

City of Mercer Minutes December 19, 2019

Mayor Ron Schatz called the meeting to order at 7 pm with Council members Randy Zinke, Gary Volochenko, and Derek Fiedler. Also in attendance Ashley Fiedler, Auditor, Harold Rotunda, CPA.

Councilmembers look over minutes. Derek Fiedler makes motion to approve minutes, Gary Volochenko seconded it. Motion carried.

Finances were reviewed. Derek Fiedler makes motion to approve finances, Zinke seconded it. Motion carried.

Bills were reviewed by council. Zinke makes motion to pay bills except Ulteig Engineering invoice, Volochenko seconded it. Roll call vote: Fiedler yes, Zinke yes, Volochenko yes. Motion carried to pay bills.

Old Business:

Resident Charlene Lelm came to talk about her curb stop on her property, to see if anything was decided to reimburse her. Engineer Tuck stated she needed to have a license plumber dig in the line before she could be reimbursed. Lelm contacted attorney Lindell who stated a license plumber did not need to dig in the water line and she also spoke with plumbing board saying it's not necessary. Board agrees with resident that the curb stop should've been placed in the same spot as the old one, and Scherbenske or Ulteig should pay. Mayor Schatz will speak with Engineer Tuck and Tuck's boss about what we can do for resident Lelm. Resident Lelm appreciates the boards help and will attend the next city meeting for more information.

November meeting the board had brought up getting a police contract. Board looked over information regarding contract and voted to not do it at this time. Volochenko makes motion to hold off on contract, Zinke seconded it. Motion carried.

New Business:

Member from the Mercer Park committee, Tina Goven was present to talk about changes they'd like to make. Park committee had City insurance agent come and do an inspection on the equipment. After the inspection the insurance agent stated the playground equipment should be replaced, the equipment is not safe for children. Insurance agent also stated the swings should be taken down at the Community Center, due to safety. There is a slide with a crack in it, bolts and screws are missing, space on the equipment is not correct. The committee is aware the new equipment will be costly, they plan on doing fundraisers, raffles, grants or donations. The committee will not be taking out any loans for the project they will pay cash. Zinke makes a motion to approve the committee going forward with getting funds to get new equipment, Volochenko seconded it. Motion carried. Park committee would like to get their own Facebook

account so they can make posts about upcoming events. Volochenko makes motion to let park committee have their own Facebook account, Fiedler seconded it. Motion carried.

Walter Lipp met with Rod and Tracy Schilling regarding their easement. Schilling agreed on \$12,000 for the cost of easement. AJ Tuck talked with Rural Development and they will pay \$3,325.21 towards the \$12,000 so the city will be responsible for \$8,674.79. Board is just frustrated with this water project as there is issue after issue where the board has to keep spending money fixing mistakes that were missed when the project started. Zinke makes motion to have the Schilling easement paid, Fiedler seconded it. Roll call vote taken: Fiedler yes, Zinke yes, Volochenko yes. Motion carried.

Information was given to board members regarding becoming Home Rule City. Board will discuss Home Rule at January meeting.

Chester's Tavern would like to request permission to have a temporary liquor permit to sell beer and wine on Sunday February 16 at Mercer Community Center. A permit to have a beer garden on Saturday June 20th for Mercer Car Show. Also, a temporary permit to sell alcohol at the Mercer Community Center Friday July 10th for All School Reunion. Zinke makes motion for Chester's Tavern have permits, Volochenko seconded it. Motion carried.

Resident Jason Meidinger would like to have speed limit signs on his road, people don't slow down. Board stated that would be county road so contact county.

Harold Rotunda, CPA has been working with the City of Mercer on their Audit. Harold noticed there are a lot of accounts that are not being used, such as centennial fund. If you would like to close out any of those accounts you could do that. Looking at the accounts the city is one event away from hurting financially, it's like rolling the dice for luck. The projects took a big toll on the check books. The city needs to look at how to make more revenue, raising taxes, raising water bills. The city doesn't have a lot of wiggle room for accounts, the city will have to come up with a plan.

Harold stated he is aware that there have been some questions regarding the financial statements, he stated the training process for Auditor Ashley could've been better and we've been working through stuff and doing more training. You have yourself a person putting in the time and work, with a good attitude, the city has that with Ashley. "That is something I look at when I'm working with people", stated Harold. Are financial statements perfect, no but we'll get there. Councilmember Zinke asked Harold, CPA, is there any money missing from the accounts like the accusations have stated. No, No there is no money missing, the money is all there. The system is not created to handle city books, you got something that was very low cost, and takes a lot of work. There isn't an issue about the money not being there it's an issue of the system putting it in the wrong place. We are working on getting it fixed, with more training.

Fiedler makes motion to adjourn, Zinke seconded it. Motion carried.

Bills to Pay

Ashley Fiedler - \$923.50

BHG - \$89.48

Derek Fiedler- \$69.26

Hardware Hank - City \$134.97- Park \$137.42 – MCC \$18.96

League of Cities Membership - \$215 (Due 1/15/20)

McLean Sheridan Water - \$1,251.25 (water) – Billing \$226.60

ND Department of Health - \$16

ND League of Cities Membership - \$215.00

ND Rural water membership - \$245.00

Otter Tail - \$896.72

Ron Schatz - \$138.52

Ulteig - \$3,439.11 – Lift station project – Time spent onsite and working with Weisz & Sons

USDA Loan Payment - \$15,685

Waste Management - \$1,232.21

WRT - \$176.99