

**Nowthen City Council**  
**May 9, 2023**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pilon called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mayor Pilon, Council Members Rainville, Breyen, Fladebo and Alders

Also in attendance: Administrator Lehner, Deputy Clerk Johnson, Lieutenant Jacobson, Fire Chief Schmidt

Council Member Alders requested to amend the agenda by adding "Discussion on what the City Ordinance says regarding ATV, Side-by-Side, and Golf Cart vehicles on Nowthen roads."

**MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER BREYEN, SECONDED BY RAINVILLE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. MOTION CARRIED. 5 AYES.**

**2. FLOOR ITEMS**

None

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY BREYEN TO ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED. 5 AYES.**

**4. ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**

None

**5. INTRODUCTION OF NEWER CITY STAFF**

Administrator Lehner explained that with Adrienne Christensen's departure from the city, we have hired Donna Ogdahl as her replacement and the entire city council had not met Madeline Greenberg, our regular part-time Administrative Assistant. He would like to introduce both these women to the council and residents.

First up is Madeline Greenberg, she started as a seasonal staff member last summer, then she was made a regular part-time Administrative Assistant in December. Administrator Lehner thanked Madeline for all her work on the Nowthen Spring newsletter, it looks amazing. Madeline introduced herself to the city council stating she has spent most of her life in Nowthen, yes, she is related to the Nowthen Greenbergs. She enjoys meeting residents and helping them at the city's front counter. She is thankful for the opportunity to serve the residents and work in the community at the city office. The Mayor thanked her for her willingness to work, learn and serve the City of Nowthen. She has learned so much in a short time being able to work the front counter, issue permits and did an awesome job on the newsletter!

Second up is Donna Ogdahl, she comes with experience from Sherburne County. She started April 19<sup>th</sup> as our Front Counter Administrative Assistant to fill Adrienne's position. She is doing a great job catching on and Administrator Lehner stated she is an amazing addition to our team! Donna introduced herself and gave some of her background. She talked about the importance of her family, faith and friends along with how excited she is to be working for the City, coming from a department of 280+ staff to a small office. One of the first things she has noticed is that residents care about their community here. She stated working and learning

from Madeline has been great. She is thankful for the opportunity to serve this community. The Mayor stated how happy the city is to have her, how well he has seen this team work together and how grateful he was to have her here.

## 6. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

For the month of April 2023, the Fire Department responded to 24 incidents (15 more than the previous month) with an average response time of 9 minutes and 23 seconds (2 minute and 14 second decrease from March). The average number of firefighters attending calls for service was 5. The Fire Department reports a \$10,000 dollar loss from fires during the month of April.

On April 13<sup>th</sup>- The Fire Department was dispatched to a report of a house on fire on the 9100 block of 190<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW. A passing by motorist spotted the fire, dialed 911, went to the home and used a garden hose to quickly extinguish the fire. When responders arrived, they completed some overhaul to ensure there was no fire extension into the home. Damages from this incident are estimated at around \$10,000. Assistant Chief Schrag has contacted this person and would like to bring him in front of the council for recognition at the next meeting.

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>- The Fire Department was dispatched to an animal rescue on the 21100 block on Nowthen Blvd. for a report of a dog that was found in a creek. It was suspected that the animal had been in the water for up to possibly 20 minutes. ACSO deputies assisted on this event, but the dog did not survive.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>- The Fire Department was dispatched to a PI accident at the intersection of Viking Blvd. and Cleary Rd. 2 vehicles were involved in this collision, resulting in one person being transported to the hospital with minor injuries.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>- The Fire Department responded to a report of a person with difficulty breathing. Upon arrival the patient was found in cardiac arrest. ACSO deputies quickly provided CPR and an AED. Fire crews applied the Lucas CPR device and assisted deputies and paramedics with care. Despite early life saving interventions, the patient did not survive.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>- The Fire Department responded to a report of a person unresponsive and possibly not breathing, possibly from an overdose. Upon arrival, responders administered multiple doses of Narcan to assist in treatment of the patient. 2 firefighters assisted in continued treatment of the patient during transport to Mercy Hospital. The outcome of the patient is not known at this time.

