**City of LeRoy MN – Council Meeting Minutes, January 9, 2023**

A regular meeting of the LeRoy City Council was called to order by Mayor Ed Koppen on Monday, January 9, 2023, at 6:30 PM at the LeRoy Community Center with the following members present: Mayor Ed Koppen, Council Members Harold Shipman, Gerald Payne, Ashley Huntley, Brian Thiel Maintenance Employee Nick Sweeney, and City Clerk Patty White.
Also attending: Axel Gumbel, Cole Wilcox, Spiff Slifka (CEDA), and Dan Feather

White administered the oath of office to Mayor Ed Koppen and Council Members Harold Shipman, Ashley Huntley, and Brian Thiel.

All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Appointments to Standing Committees:

* Council reviewed the proposed appointments to the standing committees. Koppen noted a change in wording from Fire Department to Fire Department Personnel Committee. Appointments to the standing committees for 2023 were made as follows:
* Brian Thiel-Fire Department Personnel Committee; Service Award Recognition; Library Board
* Harold Shipman-Streets & Alleys; Prairie Visions; Acting Mayor; Legal & Accounting; EDA
* Ashley Huntley-Parks & Recreation; Ambulance Board; Cemetery & Tree Boards
* Gerald Payne-Water & Sewer; EDA
* Ed Koppen-Legal & Accounting; Public Buildings

Koppen stressed the need to see protocols followed this coming year. He noted the EDA and WWG are coming along quite well. He noted that he and Shipman will be monitoring expenditures with the Highway 56 project coming up. He stressed rumors must be squelched; he stressed the need to call people out on these inaccuracies. He does not want to expose any individual council member to these inaccuracies.

Appointments to Appointed Committees:

* Council reviewed the proposed appointments to the appointed committees. Koppen noted the three new people to be appointed to the library board being Lisha Hindt, Jessica Fraser, and Laurie Schmidt. Koppen also noted the seats of Jody Morrow and Axel Gumbel are open on the LeRoy EDA board due to term limits. Koppen read, and council reviewed, four letters of interest for these two open seats. It was noted that these letters were received from four very qualified candidates. Koppen recommended appointing Tracy Smith and Cristi Masters to these two seats and keeping the other two letters on file for future openings on the EDA board. Motion by Payne to appoint Tracy Smith to seat #5 and Cristi Masters to seat #2 on the EDA board. Second by Thiel. Motion carried 5-0.
* Fire Relief Assn. Board Reps-Ashley Huntley, Patty White
* City Attorney: Baudler, Maus, Forman, & King, LLP
* City Auditor-Smith Schafer & Associates, LTD
* Official City Newspaper-Mower County Independent
* Official Depositories-First National Bank, LeRoy; First State Bank Minnesota, LeRoy
* City Engineer-Jones, Haugh & Smith
* Library Board-Lisha Hindt, Jessica Fraser, Laurie Schmidt, Vada Dahl, Shirley Miller, Georgia Eastvold, Wendy Vikre, Brian Thiel (council rep)
* Fire Dept. Personnel Committee-Brian Thiel, Patty White, Caleb Hovde, Dan Feather
* LeRoy EDA-Josh Diemer, Jan Dohlman, Sara Gerk, Tracy Smith, Cristi Masters, Harold Shipman & Gerald Payne (council reps)

Motion by Huntley, second by Shipman to approve the appointments to the standing committees for 2023 and approve the appointments to the appointed committees for 2023 and to name Koppen, Shipman, and White as authorized signers on city accounts. Motion carried 5-0.

LeRoy Fire Department:

* Assistant Fire Chief Dan Feather presented the slate of officers for the LeRoy Volunteer Department. The officers include Caleb Hovde-Fire Chief; Dan Feather-Assistant Fire Chief; Isaiah Opseth-Captain; Chase Huntley-Lieutenant; Nick Sweeney-Fire Marshall/Emergency Management; Jake Payne & Tim Freerksen-Training Officers; Jason Bastian-Secretary. Motion by Payne to accept the election results and the slate of officers for the LeRoy Volunteer Fire Department for 2023. Second by Shipman. Motion carried 5-0.

Consent Agenda:

* Thiel noted the updates that he been made to the key performance indicator worksheet and handed out updated worksheets. Thiel was thanked for this report.
* Motion by Huntley, second by Shipman to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

Police Report:

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

Public Input Time:

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

Standing Committee Reports:

* Council had nothing to report for standing committee reports.

State Highway 56 Project:

* There was no new information on the Highway 56 project.

Requests to Attend MRWA & MCFOA Conferences:

* Motion by Shipman, second by Payne to allow Sweeney to attend the MRWA conference and White to attend the MCFOA conference with the city paying related costs. Motion carried 5-0.

