

Nowthen City Council

March 10, 2022

Regular Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pilon called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 pm

All Present Recited the Pledge of Allegiance

Present Council Members, Alders, Blake, Greenberg, and Rainville

Also in attendance: Interim City Administrator Boyles, Interim Deputy Clerk, Natalie Johnson, City Planner, Liz Stockman, Lieutenant Bill Jacobson

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Blake noted that 2b claims listing should be March 10, 2022, rather than February 28, 2022.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER GREENBERG AND SECONDED BY RAINVILLE, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. MOTION CARRIED. FIVE AYES.

3. ASSESSOR'S REPORT

City Assessor's Erik Skogquist, Mary Wells and Chris Larson presented a PowerPoint providing an update on the Real Estate Market in Nowthen. Mr. Skogquist thanked the council for allowing them to come. He proceeded to discuss the raising prices of home sales. How they value homes on what others have sold for. They used 47 "good" sales from the open market. Homes are selling for more than list price, it has been a hot market with residential properties averaging 17.5% increase and 20-30% on commercial properties, especially storage facilities. This does not mean taxes go up. Taxes are based on property owner's "sliver" of the pie.

4. FLOOR ITEMS

NONE

5. SHERIFF'S REPORT

Lieutenant Jacobson reported 80 calls in the Nowthen area in February. There were 3 Bar None, Runaway calls. Reserve Deputies are a great resource and help. They volunteer after working hours. They help with stalled vehicles, animal calls, livestock in the road calls. A call where the neighbors knew the house next door had no one home, called because lights were on. Everything was OK! These are the calls they like. Please if you notice something suspicious, call. You are not a bother and the sheriff would rather have you call with no problem, then not call, and there was a problem. There were 8 crashes, mostly due to weather and road conditions, and a couple of catalytic convertor thefts.

He also reported they are working with the Nowthen Fire Department to prepare for the sheriff's department co-location. It is going well and they are thankful to the fire fighters for making them feel welcome! Things are progressing well and expect to be ready for the July 1st transition for Nowthen' s dedicated daily car.

Mayor Pilon thanked the Fire Department personnel that were in attendance for making the sheriff's office feel welcome and stated the businesses in town like their presence as well.

6. FIRE DEPARTMENT

Nothing to report

7. PLANNING AND ZONING

- a) Consider Approval of Woodhaven Preliminary Plat

Liz Stockman reported the planning commission recommends preliminary plat approval for Woodhaven.

Mayor Pilon asked about the Trail Easements. Engineering to prepare a graphic to vacate the easement on the cul-de-sac. And preliminary plat to include "possible future trails" very clearly.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER ALDERS, SECONDED BY RAINVILLE TO APPROVE THE WOODHAVEN PRELIMINARY 9 LOT PLAT, MOTION CARRIED, FIVE AYES.

8. CITY COUNCIL

- a) Approval of Resolution confirming 2022 Precincts and Polling Places in Nowthen.

We have gained 90 residents in the last 10 years since the last redistricting. No need to re-district. We will keep the same polling places for both district 1 and district 2 at the Nowthen Fire Department for both the primary and the general election.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER BLAKE, SECOND BY RAINVILLE TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2022-07 ESTABLISHING PRECINCTS AND POLLING PLACES FOR 2022 NOWTHEN ELECTIONS ON AUGUST 9, 2022, AND NOVEMBER 8, 2022. MOTION CARRIED, FIVE AYES

- b) Approval of Process to Recruit and Select a Replacement Planning and Zoning Commissioner to Fill the Term of Robert Schiller.

Mayor Pilon asked the City Council to accept the processes in place and instruct staff to solicit applicants for the position. Councilmembers confirmed that there is no limit on the number of applicants and the posting will be for 30 days.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY GREENBERG TO ACCEPT THE PROCESS IN PLACE AND INSTRUCT STAFF TO SOLICIT APPLICANTS TO FILL THE TERM OF ROBERT SCHILLER. MOTION CARRIED. FIVE AYES

- c) Discuss City Administrator Position to be Filled, Job Description, Process, Timeline and Participates

The city council needs to decide what is the position to be filled. City Clerk, City Clerk/Treasurer, or City Administrator?

The city council's hiring committee is Interim City Administrator Boyles, Councilmember Blake and Mayor Pilon.

Councilmember Rainville asked the hiring committee if they feel confident that they could do the process of hiring? Boyles responded he was "very hesitant". He believes we had the wrong level of people in the wrong positions before. We don't want the same problems we have had. He feels it is the single most important thing for this council to get right – to hire the right person. He agrees \$24,500 is a lot of money – but we can't get this wrong. It costs the city more if we get the wrong person.

Councilmember Blake responded with we should bite the bullet and do it right. Councilmember Alders asked the costs differences for City Clerk, City Manager, City Administrator? Discussion – possible to get an Administrator/Clerk? What are the Salary ranges? What is the cost for support staff for each? Councilmember Alders agrees with Boyles, that the cost is great, but we have spent much more in the past few months and he would propose to go with a firm to help us get the right candidates.

Councilmember Blake proposed Boyles and the committee get all the information and costs for the "all in" for each scenario. She also asked if they could meet earlier and call a special meeting to get this process moving. Mayor Pilon requested authorization to engage into a contract with a 3rd party after review of the budget, since fuel costs are higher as are hauling costs.

Mayor Pilon confirmed that hiring committee will consider the city council's discussion as direction.

- d) Discuss City Council work completion priorities prior to July 1, 2022

Boyles requested the council members consider making up a "to do" list and prioritize their top 5 items.

City council agreed to have lists turned by 3/16/22 with #1 as the most important and #5 the least important of the 5. He will make a priority list of the items that need to be completed before his contract ends July 1, 2022.

- e) Discuss city council participation, cost, and declaration of May 7, 2022, as Recycling Day in Nowthen.

Councilmembers willing to participate: Pilon, Rainville, Greenberg, Blake (if in town), Alders - Maybe.

Councilmember Rainville is investigating with staff to have no cost appliance recycling with A-1, with Mosquito control district for no cost tire recycling. The city council supports these efforts.

Recycling day will be May 7th, 2022, with councilmembers will be collecting fees for electronics and staff will be there as well. Hours to be 8:00 – 1:00. Clean up and be done by 2:00pm.

Staff will post on website, will have a \$2.00 coupon off any item in the Spring Newsletter.

f) Discussion on the Watershed Consolidation Proposal (1W1P)

Councilmember Greenberg gave an update on the 1W1P. There is an open enrollment June 1 – July 31 to join. No cost to each city and can resign at any time. There will be access to additional funding, however, Nowthen, doesn't have many projects to spend the money on.

Mayor Pilon suggested everyone re-read the email from councilmember Greenberg, think about it, and discuss again on May 12th council meeting.

g) City of Nowthen Spring Newsletter Update

Councilmembers Blake and Rainville are helping prepare the city's spring Newsletter. Councilmembers have taken on several assignments. The deadline for advertising and articles is March 25th at Noon. It will go to the designer and printer; the proof will be submitted to city council on April 18th, and it will hit residents' mailboxes the first week of May. The Newsletter will go to approximately 1500 homes and businesses.

MOTION BY RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY BLAKE TO ADJOURN.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Frank Boyles
Interim City Administrator

Jeffrey M. Pilon
Mayor