May 24<sup>th</sup> is the Fire Department Recruitment Open House. City Council members are invited as well as community members.

The Community Safety Grant has been applied for with CenterPoint Energy. This would be a 50/50 grant if the Fire Department receives it. We have requested the grant for the purchase of Masimo Rad-57 and MSA Altair 4 Gas Monitor. The Grant for the dryer was also submitted; the chief doesn't expect to hear anything until at least July.

## 7. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT REPORT

### Calls for Service:

Sheriff's Deputies responded to 146 calls for service. April 2023 calls for service included:

5 to Bar None

5 Alarms

13 Medicals

16 Animal Complaints

### **Bar None Calls**

On 04/03/2023 at 5:38 PM ACSO responded to Bar None on a report of a client that had run away from the facility on foot. Staff attempted to follow the juvenile, but they were not able to keep up. Deputies began an area search using patrol squads and an unmanned aerial systems (UAS) aircraft. The juvenile was located and brought back to the facility and left in the care of staff. On 04/06/2023 at 9:50 AM ACSO responded to Bar None on an assault report. Deputies arrived and learned that a juvenile male had thrown a water bottle and then punched an adult female staff member in the face with a closed fist. The juvenile was arrested and booked at the Lino Lakes Juvenile Detention Center.

### **Noteworthy Calls for Service**

On 04/04/2023 at 10:12 PM, deputies were dispatched to a report of a violation of a domestic abuse protection order that was occurring in the 21800 block of Norris Lake Rd. NW. The suspect, an adult male, was reported to be at the address in violation of the protection order. Deputies checked the property for the suspect but were unable to locate him. They did locate fresh footprints in the snow north of the address. Other resources were then called in to assist in locating the suspect, including a K9 team, the ACSO unmanned aerial system (UAS), and additional squads. The UAS was flying north of the location and located the suspect. The K9 team moved in the direction of the suspect and located him. The K9 apprehended the suspect, and he was subsequently booked on the following charges:

609.582.1 1st Degree Burglary-Occupied Dwelling

629.75.2(b) Domestic Abuse No Contact Order-Violate No Contact Order

609.66.1(a)(4) Dangerous Weapons- Switch Blade

Assisting agencies included Coon Rapids Police, Blaine Police/K9, Ramsey Police, and St. Francis Police. He noted how much we appreciate our neighboring communities.

On 04/07/2023 at 5:06 AM, Wright County contacted Anoka County and reported that they were in pursuit of a stolen vehicle northbound on Baugh St. passing 184 Ln. Wright County terminated the pursuit at 5:08 AM after the suspect vehicle began driving into oncoming lanes. ACSO squads located the suspect vehicle but did not pursue it. ACSO did try to get spike strips out but were not successful. The vehicle was last seen in St. Francis.

On 04/18/2023 at 10:49 AM ACSO responded to a report of an accident with injuries on Viking Blvd. at Baugh St. Arriving deputies found a 2012 Chevrolet Malibu had been rear-ended by a 2016 Ford F150. Two occupants of the Chevrolet Malibu suffered minor injuries and were treated onsite by Allina paramedics. The driver of the F150 reported he was unfamiliar with the road and was looking at his phone that was mounted to his car. The driver attested he saw that the Malibu was stopped in the lane when he looked up, and that he was not

able to stop and struck the Malibu. The driver of the F150 was cited. The Lieutenant explained the laws regarding the use of cell phones while driving.

On 04/23/2023 at 11:01 AM an ACSO community service officer was dispatched to the 21000 block of Nowthen Blvd. on a report of a dog that was pulled from a creek and was not breathing. The CSO responded and attempted life-saving efforts via chest compressions and rescue breathing but, tragically, the dog could not be saved.

On 04/29/2023 at 1:44 PM a deputy stopped a vehicle in the 19000 block of Iguana St. after running the vehicle's license plate and learning the vehicle's registration was suspended. The deputy found the driver of the vehicle had a cancelled-IPS driver's license. The driver, an adult male, was charged with gross misdemeanor driving after cancellation-IPS.