Land Use Permits:

* There were no land use permits for council review.

Communications File:

* There was nothing to review in the communications file.

Street Project for 2022-Sanitary Sewer Review:

* Sweeney reported he had received a quote for sewer main lining from Insituform; this quote would include televising and cleaning of the mains in the amount of $95,229. He reminded council of the quote received from H & M Underground in the amount of $207,900.
* Motion by Thiel to accept the proposal from Insituform and proceed with this project using capital outlay infrastructure funds. Second by Huntley. Motion carried 5-0.

Well House Controls:

* Sweeney reported he has been in contact with Norman’s Electric Service (NES). The VFDs will be here toward the end of January. Sweeney noted the well house is running as good as he has ever seen it run. The rest of the items for the well house controls will be installed when they arrive.

Community Center Kitchen Proposal:

* Payne reported a group has come forward that may pay for the entire kitchen proposal project if grant funds are not awarded. Koppen noted council would review all proposals for this project.

Community Center Utility Room:

* Koppen and Wilcox had surveyed this room for size. Koppen would like this to be considered as a storm center/safety center.

Service Award Recognition:

* Koppen recognized posthumously Eileen Hutchins for all she did for the city, the Development Corporation, the LeRoy EDA, and serving on the building committee for Wildwood Grove. Eileen was involved with research on a housing facility prior to Wildwood Grove coming to fruition. She was also one of the driving factors with Prairie Visions and getting the Shooting Star Trail started with a ceremonial signing on May 31, 1994.
* Koppen also recognized Becky Loven for her membership with the LeRoy Lions, for her volunteering for different events, and her willingness to help others.
* Koppen also recognized the LeRoy Lions for all they do.

Nuisance Properties:

* Koppen recommended changing this title from Nuisance Properties to Vacant Properties and focus on the properties located at 213 E Henry, 210 E Frederick, and 221 E Main. Koppen would like to brain-storm ideas with Thiel to try to get these properties repaired for rental properties or listed for sale. He would like to try this approach to try to get something to happen.
* Koppen also noted some conversations he has had with people in the 60+ age range looking for a slab-on house or two-plex or four-plex.

Strong & John Street-Right of Way Infringement:

* There was nothing to report on this. Council may want to consider these streets for traffic flow following the Highway 56 project.

ARPA Funds:

* There was nothing to report on the ARPA funds.

EDA & WWG Report:

* Spiff Slifka, the CEDA rep for the EDA, introduced herself to the council, and handed out the Comprehensive Housing Study that has been completed. She reported she has been in economic development and tourism for 16 years. She noted that housing needs change throughout the years. She reported she has a developer in Iowa that would like to come to LeRoy to construct houses, but he wanted to see a housing study first. This developer, and any developer, wants to know the pulse of the community. She commented having the tax abatement program for new home construction is a plus, but the city and/or EDA may want to consider other additional housing incentives. She also commented incentives could be researched for what other communities do for dilapidated housing. She noted that with housing comes daycare needs. She reported some cities are incentivizing daycare providers. Thiel noted he would like to see the implications of some of these housing incentives to the city.
* Slifka reported she, Axel Gumbel, and White maintain the city website. Slifka noted the present website is a cumbersome site; she felt the site is probably towards the end of what can be done with the site. She presented the new website for Howard County Tourism; this site cost approximately $6,000 to set up. Thiel reported the website the city currently uses is a template website. An annual fee is paid for this site; he noted the city does own the domain name of leroymn.com. Slifka is proposing a different website through Iroc Web Design Services; this site would use Word Press. Thiel expressed some concerns with this. Council would like to do more research on this, look at other sites, and possibly have a presentation by the web developer.
* Slifka reported the EDA received two grants for the windtower park shelter. Slifka is working with EDP Renewables to see if they would provide the electricity to the shelter. Slifka would like to work in cooperation with the school and city to get some picnic tables at this site. Council would like to see this pursued.
* Slifka reported she has worked with eight different people on potential businesses for the LeRoy area. She has been working with the LeRoy Commercial Club with membership letters and changing that only Commercial Club member businesses will be able to accept LeRoy Bucks. Slifka noted that LeRoy is a real gem of a community and needs to be further promoted.
* Council discussed a date and time for a joint meeting with the city council, EDA, and Wildwood Grove, Inc. It was the consensus of the council to hold this meeting on Tuesday, January 31, 2023, at 6:00 PM at the LeRoy Community Center. It was suggested to allow 20 minutes for each topic to be discussed.

Being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Payne, second by Shipman at 8:20 PM.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Ed Koppen, Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Patty A. White, City Clerk-Treasurer