

**TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

The Agenda for this Meeting was posted Wednesday, December 9, 2015 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 14, 2015 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: Mary Tomnitz, Clerk-Treasurer, and Adam Berklund Coordinator – Zoning Administrator

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda was amended to remove under new business #4: **Consider Repairs to Playground Equipment at the Tot Lot.**

MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/MURPHY TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, AS AMENDED, FOR THE DECEMBER 14, 2015 TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION BY RIVARD/TANGEN TO APPROVE/ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS: STAFF REPORTS; COMMISSION/BOARD OR COMMITTEE MINUTES/ REPORTS; CONSIDER APPROVING RESOLUTION 15-12-01 AUTHORIZING 2015 SPECIAL CHARGES; CONSIDER APPROVING 2016/2017 CHISAGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S CONTRACT FOR SERVICES; CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CLAIMS & PAYROLL; AND CORRESPONDENCE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING MEETING

TRUTH & TAXATION PUBLIC HEARING

2016 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 2016.

*Monday, December 14, 2015, 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 2016 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 4.89%, which has been the case thirteen out of the last fourteen years.

2015

2016

**Change from
2015 – 2016**

Total Tax Levy	\$638,191.00	\$625,417.33	-1.02%
General Fund Levy	\$330,618.00	\$309,417.33	-1.06%
City Tax Rate	75.213%	70.323%	-4.89%

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 2016 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/MURPHY 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 2015 Property Tax Levy, Payable in 2016 and the 2016 Budget at the December 28, 2015 City Council Meeting. The Public Hearing closed at 7:10 p.m.

PUBLIC FORUM

Certificate of Appreciation to Tyler McKenzie for the Split-Rail Fence at Cherry Hill Park as his Eagle Scout project:

This certificate is awarded to Tyler McKenzie, the City of Taylors Falls commends you for your leadership and organization for the split-rail fence project. Your participation has contributed significantly to the betterment of the City's Cherry Hill Park and the people who use it. Your leadership deserves to be recognized for your exemplary work you provide to our residents and visitors. We appreciate all of your efforts and accomplishments.

Julie Hildebrand – spoke to the topic of Community Solar, and how she was excited to see it on the agenda. She believes this is a great opportunity for people to take advantage of the benefits who would not be able to put solar on their own property. An investment in community solar would be an asset that you could sell with your home increasing value. She emphasized doing due-diligence on the company and see if there is a contingency plan in place if the company went out of business.

STAFF REPORTS & REQUESTS

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

THE CITY COUNCIL ACCEPTED BY CONSENT AGENDA THE DECEMBER 2015 PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT AS PRESENTED BY PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT MIKE KRIZ.

COMMISSION, BOARD OR COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORTS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDER COMMUNITY SOLAR AT SEWER PONDS

Mayor Buchite described the discussion that has taken place with Community Green Energy who approached the City shortly before the Solar Moratorium was put into place. They specialize in the development and operation of community solar gardens in municipalities. Discussion resulted in a potential site out at the sewer ponds that has no value to the city as it sits. With a small site like this the City would receive 20% of the energy produced by the system, for at least 25 years, at no cost. Community Green would then offer the remaining solar production to community members and businesses to purchase towards offsetting their own electric bills, a process their company would facilitate and manage at their own expense.

In the proposal there is a primary site and two alternate sites. Council decided to start with Alternate Site B to be the primary “test” site to get an idea of how successful the project would be. This site would produce 57,618 kWh/Yr saving the City \$6,789 which would increase at an annual inflation rate of 3.75% so by year 25, the City would save \$14,564, with a total of \$255,181 in savings.

MPCA had emailed, Public Works Superintendent with their opinion on it and had no problem. City Attorney, Patrick Kelly worked with staff to safeguard the City with the initial cooperative agreement. Staff contacted Laketown Township and found that Community Green was a great company to work with and would work with them again. Council Members were all in agreement that Solar Gardens would be great out at our sewer ponds, especially when it is at no cost.

MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/RIVARD TO AUTHORIZE CITY STAFF TO MOVE FORWARD INTO SOLAR PANELS AT OUR SEWER PONDS, NOTING THAT SITE B IS OUR FIRST LOCATION, ALSO NOTING THAT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE INSTALLERS MEET WITH OUR COMMUNITY TO SHARE HOW RESIDENTS ARE ABLE TO BUY INTO THE PROGRAM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CONSIDER TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM GRANT

City Staff and Wade Vitalis has been attending meetings with Bob Voss from the East Central Regional Development Commission to determine what projects are out there that qualify for this funding. A meeting was held here in Taylors Falls, Marine on St. Croix, and Bayport; all cities along the St. Croix Scenic Byway. Taylors Falls' representatives were the only ones who were in attendance at every meeting, and brought projects to the table. Three projects were identified: Scenic Byway monument, railing at old overlook, and the South Gateway pedestrian overpass. At the meetings these projects were received with high praise and enthusiasm.

Staff presented these projects and others with recommendations. The St. Croix Scenic Byway monument was discussed first. An estimate and design was presented at a cost of \$72,000 and would be 25 feet tall. Council questioned why the City would do this as the location of the monument was out of City limits. Questions were also raised about the railings at the old pull-off overlook as it is in MnDOT's right-of-way/Interstate Park land. Two projects Council were in agreement to apply for were a new retaining wall in the parking lot behind the Chisago House. This would include a new sidewalk and railing. Lastly Council agreed that pedestrian crosswalk signs between the Chisago House and bakery would be great for improving traffic flow on busy days in town.