Miscellaneous – The Axon Fleet 3 technology is scheduled to be installed over the next few weeks. This will provide increased connectivity across our fleet and will allow more efficient uploads of digital evidence and squad car video from the more remote areas of Anoka County. This is impressive equipment, and we are looking forward to using it for uploading evidence more quickly. There is also remote streaming if something is going down, it even grabs the previous 30 seconds for viewing.

Discussion ensued regarding speeds and high-speed chases. Lt. Jacobson explained that speeding can be fatal; if high speeds in a chase are more dangerous to others, the chase is ended. That does not mean the person won't be caught; there are other methods including drones, state patrol choppers, and other tools. Our sheriff's office is here to protect our community first. Please call if you see dangerous drivers, get a plate if you can. It's okay if it isn't an emergency, call 911. Speeds tend to go up in the rural areas and have continued to be a major issue since the Covid-19 pandemic.

**8. PLANNING AND ZONING: NONE**

**9. ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE**

- a) The personnel committee has met and interviewed 4 candidates for the Recycling Center Attendant and Summer seasonal help. The committee is recommending 3 of them for hire.

Don Philipps was introduced as the committee's recommendation for the Recycling Center Attendant, being recruited for the job by the current attendant, Christie Wall. Don stated he has been a resident of Nowthen since 2006 – he is retired and is looking for something to keep him busy. He lives close and can be at the Recycling Center when needed. He looks forward to serving his community.

Rose Fredell was introduced as the committee's recommendation for one of the seasonal parks positions. She introduced herself and told the council about her background living in Nowthen and her past 8 years as a missionary in Taiwan. She grew up on machinery, working outside and is thankful for this opportunity to serve her community.

Isaac Schulz was introduced as the committee's recommendation for the other seasonal position helping in parks and public works. Many of the council and residents are familiar with Isaac as he is also an on-call fire fighter for the Nowthen Fire Department. One of the benefits of hiring Isaac is he will continue



to be able to respond to daytime Fire Department calls as needed. Isaac introduced himself as a Nowthen resident, his experience history plus his farming experience.

Administrator Lehner explained that the committee is recommending Isaac for the position; however, staff must work out a few policies to be sure correct procedures are used with Isaac's working hours.

Administrator Lehner thanked the candidates for being present at the meeting and for taking time to introduce themselves to the city and city council.

**MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER BREYEN, SECONDED BY ALDERS TO AUTHORIZE ADMINISTRATOR LEHNER TO HIRE DON PHILIPPS AS THE NEWEST RECYCLING ATTENDANT, ROSE FREDELL, AS SEASONAL PARKS AND ISAAC SCHULZ AS SEASONAL PUBLIC WORKS ONCE DETAILS ARE WORKED OUT TO START AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. MOTION CARRIED. 5 AYES.**

b) 2008 Ford 1-Ton Truck and Plow – this truck has outlived its use for the city. It will be a great truck for personal use, but it is not for city use. Administrator Lehner is seeking authorization to declare this truck excess inventory and sell the truck and plow as a package for the best price possible. There was discussion about why the city would not keep it. Discussion regarding how many drivers the city has, how many trucks, maintenance requirements, types of plow blades, and the use of a road grader plow as well.

**MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY ALDERS TO DECLARE THE 2008 FORD 1-TON TRUCK AND PLOW AS EXCESS INVENTORY AND AUTHORIZE ADMINISTRATOR LEHNER TO POST THE TRUCK AND PLOW FOR SALE AS A PACKAGE DEAL, PRICE WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE KELLY BLUE BOOK. MOTION CARRIED. 5 AYES.**

c) Capital Improvement Plan – Staff has worked with department heads and financial advisor Lori Yager to put together a preliminary CIP. A meeting is to be scheduled with the Mayor, Council Member Alders, Staff, Lori, and Department heads to firm up the CIP to bring a recommendation to city council.

d) Annual city audit started yesterday. Bergen KDV has 2 staff members in the city offices, 1 working remotely on our audit. So far it is going well. Bergen KDV will be presenting the audit results during the June city council meeting.

e) New Positions Update – talked about this previously.

f) Crack Sealing Roads Update:

