

**TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2014 – 7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

The Agenda for this Meeting was posted Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at City Hall, the Post Office and on the City's Web Site. Copies were e-mailed to residents requesting such, and the Press was notified.

The Taylors Falls City Council met for a regular meeting on Monday, December 8, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall, 637 First Street, Taylors Falls, Minnesota.

CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Mike Buchite.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All those present at the meeting recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Buchite, Ross Rivard, John Tangen, Larry Julik-Heine, Mary Jo Murphy

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Loren Caneday, Jo Everson, Clerk-Treasurer, and Paul Ringnell from the Chisago County Press

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda was amended to include under New Business: **Consider Donation of Paintings; Consider Payment to H&L Mesabi; Consider Liquor License for Border Bar & Grill.**

MOTION BY RIVARD/MURPHY TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, AS AMENDED, FOR THE DECEMBER 8, 2014 TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION BY TANGEN/JULIK-HEINE TO APPROVE/ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON NOVEMBER 10, AND NOVEMBER 24, 2014; STAFF REPORTS; COMMISSION/BOARD OR COMMITTEE MINUTES/ REPORTS; CONSIDER APPROVING 2014 LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT WITH ABDO, ECK & MEYERS; CONSIDER PAYMENT TO H&L MESABI; CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CLAIMS & PAYROLL; AND CORRESPONDENCE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING MEETING

THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA THE MINUTES OF THE TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON NOVEMBER 10 AND NOVEMBER 24, 2014.

TRUTH & TAXATION PUBLIC HEARING

2015 PROPOSED PROPERTY TAXES

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m. The Clerk read the Public Notice into the record:

*Notice of Proposed Property Taxes
City of Taylors Falls*

The Taylors Falls City Council will hold a public hearing on its budget and on the amount of property taxes it is proposing to collect to pay for the costs of services the City will provide in 2015.

*Monday, December 8, 2014, 7:05 p.m.
Taylors Falls City Hall*

All City residents are invited to attend the public hearing of the City Council to express their opinions on the budget and on the proposed amount of 2015 property taxes.

An informational packet was provided complete with budget information, tax rates, and information regarding Minnesota's taxation system. Taylors Falls was able to reduce the tax rate by 1.77%, which has been the case twelve out of the last thirteen years.

	2014	2015	Change from 2014 - 2015
Total Tax Levy	\$617,333.00	638,191.00	+3.38%
General Fund Levy	\$324,960.00	\$330,618.00	+1.74%
City Tax Rate	76.984%	75.213%	-1.77%

Despite the fact that there was no one from the public in attendance, the Mayor asked three times for public comment IN FAVOR OF, OPPOSED TO or NEUTRAL TO the proposed 2015 budget and the property taxes the City proposes to collect to pay for the costs of services it will provide.

Hearing none, MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/RIVARD TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2015 PROPOSED BUDGET. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Mayor announced that the Council would take final action on the 2014 Property Tax Levy, Payable in 2015 and the 2015 Budget at the December 29, 2014 City Council Meeting. The Public Hearing closed at 7:07 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

STAFF REPORTS & REQUESTS

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

THE CITY COUNCIL ACCEPTED BY CONSENT AGENDA THE NOVEMBER 2014 PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT AS PRESENTED BY PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT MIKE KRIZ.

COMMISSION, BOARD OR COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORTS

LIBRARY BOARD

THE CITY COUNCIL ACCEPTED BY CONSENT AGENDA THE MINUTES FROM THE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2014.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

CONSIDER CONTRIBUTION REQUEST BY THE CHISAGO LAKES AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

At the last Council Meeting, Noel Stensrud from the Chisago Lakes Area Community Foundation gave a presentation to the Council regarding their next venture following the successful campaign last year the "Life is Great on Highway 8 Chairs". They are proposing to establish a quilt trail with quilts hung on business supporting the project. She requested a minimum contribution of \$150.00 from Taylors Falls to buy the supplies necessary for these paintings, the printing of the maps, banners, signage and a website. Mayor Buchite commented that he thought it would be a great project and good for tourism, but it would not be appropriate for Taylors Falls. The criteria for considering donation requests require that the donation benefit the community as a whole, not just the businesses. Secondly, he reminded the Council that it had taken official action in 2007 to clarify that Taylors Falls is not a sister city to Åseda, Sweden. This decision was based upon public opinion at that time. He expressed concern that the same supporters of the Swedish Sister City campaign could return to the Council to argue that a Swedish Sister City designation would be appropriate if the Swedish quilt trail were to be approved. He stated that it would send a wrong message to the community. He was opposed to donating money to the project.

CM's Murphy, Rivard and Tangen were in agreement with the Mayor. CM Julik-Heine disagreed in that he thought the project would be a nice addition and a benefit to everyone. It would bring color to the City and cultural discussion and acceptance of other groups. He questioned why then did the City agree to the Swedish Immigrant Trail (proposed by Chisago County). Mayor Buchite responded that the Swedish Immigrant Trail is called just that until it reaches the City limits. From there it becomes the proposed Valley View Trail.

