

# VIRGINIA CITY COUNCIL

## COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

**CITY OF VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA, February 28, 2017**

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Virginia, Minnesota was called to order by Mayor Cuffe, Jr. at 6:34 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall.

Present: Councillor Littlewolf, Paulsen, Baranzelli, Johnson, Jorgensen, Baribeau  
Mayor Cuffe, Jr. (7)

Absent: None

Mayor Cuffe, Jr. led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Sexual Assault Awareness Month Proclamation will be added to the last City Council meeting on March 28, 2017.

Moved by Councillor Jorgensen, supported by Councillor Baranzelli to approve the consent agenda as follows:

1. Approval/correction of minutes of Regular Meeting held February 14, 2017
2. Adoption of Finance Resolution No. 17-004 Schedule of Bills.
3. Approve one day temporary liquor license for Friends of the Greenhouse, March 18, 2017 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Olcott Park Greenhouse.
4. Approve travel request for Steve Estey, Chris Rengstorf, Jacob Roskoski to attend the Death Investigation in Brainerd, MN April 20-21, 2017, for a total cost of \$615.00.
5. Approve the 2017 Used Metal Dealer's License for A+ Auto Salvage.
6. Approve the 2017 Transient License for Walter Wallis, DBA/Barb's Fried Bread.
7. Approve the Exempt Permit for the Ruffed Grouse Society to hold a raffle at the Coates Plaza Hotel on April 20, 2017.

Motion Carried.

Jim Makowski, Tony Jeffries and Beth Pierce appeared before the Council to give an update of the Iron Range Tourism Board and how they promote tourism on the Iron Range. The purpose of the Board is to promote the entire Iron Range from Hibbing to Hoyt Lakes through lodging with a 3% tax that is added onto a room charge or a participating campground stay, which is then sent to the tax administrator for the Tourism

Bureau. These funds are used to promote the areas that they are generated from. Advertising is split between the business and leisure type of tourism. Beth Pierce stated that the total amount spent by visitors in 2015 on lodging was \$13 million, food \$14.5 million, retail \$10.5 million and \$10 million on activities. Looking forward, Virginia will have the new bridge as an attraction along with the large expansion of the OHV Park that will be titled the Virginia Eveleth OHV Park.

Moved by Councillor Baribeau and supported by Councillor Paulsen to approve entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU #16059) between the City of Virginia and St. Louis County for 24 hour response protocol for reports of child maltreatment. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Baribeau and supported by Councillor Littlewolf to approve submission and if approved, the acceptance of a MN OSHA 50/50 matching safety grant for purchase of GloWear Jackets and a safety rated gas storage cabinet for the Public Works Department (approximate cost \$6,413.32) with the City responsible for half of the costs. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Littlewolf and supported by Councillor Baribeau to authorize travel for up to four (4) city staff to attend 2017 Day on the Hill, March 9, 2017, St. Paul, MN. Motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding the proposed Resolution opposing the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service's proposal to withdraw 240,000 acres of land in NE Minnesota from future leasing, exploration and potential development. Councillor Littlewolf did not agree with the language of "politically motivated" in the resolution and felt that it should be removed. This Resolution also requests US Senator Amy Klobuchar and US Senator Al Franken to join Congressman Rick Nolan and publicly state both their opposition to the withdrawal and formally request immediate reversal by the Trump Administration.

Moved by Baribeau and supported by Jorgensen to adopt Resolution No.17- 041 opposing BLM-USFS proposal to withdraw 240,000 acres of land in NE Minnesota from future leasing, exploration and potential development with the amended language, removing the term "politically motivated." Resolution adopted unanimously.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee of the Whole Meeting held February 21, 2017:

Dana Hiltunen, HRA Executive Director, was present to discuss the Residential Rental Unit Garbage rate and how it would affect the Washington Manor budget. At the Committee of the Whole Meeting on February 28, 2017, the City Administrator and HRA Director were asked to meet to discuss the garbage rates. As part of this meeting, it was proposed that a Large Unit Rental Rate be created that would match what a single family residential unit (non-rental) would pay. This rate would be used only for large commercial rental units with 45 units or more. The rate could be phased over three years until the garbage rate for Large Unit Rental would equal the Single Family Residential rate. The Council also discussed the impact this would have on residents if the full amount was passed on directly to the tenant.