The road maintenance season is upon us. Crack sealing started yesterday in the Rogers Lake area. Roads chosen for crack sealing were based upon the condition, age of the road and recommendations. Some residents may be asking why the city is crack sealing newer roads. Please know that Public Works Supervisor Joe Glaze is doing a great job determining which roads need maintenance in order to prolong the use of our roads, based upon the recommendations of professionals. A couple of bids were received; the crack sealing completed this year will be done according to the approved budget. Council Member Fladebo thanked Administrator Lehner for the explanation and expressed thanks to Joe for all the work he does for the city. Council Member Rainville also reminded everyone that our city engineer has stated it is important to maintain the newer roads in order to prolong the life of the road. Administrator Lehner stated that in addition to crack sealing, pothole filling has also started. City staff does this work internally and has the hot box up and working on the roads.

- g) Dust Control – Once again, multiple bids were received. The city has 25 miles of dirt roads, of which only 10 are in the budget for dust control. It would be much too expensive for the city to do all the miles of dirt roads. The roads chosen were based upon amount of traffic, speeds, and whether they were a through road or a cul-de-sac road. Joe tried to coordinate with St. Francis; however, there are no discounts given for additional miles. Public Works staff will get out to gravel and crown the roads to be sprayed a day or two before the dust control is applied.
- h) Update regarding the culvert on Xenon Street – Multiple bids have been received. The existing culvert has been there over 30 years and has deteriorated dramatically. The bids include replacing it with another steel culvert or with a concrete culvert. There is money in the budget for this repair and the costs range from \$50,000 to \$93,000 depending on the style of culvert. Staff is working on the pros and cons along with finding out if two culverts would be considered a “bridge” therefore, possibly eligible for county grants. More to come.
- i) Spring Recycling Day is May 20<sup>th</sup>. Staff invites the city council to participate in this community day. The information about the day is included in the city newsletter that went to all residents via mail recently. We hope to see you all there meeting residents and staff.

#### **10. City Council:**

Old Business: NONE

New Business:

1. Anoka County Fire Protection Council Update. Mayor Pilon and Fire Chief Schmidt attended the meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Pilon explained to the city council about a vote that took place for the purchase of new equipment “Public Data System” helping to be sure public safety all get the same data. Using costs of these kinds are distributed by a “super formula” based upon size, population, calls, etc. to make the cost sharing equal. This time however, the board made up of fire chiefs voted to allocate the costs differently which affected smaller cities drastically. Cities like Nowthen saw increases of over 90%, Bethel saw a 395.99% increase. The Mayor and Chief Schmidt did oppose this before the vote and wanted to use the super formula once again, however, they were outvoted. Mayor Pilon asked that elected officials be on the finance committee which makes the recommendations and voting power, as it is the elected officials that must manage and balance budgets for the cities. The Mayor also stated that receiving the budget recommendations just two days before a meeting is unacceptable and would like standards in place to receive documentation much sooner in the future so there is time for review and research. He stated attending these meetings is quite intimidating as all the fire chiefs are in uniform and full of confidence. Unfortunately, the vote was taken and the way it was presented is the way it was accepted; therefore, the costs are substantially higher this year. The mayor is hoping for better, more fair allocations in the future.
2. ATV / Golf Cart regulations in the City of Nowthen. Council Members Alders and Fladebo received calls regarding the use of golf carts and ATVs on city roads. Discussion of the city ordinance regarding age, license, side of road, state statutes. The ordinance is on the city website for residents to review. Lt. Jacobson was asked to provide some stats regarding accidents and injuries along with state statutes. City staff was directed to review the ordinance, review information from the Lt. and bring back a recommendation to the council if the ordinance needs to be

amended or changed. The mayor instructed the Lt. to inform the deputies not to go looking for people, but to only address vehicles if they are tearing up the dirt roads or driving recklessly.

**MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER BREYEN, SECONDED BY RAINVILLE TO ADJOURN.**

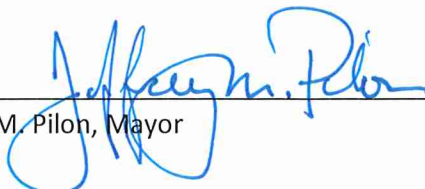
**Meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,



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Scott Lehner, City Administrator



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Jeffrey M. Pilon, Mayor