CM Rivard commented that just because the City does not financially support the project, the businesses themselves can participate in the project if they so choose to.

MOTION BY RIVARD/TANGEN TO DENY THE DONATION REQUEST BY THE CHISAGO LAKES AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT THE OLD SWEDISH QUILT TRAIL PROJECT. MOTION CARRIED WITH JULIK-HEINE VOTING NAYE.

CONSIDER HPC REQUEST TO PURCHASE HOUSE PLAQUES FOR MCC & LIBRARY

Mayor Buchite summarized the discussion held by the Council at the November 24, 2014 Meeting when the Council authorized the HPC to move forward with the process of pursuing the installation of house plaques for locally designated buildings in Taylors Falls. The Council delayed approving the installation of plaques on the Library and the Memorial Community Center until this meeting so that the Library Board could be contacted for discussion and approval. CM Tangen indicated that a meeting had not yet occurred. Mayor Buchite then recommended Council approve the installations, conditional upon discussion by the Library Board for that plaque installation.

MOTION BY MURPHY/JULIK-HEINE TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF HOUSE PLAQUES ON THE TAYLORS FALLS MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTER AND THE TAYLORS FALL PUBLIC LIBRARY, CONDITIONAL UPON DISCUSSION AND THE APPROVAL BY THE LIBRARY BOARD FOR THAT PLAQUE INSTALLATION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDER DISSOLVING STEERING COMMITTEE

NSP (now Xcel Energy) began talking to Taylors Falls in 1995 about a proposed project of installation of a 230 kilovolt line on "H" type poles in Minnesota and a 161 kV line in Wisconsin. It involved a transmission line on proposed routes between the substation in Lent Township and the Apple River substation in Wisconsin. The Chisago Project, as it was named in later years, resulted in several hearings: before the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (MEQB), before two administrative law Judges, and the Wisconsin Public Utilities Commission (WPUC). NSP approached both Taylors Falls and St. Croix Falls, who was also involved in the process (and especially the contested case in the early 2000's) requesting mediation. What resulted was a Settlement Agreement (see Minutes from September 9, 2011) which, amongst other provisions, agreed to reduce the transmission line to a 115kv line, and bury a portion of the line that was visible from the St. Croix river. The settlement agreement also created a steering committee of the cities and NSP to ensure the fulfillment of the terms of the agreement. Each entity appointed its representatives, with Taylors Falls appointing former Council Member Loren Caneday and Council Member Ross Rivard.

Loren Caneday appeared before the Council to update them on the status of the project and the Steering Committee. He indicated that the Committee had accomplished all that the tasks that were assigned to them. The remaining issue required by the Agreement would be NSP's relinquishment of its easement on National Park Service land. At this date, NSP has completed their end but the National Park Service (NPS) has not accepted it. This legal work will take some time because the NPS must make sure the acceptance of the relinquished easement will comply with the legislation establishing the Wild and Scenic River.

Caneday concluded his presentation suggesting that the City should be mindful of the Agreement which includes the provision that if the dam is decommissioned, the transmission line crossing the river must be buried. Since institutional memory changes with elected officials and staff, the City should establish some means of remembering the Settlement Agreement. (summary attached) The City Clerk was directed to contact the Attorney for his opinion.

MOTION BY RIVARD/JULIK-HEINE TO ACCEPT THE FINAL CHISAGO PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES, AND ACCEPT THEIR RECOMMENDATION TO DISSOLVE THE STEERING COMMITTEE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Mayor Buchite (and the Council echoed) thanked Caneday for his amazing 19 years of service on this Committee.

CM Julik-Heine questioned a comment in the Steering Committee's minutes that referred to the planting of trees near the Substation. Caneday informed him that this was a request/issue outside of the Settlement Agreement, and that this and other issues are monitored by CM Rivard.

CONSIDER LETTER OF SUPPORT TO COUNTY FOR PROPOSED COUNTRY ROAD 16 PROJECT

Chisago County Engineer Joe Triplett recently informed the City that Chisago County would be pursuing State funds to improve CSHA 16 project, and request a letter of support from Taylors Falls, since that road provides access to the North and South Lions Parks and several businesses, including Eric's Canoe Rental and Camp Waub-o-Jeeg, as well as the primary route to Wild Mountain Taylors Falls Recreation.

MOTION BY MURPHY/TANGEN TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM CHISAGO COUNTY TO SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM MAYOR BUCHITE TO JOE TRIPLETT FOR THE COUNTY STATE AID HIGHWAY 16 PROJECT, OFFERING FULL SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (attached)

CONSIDER DATE FOR FINAL 2014 COUNCIL MEETING

MOTION BY TANGEN/MURPHY TO APPROVE THE DATE OF MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2014 AT 7:00 P.M. AS THE CITY COUNCIL'S FINAL 2014 MEETING. CARRIED.

