

**Nowthen City Council
December 14, 2021
Regular Meeting Minutes**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pilon called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was not recited as it had been at the commencement of the Truth in Taxation meeting.

Present: Mayor Pilon, Council Members Rainville, Blake and Alders

Absent: Council Member Greenberg (entered the meeting late)

Also in attendance: Interim Administrator Boyles

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Pilon asked that the city council add item 2M to the consent agenda authorizing Banyon Training for Natalie Johnson. Item 2K Accessory Structure Zoning Ordinance Amendment removed from the consent agenda. Item 2J Approval of auditor for 2021 was moved to 8C. Item 2I Hiring of Three Paid on Call Firefighters moved to 4B.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY ALDERS TO APPROVE THE AMEND CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2I AND 2M. MOTION CARRIED FOUR AYES.

3. FLOOR ITEMS

None

4. FIRE ITEM

A. APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF FIRE DUTY OFFICER VEHICLE

Fire Chief Schmidt reported that because this is the first-year budgeting for the fire service, there are year-end unexpected funds. Now is an opportune time to purchase a used SUV type vehicle with an emergency sign package to provide duty officers. The vehicle is assigned to the person on duty who is to respond to each call. That individual arrives first at the scene, sizes the situation up and cancels or authorizes full department response. This practice is commonplace with most departments because it saves money and expedites the correct response.

Council asked about the type of vehicle contemplated, the cost, availability, wither capital funds were justified and how the duty officers program would be managed so response would be guaranteed, whether the vehicle is used to drive to work and how long the vehicle is expected to last.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY BLAKE TO AUTHORIZE UP TO \$40,000 PLUS 10% FOR ACQUISITION OF THE VEHICLE. MOTION CARRIED. 4 AYES.

B. APPROVAL TO HIRE THREE PAID ON CALL FIREFIGHTERS

Fire Chief Schmidt reported there have been seven (7) interested candidates, there are three (3) candidates that have completed background checks and he is optimistic that these candidates will be an exciting time for the department. The candidates are Ginger Warren, Cody Olsen and Justin Petrick.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER ALDERS, SECONDED BY RAINVILLE TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF THESE CANDIDATES' CONTINGENT UPON THEIR PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING. MOTION CARRIED. 4 AYES.

5. **SHERIFF'S REPORT**

126 calls for service over the month.
Some high call volume days and some 0 days.

Bar None has reached a settlement with the Department of Human Services on the investigation and the findings that were made last year. They were able to negotiate with DHS – it seems they were able to lift the two-year conditional license on the omagon program as well as amend some of the other issues in the original report. DHS has not provided any documentation yet, just an email from the Volunteers of America. Council needs to take no action at this time. Council directed the commander to bring Mr. Boyles up to speed on this issue.

November 10 was a busy day – The Sheriff's office, Nowthen Fire, Allina Health responded to a heroin overdose, used Narcan and a lot of work went into saving this person. It was a great working relationship between all the departments. Also on November 10th, all responded to a crash on Hwy 47 between a passenger vehicle and a dump truck. Also responding was the state patrol. Unfortunately, the driver of the vehicle was deceased. Everyone did what they could, even bystanders tried to put out the fire with extinguishers. The crash is still under investigation. This is a sample of what first responders see on a daily basis.

The county board did approve the contract between the sheriff's office and the City of Nowthen for the 2022 Law Enforcement Contract.

6. **PLANNING AND ZONING:**

2K) Moved from Consent Agenda. Mayor Pilon indicated that Planner Stockman called to indicate she wanted to amend the ordinance and believes it should be tabled.

MOTION BY MAYOR PILON, SECONDED BY RAINVILLE TO DEFER ACTION ON THIS AGENDA ITEM UNTIL A FURTHER MEETING. MOTION CARRIED. FIVE AYES.

7. **PUBLIC WORKS – NONE**

8. **CITY COUNCIL**

A. Approval of Improvement Project at the Recycling Center

Mayor Pilon asked Council Member Rainville to report. Rainville indicated that the city council appointed she and Council Member Greenberg to collaborate with staff and a local vendor to determine the most appropriate improvements to be made to the recycling center and work with staff to receive a proposal. North Country Construction did provide the quote included in the packet. Rainville reviewed the proposed improvements. The expectation is that the work included in the proposal will be completed in 2021 as is required by Anoka County and the funding taken from the existing balance in the city's accounts.

