

City of Mercer Minutes

January 16, 2025

Mayor Lori Stute called the meeting to order and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tonya Wellington-Auditor conducted a roll call with Barb Stute-present, Gary Volochenko-present, Erika Lorenz-present, and Randy Zinke-present.

Lori Stute read the minutes from December 18, 2024. Erika Lorenz made the motion to approve the minutes with changes made and Randy Zinke seconded. Barb Stute, Gary Volochenko, Erika Lorenz, and Randy Zinke all voted aye. Motion carried.

Lori Stute read the minutes from January 13, 2025. Erika Lorenz made the motion to approve the minutes with changes made and Randy Zinke seconded. Barb Stute, Gary Volochenko, Erika Lorenz, and Randy Zinke all voted aye. Motion carried.

Financials

Randy Zinke made the motion to approve the financial report and Barb Stute seconded. Barb Stute, Gary Volochenko, Erika Lorenz, and Randy Zinke all voted aye. Motion carried.

Bills

Gary Volochenko made the motion to approve the bills and Erika Lorenz seconded. Barb Stute, Gary Volochenko, Erika Lorenz, and Randy Zinke all voted aye. Motion carried.

Water Bills

Tonya Wellington Auditor will send out letters to accounts 9, 51, 74 for 30 days past due.

Old Business

Lori Stute stated the city hall's sewer pipe vent was properly fixed.

New Business

Charlene Lelm stated that she is here representing the Mercer School Alumni. They are having an all-class reunion on Friday July 11th, 2025, and are still looking at options for the reunion. Charlene Lelm made a request to the council to allow someone to enter the community center to remove the wall mount of the alumni class photos and trophies so they could have them available for the union this summer. Lori Stute stated that she just talked to the city attorney Jim Wilson who is drafting a waver or a release of liability and will be getting that form to her soon. But it needs to be a city council member to go into the community center and bring items out of the building then you can sign the waver to release the item for liability reasons. Charlene Lelm handed out a senate bill 20-97 to the city council. It is an endowment for populations under 1,000 people. If the endowment is formed, it might be something to help with grants to repair the community center. Erika Lorenz stated that when talking about the scope of repairing the community center, first, you

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would have to replace the roof and Randy Zinke got estimates last winter and the minim was \$250,000.00 starting and it went up from there. According to the report from the testing company and DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) we would have to take out all the building materials affected by the mold and abet the asepsis including going two feet past any affected areas. Once that is completed then we would need to bring the building up to code. There is no sprinkler system and the electrical and plumbing would need to be updated.

Jon Schumann stated that within our small community a lot of traffic goes through our town on the main street. The holiday lights are a way to welcome visitors and travelers. This past holiday season we missed our opportunity of welcoming and spreading the holiday cheer. The park board put up a decorative display with lights throughout the park. The city dropped the ball on continuing the display of lights. How do we as a city ensure these welcoming opportunities are not missed in the future?

Jon Schumann stated that Randy Zinke has done an outstanding job running city equipment throughout the seasons from lagoon maintenance, mowing, snow cleanup and other city jobs. We have multiple pieces of equipment that can be run for all seasons. This is not a one-person board. The elected officials accepted responsibility for the inner workings of the city. How are these responsibilities being distributed to board members or does the city need to hire an assistant maintenance person to assist in the duties of running equipment for snow removal and road maintenance and here forth.

Lori Stute stated that Randy Zinke does volunteer a lot of his time to the City of Mercer and sometimes he is not here. So, we do need to figure out how those things will be covered.

Kathy Schon stated that regarding the city audit. Anyone can look under the North Dakota State Audit and go to the City of Mercer. Under this website it shows the City of Mercer has been delinquent sense 2018 and now 2023 is delinquent. Tonya Wellington-Auditor stated that the State Auditor Office contacted her about the City of Mercer's 2018 audit and some information needs to be found and submitted. Tonya Wellington has been working with them and finding information for the audit for each of those years that have not been completed.

Willa Murray asked when will we get this resolved with special assessments? Lori Stute stated that Jim Wilson stated that we should have answers by the next meeting.

Gary Volochenko made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Barb Stute seconded. Barb Stute, Gary Volochenko, Erika Lorenz, and Randy Zinke all voted Aye. Motion carried.