CONSIDER APPROVING 2014 LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT WITH ABDO, ECK & METERS

THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF TAYLORS FALLS AND ABDO, ECK & MEYERS, CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND CONSULTANTS, TO PERFORM THE 2014 FINANCIAL AUDITS, AT A COST OF \$14,000 AND THE STATE AUDITOR'S REPORTING FORM AT \$625.00. (on file)

CONSIDER DONATION OF PAINTINGS

Mayor Buchite directed the Council's attention to four paintings in the Council Chambers that were owned by William C. Scott and Daryl Wangen, former residents of Taylors Falls, now living in Chisago City. They have offered to donate to the City these paintings (with certain conditions) that portray the St. Croix River and express the unique character of Taylors Falls. If the City were interested in accepting them, the City must accept the gifts by approving Resolution. The Council was very receptive of obtaining the very valuable paintings. City Clerk Jo Everson recommended that they be hung behind the Council dais as it is the most prominent location for viewing. CM Julik-Heine recommended that a plaque be hung acknowledging the generous donation.

No action was taken by the Council at this time.

CONSIDER PAYMENT TO H&L MESABI

THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA PAYMENT OF \$1,733.58 TO H&L MESABI TO BE PAID FROM THE PUBLIC WORKS REPAIRS AND MAINTENACE BUDGET ACCOUNT (43100-404).

CONSIDER 2015 LIQUOR LICENSE FOR BORDER BAR & GRILL

MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/RIVARD TO APPROVE THE ISSUANCE OF THE FOLLOWING 2015 LIQUOR LICENSE CONDITIONAL UPON RECEIPT OF A VALID CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE:

BORDER BAR & GRILL, LAURIE EVERTS
DBA: BORDER BAR & GRILL AT 367 BENCH STREET
ON-SALE LIQUOR LICENSE
OFF-SALE LIQUOR LICENSE
ON-SALE SUNDAY LICENSE

MOTION CARRIED WITH TANGEN ABSTAINING SINCE HE IS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE CHISAGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING THE ESTABLISHMENTS FOR LEGAL COMPLIANCE.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS & PAYROLL

THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA THE PAYMENT OF CHECK NUMBERS 26121 – 26161 TOTALLING \$78,800.96 IN EXPENDITURES, AND CHECK NUMBERS 6552 – 6565 TOTALLING \$17,734.55 FOR NOVEMBER PAYROLL.

LIAISON OR COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Mayor Buchite reported that after the first of the year he and Representative Barrot would again testify before the House Finance Tax Committee on the Tax Bill entitled A New Business Jobs Development Zone that Representative Barrot intends to once again introduce. This bill would establish a tax incentive for businesses who build in the new Taylors Falls Business Park. In 2013 the Tax Committee was 100% supportive as was the House of Representatives. However, Senator Sean Nienow did not introduce the bill to the Senate for some unknown reason. The Mayor indicated that he would be seeking another Senator that would be willing to introduce the bill.

CM's Larry Julik-Heine, Mary Murphy, and John Tangen reported on the recent Lighting Festival events (November 28, 29 and 30). It was very successful, with an estimated 1,500 people attending the 36-unit Santa Parade. 400 children visited with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and there were 140 people at BINGO, which sets a record for all BINGO events in Taylors Falls. The Vespers at the United Methodist Church was standing room only. The new bonfire event, however, was not well attended and may not return in 2015. The Council commended Public Works Superintendent Mike Kriz for his work before, during and after the festival. The Committee's thank you to the City stated "....Mike goes about his work in a happy, gracious, and professional manner...."

CORRESPONDENCE

1. CORRESPONDENCE FROM XCEL ENERGY, RE: FRANCHISE AGREEMENT COMPLIANCE
2. STAFF CORRESPONDENCE & EMAIL'S

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/MURPHY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING OF THE TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL HELD THIS 8th OF DECEMBER, 2014. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Being no further business to come before the Council, the Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Michael D. Buchite, Mayor

Jo Everson, Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED: DECEMBER 29, 2014

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

TAYLORS FALLS, MINNESOTA

December 9, 2014

Mr. Joe Triplett
Chisago County Engineer
Chisago County
313 N. Main Street
Center City, MN 55012

Mr. Triplett,

The City of Taylors Falls supports Chisago County's efforts to pursue and obtain funding through the Local Road Improvement Program for the Chisago County State Aid Highway 16 Improvement Project. CSAH 16 provides access to our Lion's Park which recently received a \$175,000 upgrade to improve access to the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. It is also the highway that provides recreation activities with area businesses Eric's Canoe Rental and Camp Waub-o-Jeeg, as well as being the primary route to Wild Mountain Taylors Falls Recreation.

We fully support the efforts to add a paved shoulder area for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. CSAH 16 is the southern portion of the Nevers Place District along the St. Croix Scenic Byway. It features bluffs, vistas, stream crossings on the way to Wild River State Park, an ideal location to add pedestrian and bicycle traffic lanes. This project will enhance the already scenic, cultural, historical, recreational and archeological quality that this region is known for.

It is without reservation that we offer our strong support and endorsement of Chisago County's funding request for the improvements to CSAH 16.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Buchite, Mayor

MICHAEL D. BUCHITE, MAYOR
CITY OF TAYLORS FALLS
637 FIRST STREET
TAYLORS FALLS, MN 55084-1144