Grove at 410 East Main Street. Payne noted that an address change would not only affect Wildwood Grove itself but also all the residents that live at Wildwood Grove. Council was in agreement to abide with the EDA recommendation to leave the address at Wildwood Grove at 410 East Main Street. A new street sign will be installed near the driveway entrance to Wildwood Grove showing the street address. Payne reported the painting at Wildwood Grove has begun.
* Payne reported the EDA owned building at 127 West Main Street has been torn down.
* Huntley reported the ambulance board is meeting tonight; she noted there were 26 calls in August. She expressed kudos to the EMS people for covering all these calls.
* Axel Gumbel reported he had received some concerned posts on the city Facebook page about speeding on East County Road. A private citizen has installed a speed sign near North Baumbach Park. It was noted this sign has been well-received. Council gave credit to Ed Bunne for taking the initiative to install this sign. Shipman noted that Colton from Heartland Asphalt had suggested the installation of a stop sign at the intersection of Benton Street and East County Road. That would turn that intersection into a four-way stop. Council took no action on this suggestion.
* Shipman noted that Prairie Visions did not meet in August.

State Highway 56 Project:

* The city engineer has sent out second notice letters to those property owners abutting Highway 56 that had not responded to the initial letter requesting temporary easements for the project.

Parks:

* Koppen reported he had gone to South Park on a tip from someone calling City Hall for three younger people possibly rough-housing at the park. Koppen spoke to these kids; he noted they were polite and cordial.
* Koppen noted the restrooms in both parks are looking poor. He also took note about the information provided by Fox for walkways/bikeways with signage for kids to bike on. Koppen felt the local residents need to take an interest in the parks, to keep an eye on them. He did not feel the maintenance employees should have to babysit the parks.
* Payne noted many other communities have the park restrooms locked by 8:00 or so at night. Koppen and Huntley noted that damage in the parks also happens during the daytime hours.
* Huntley questioned about neighborhood watches. She would like to see people take some responsibility for the amenities in the community. She noted she likes Fox’s idea but is concerned that it could be vandalized.
* Koppen noted that he has heard both positive and negative feedback on having a park in the Olson Addition. Huntley expressed concern that if the council raises taxes for another park the townspeople would not be happy. She commended the Lions for all their work with their park idea; she would like to see some of those ideas incorporated into the existing parks.

ARPA Funds:

* White reported the city has received the first half of the ARPA funds in the amount of $49,310.73. The second half of the funds will be received next summer.
* Shipman questioned about using these funds for a second well. White suggested automatic generators for the well house and three lift stations. Council consensus to proceed with Jones & Sweeney checking with Wheeler Electric for two generators; the other two generators could be considered when the second half funds are received.

2022 Proposed Budget & Levy:

* Council reviewed the proposed budget and levy. Koppen reminded council of the large expenditures coming this fall for Wildwood Grove.
* White explained how the levy and budget were figured. She noted the levy was left at $500,000; this the same figure the levy has been for ten years. Koppen further explained his ideas with the proposed levy. Huntley suggested increasing the levy to $575,000. White reminded council they should have a good reason for increasing the levy. White also reminded council the preliminary levy cannot be increased after approval; it can be decreased prior to the final adoption in December.
* Motion by Huntley, second by Shipman to pass Resolution 2021-08, a resolution setting the preliminary levy at $575,000. On a roll call of votes, all members voted aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Regional Transportation Management Organization Funding Request:

* Council reviewed this information. Council tabled this funding request; they would like to know if other communities have funded this request.

Land Use Permits:

* Council reviewed one land use permit.
1. Lot 3, Block 20, Caswell & Lewis, 215 E Lowell, Kaleb Fitting-install chain link fence
* Motion by Huntley, second by Shipman to approve said permit. Motion carried 5-0.

Communications File:

* Council read the thank you from Andrew Lohuis for the Pangborn Scholarship he received.

Security Cameras Update:

* Sweeney had provided some information to White about possible trail cameras for the parks. White noted that one of the cameras had many negative reviews associated with it. Huntley offered to check with Leonard Soltau to see what type of camera he has at the BP. White was directed to check with On-Site Computers.

Service Award Recognition:

* Koppen recognized Ed Bunne for the speed sign he installed.
* Koppen recognized John Jones, Scott Osmundson, and Caleb Hovde for their work during the flooding that happened in August.
* Koppen recognized L-O School Board Member Deb Reburn for making her strong statements about no discrimination against students and staff for wearing masks. Koppen expressed concern with the lackadaisical stance the L-O School Board is taking with COVID.

Nuisance Properties:

* Payne noted that he and Shipman had taken pictures of four nuisance properties; Payne had drafted a letter to be sent out with the pictures.
* Motion by Payne to send out these four letters to the owners of record at 221 East Main Street, 213 Henry Street, 304 East Main Street, and 124 East Main Street, with each council member signing each letter. Second by Fox. Motion carried 5-0.
* White was directed to send a mowing letter to Mudd Brothers and a chicken letter to Roger Bacon.

North Speed Limit Sign:

* The sign has been sent in.

Chromebooks:

* The Chromebooks have been distributed to the council members.

Being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Shipman, second by Huntley at 8:46 PM.

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 Ed Koppen, Mayor

Attest:

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 Patty A. White, City Clerk-Treasurer