Moved by Councillor Jorgensen and supported by Councillor Johnson to adopt Resolution No. 17-042 Creation of Large Unit Rental Garbage Fee with rate to be allowed only for rental dwellings that are forty-five (45) units or more per building, with rate increases to begin on April 1, 2017 with the following phased approach:

Step 1 April 1, 2017 Increase Rate to \$5.08 per unit

Step 2 April 1, 2018 Increase Rate to \$7.50 per unit

Step 3 April 1, 2019 Increase Rate to \$10.30 per unit

Resolution adopted unanimously.

A review of two proposed operating budgets from Ms. Hiltunen broke down a phase-in option that would increase the rents over the course of a three year period by 1% the first year, 1.5 % the second year and 3% the third year. Councillor Littlewolf voiced her concerns on increasing rents at this time and asked the Council to be thoughtful about how this was done with concerns on the impact this will have on the residents.

Moved by Councillor Jorgensen and supported by Councillor Johnson to maintain the 2017-2018 Washington Manor Budget with a zero percent rental increase to residents. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Littlewolf and supported by Councillor Johnson to authorize a letter of support to AEOA to continue with the Live Well at Home Grant and for the City to offer financial support of \$15,000.00.

Ayes- 6 Jorgensen, Johnson, Littlewolf, Baribeau, Paulsen, Cuffe Jr.

Nays- 1 Baranzelli

Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Johnson, supported by Councillor Littlewolf to approve the revised Travel Policy as presented. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Baranzelli and supported by Councillor Baribeau to approve the Credit Card Policy as presented. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Jorgensen supported by Councillor Baribeau to approve entering into a contract with St. Louis County Crushing and Maintenance Striping Program for 2017 in an amount up to \$10,000.00. Motion carried.

Moved by Councillor Jorgensen and supported by Councillor Paulsen to adopt Resolution No. 17-043 approving the 2017 Tennis Professional Contract with Jim Prittinen as a contract employee. Resolution adopted unanimously.

Moved by Councillor Baribeau, supported by Councillor Jorgensen to set the Board of Appeals and Equalization meeting for Wednesday, April 26, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. Motion carried.

#### COMMISSION LIAISON/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

City Administrator Britt See-Benes stated that contractors have been contacted to repair the Miner's Memorial sound system and scoreboard.

Councillor Baribeau updated the Council on the recent Virginia Public Utility meeting stating that Dave Curry will be retiring after 26 years and Nancy Graham will be moving on to a new opportunity. They also discussed the proposed electric charging station for electric cars and potential installation sites.

Councillor Baribeau updated the Council regarding the RAMS meeting he attended and stated that another Laurentian Energy Authority resolution may need to be reviewed in the future. He will have the RAMS meeting minutes distributed to the Council.

Mayor Cuffe, Jr. gave updates on the following events:

- The Friends of the Greenhouse will be holding their Green Envy Fundraiser and Annual Membership drive on Saturday at 2:00 p.m., March 18, 2017; admission is free for members and \$5 for non-members.
- The second Townhall meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 15, 2017 starting at 6:00 p.m. in the South Room of the Miners Memorial to offer information and answer questions regarding: Predatory Offenders, Virtual Crime Watch, Police Body Camera Policy and Survey
- Minnesota Discovery Center is having a Crafts and Crops Artisan Fair on Saturday, April 8, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- The Eveleth Virginia Airport will be having an open house on Wednesday, March 8, 2017 - Everyone is welcome!

Mayor Cuffe, Jr. stated that the City Council did approve the purchase of the dog for the K9 Unit. The dog's name is Teddy and he will be coming from the Czech Republic next week. Officer Grivna will be the Officer assigned to the canine.

Mayor Cuffe, Jr. announced he will be at the Capital this week to speak on behalf of the Council. He also served on a panel for Congressman Nolan last Friday and spoke about the \$1 trillion-dollar infrastructure plan President Trump is working on. The panel consisted of engineers, St. Louis County, MPCA and members of Public Utilities Commissions.

City Administrator Britt See-Benes also stated that the owners of the Mall (Rockstep) are beginning Phase I for the demolition of K-Mart and as a part of Phase II they are seeking potential tenants that would suit the mixed-use concept proposed in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan.

Adjourn at 8:33 p.m. to Tuesday, March 14, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.