Council members concurred that the anticipated improvements will be beneficial and ensure that the facility will be productive and usable year-round which is especially important considering the Tuesday through Saturday extended hours. The expenditure is expected to be less than \$42,000.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER BLAKE, SECONDED BY GREENBERG TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO \$42,000 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE QUOTE PROVIDED IN THE PACKET. MOTION CARRIED. FIVE AYES.

B. Status of Supplemental Grant for 30 Yard Roll Off Container for Recycling Center

Council Member Rainville stated that as part of the subcommittee's work, the SCORE Grant was researched. The score grant allows for an expenditure of up to \$10,000 for item or items which will increase the productivity of the recycling center. After collaborating with the staff, a quote for a thirty yard roll off container has been received. Since the Rolloff is to be used for sheet metal it is to be heavy duty metal. Rainville researched the statutes and found that this item should not be subject to tax therefore saving the city over \$1,100. Delivery will be \$495 bringing the total to \$9,150. The old one will be sold for \$1,000 which will go back into the recycling account. The roll off must be ordered before the end of the year.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER GREENBERG, SECONDED BY BLAKE TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE UP TO \$10,000 USING THE SCORE GRANT TO PURCHASE THE NEW ROLLOFF. MOTION CARRIED. FIVE AYES.

C. Status of Financial Assistance Efforts

The staff solicited two three-year audit proposals last fall. The city council subcommittee interviewed the two firms. The subcommittee also solicited a one-year proposal from Mike Pofahl who has completed the city audits for years. The subcommittee recommends that Mike Pofahl complete the 2021 audit at a cost not to exceed \$8,950.00.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY GREENBERG TO SELECT MIKE POFAHL TO COMPLETE THE 2021 CITY AUDIT AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$8,950.00. MOTION CARRIED. FIVE AYES.

The subcommittee has concluded through the auditor selection process that the city financial records keeping system, process and regulations should be looked at and refined. Proposals were solicited from the two firms who proposed to be auditors for the next three years as well as Ehlers and Associates. The subcommittee is waiting for the proposal from Ehlers.

The city council asked why such action is necessary now as well as the cost. This review is to assure that the city financial system is up to date and ready for the audit. The cost is based upon the number of hours contemplated by the proposer.

The city council concurred that a special city council meeting should be scheduled once the Ehlers Proposal is received, and a report can be prepared for the city council consideration.

MOTION MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY BLAKE TO SCHEDULE A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN A TIMELY WAY TO CONSIDER PROPOSALS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. MOTION CARRIED. FIVE AYES.

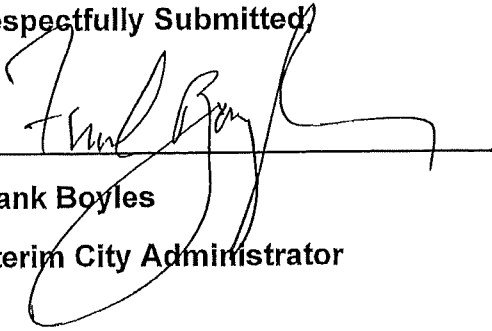
D. The Mayor indicated that Kelly (the recycling attendant) would like to take his birthday, December 23rd off and the center would also be closed December 24th and 25th.

MOTION BY GREENBERG, SECONDED BY ALDERS TO CLOSE THE RECYCLING CENTER THURSDAY, FRIDAY, AND SATURDAY OF CHRISTMAS WEEK. MOTION CARRIED. 5 AYES.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER RAINVILLE, SECONDED BY BLAKE TO ADJOURN.

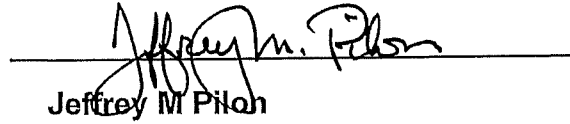
Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Boyles", written over a horizontal line.

Frank Boyles

Interim City Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey M. Pilon", written over a horizontal line.

Jeffrey M Pilon

Mayor