Council Members provided staff with other options that would fit in with Grant Qualifying Activities, such as: a new ceiling in the historic train depot (community center) and the possibility of bathrooms at Heritage Park overlook. Council directed staff to rework the ideas for the grant, and since Council would be having a second meeting in December, there was still time before the deadline to apply.

MOTION BY MURPHY/TANGEN TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO PURSUE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM GRANT AND RETURN WITH A RECOMMENDATION BASED ON WHEN GRANT IS READY.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GRANT

Principal Riebe from the Taylors Falls Elementary School met with Mayor Buchite and staff looking for a letter of support for when they apply for the Safe Routes to School Grant. Their goal will be to work with the City to get sidewalks put in on West Street. The grant takes several years to complete with a year-long study on how individuals get to and from school.

MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/MURPHY TO APPROVE REQUEST FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL JASON RIEBE TO SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL FOR THEIR SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GRANT APPLICATION, OFFERING FULL SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER 2016 LIQUOR & RELATED LICENSING

MOTION BY RIVARD/MURPHY TO APPROVE THE ISSUANCE OF 2015 LIQUOR AND CIGARETTE LICENSES TO THE FOLLOWING:

ADIUM OIL COMPANY, INC.
DBA: PETRO PLUS #108 AT 341 BENCH ST.
OFF-SALE LIQUOR LICENSE
CIGARETTE LICENSE

HALVERSON INVESTMENT, INC.
DBA: TANGLED UP IN BLUE AT 425 BENCH ST.
ON-SALE WINE LICENSE
ON-SALE STRONG & 3.2% BEER LICENSE

DDMCVI, LLC
DBA: ROMAYNE'S ON MAIN AT 391 BENCH ST.
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.

CONSIDER FIRE DEPARTMENT REQUEST TO UPGRADE SONAR EQUIPMENT

The fire department met with Frankie's Marine and a salesman from Garmin to discuss sonar for their rescue boat. After listening to them they both told them that the Lowrance HDS sonar would fit their needs the best. That being said they received a quote for the system of \$3,567.28. This price includes installation and training on the river in the spring and support is a phone call to Frankie's. Their request is to increase the approved \$3,000 to be able to purchase this system.

MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/MURPHY TO APPROVE PURCHASE OF LOWRANCE HDS12 GEN3 SST FROM FRANKIE'S MARINE AT A COST OF \$3,567.28 FOR RESCUE BOAT TO BE PAID FROM THE NEW EQUIPMENT FUND (580) AND THE REMAINDER FROM THE TRAINING FUND (208).

CONSIDER TREE REMOVAL ON HAZEL ALLEY

Public Works reported that there are three large pine trees that are along Hazel Alley that have been dead for quite some time. It has gotten to the point where it is a safety issue. If these trees fall, not only will there be substantial property damage, but the potential for personal injury. Council was provided with two estimates; Arbor Tree Service at \$1,450 and Above All Tree at \$1,500.

MOTION BY MURPHY/JULIK-HEINE TO APPROVE PUBLIC WORKS REQUEST TO HAVE ARBOR TREE SERVICES REMOVE THREE TREES ALONG HAZEL ALLEY AT A COST OF \$1,450 TO BE PAID FROM THE 2016 BUDGET TREE REMOVAL FUND (545).

CONSIDER RESOLUTION 15-12-01 AUTHORIZING SPECIAL CHARGES

THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 15-12-01 ADOPTING SPECIAL CHARGES FOR THE TAX YEAR 2015 TO BE COLLECTED IN 2016.

CONSIDER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE CHISAGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

THE CITY COUNCIL ACKNOWLEDGED BY CONSENT AGENDA TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED 2016-2017 LAW ENFORCEMENT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CHISAGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT/CHISAGO COUNTY AND THE CITY OF TAYLORS FALLS.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS & PAYROLL

THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA THE PAYMENT OF CHECK NUMBERS 26618 – 26662 TOTALLING \$42,691.61 IN EXPENDITURES, AND CHECK NUMBERS 6727 – 6736 TOTALLING \$11,093.56 FOR NOVEMBER PAYROLL.

LIAISON OR COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

Julik-Heine – reported that the PRC would be meeting on Wednesday and will provide Council with a recommendation to replace the seats on the playground equipment at the “Tot Lot”. Also that everything is going well with the Public Works. Lastly that he received an email from the CCSWCD about a potential project for this summer.

Rivard – the Planning Commission did not meet in December since members were out of town. In January the commission would continue with the review of Chapter Two of the Zoning Ordinance.

Tangen – reported that there will be an HPC meeting on Tuesday and will discuss the record retention project.

Murphy – Mary did not make it to the EDC meeting but was informed that two members of the commission would be resigning at the end of the year, meaning they will not have a quorum. She personally thanked Barbara Nelson for chairing this last year and to John Coffey who has been on the commission for a long time.

Murphy also thanked staff for the help getting information together for the Shafer Fire contract. She reported she had met with Shafer Township and worked with their formula, but Shafer still believes it is too much. Negotiations have not been going well.

Mayor Buchite - wished everyone a Merry Christmas and hopes it is a safe one.

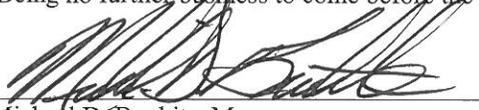
CORRESPONDENCE

1. STAFF CORRESPONDENCE & EMAIL'S

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY JULIK-HEINE/MURPHY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING OF THE TAYLORS FALLS CITY COUNCIL HELD THIS 14th OF DECEMBER, 2015. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Being no further business to come before the Council, the Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Michael D. Buchite, Mayor



Mary Tomnitz, Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED: MARCH 14, 2016