

Approved on 03/11/2024

**Whalan City Council  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Monday, February 12, 2024  
Meeting held at the Whalan Town Hall and via Zoom**

**Present:** David Hallum, Kim Berekvam, Thore E. Johnson, and Sheila Higbe; and Owen Lewis (via Zoom)

**Absent:**

**Visitors:** Barb Jeffers, John Gaddo, Tammy Hallum, Diane Knight, Renee Bergstrom, Mary Bell, Joe Goetzke, Tammy Hughes, Randy Berekvam and Ben Ruberg (in person); and no guests (via Zoom)

**Regular Meeting:**

Mayor Hallum called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**B. Agenda:** Member Johnson motioned to approve the agenda with the following additions:

NEW: Request for City to serve as Fiscal Agent for poetry (of Diane Knight) project

MISC: Gas Pump Meter, Music in the Bluffs Update, and Utility Poles Repair

Member Higbe seconded the motion. Motion carried, with all in favor via a Roll Call Vote.

**C. Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of the January 8, 2024 Council Meeting were read by Mayor Hallum. Member Johnson motioned to approve the minutes of the Council Meeting as presented; Member Lewis seconded the motion. Motion carried, with all in favor via Roll Call Vote.

**D. Treasurer's Report:** Clerk Grossell provided the treasurer's report. The following are the bank balances as of 01/31/2024: General Fund \$51,163.51, Court Reimbursement Fund \$10,658.19, Siding Upkeep Fund \$1030.00; Taste of the Trail \$2900.98, Ballfield Fund \$935.06, Beautification Fund \$187.00, General Capital \$27,803.00, and Electric Fund \$57,166.64. Member Berekvam motioned to approve the treasurer's report including the following accounts payable:

Claim No	Vendor	Detail	Amount	Check Number
	Payroll	January 2024 Payroll Period	January Net Payroll – R. Berekvam	\$ 260.88 6299
	Payroll	January 2024 Payroll Period	January Net Payroll – T. Grossell	\$ 450.00 6300
02122401	Plunkett's Pest Control	Jan Pest Control	\$ 46.52	6301
02122402	Acentek	Feb 2024 Phone	\$ 40.26	6302
02122403	Whalan Museum	February Internet Expense (in full)	\$ 70.26	6303
02122404	MiEnergy	Purchase Power, invoice	\$ 3753.60	6304
02122405	Rushford Hardware	Parts	\$ 27.98	6305
02122406	NuWay K & H CoOp	Fuel	\$ 507.74	6306
02122407	LMC Insurance Trust	Workers Comp Premium (after audit)	\$ 234.00	6307
02122408	Teresa Grossell	Annual Tax Forms, Postage, photo copies	\$ 86.25	6308
02122409	MiEnergy	Annual Joint Poll Use Billing	\$ 150.00	6309
02122410	Thore E Johnson	Snow Plowing in January	\$ 172.52	6310

Member Higbe seconded the motion. Motion carried, with all in favor via Roll Call Vote.

**E. Welcome to Visitors and Visitor Comments:** No comments were shared.

**F. New Business:**

- a. Welcomed and heard from Joe Goetzke, Executive Director for the Lanesboro Chamber of Commerce
- b. MiEnergy Wholesale Power Agreement 2024 was reviewed and approved on a motion by Member Berekvam and seconded by Member Johnson. Motion carried, with all in favor, via a Roll Call Vote.

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- c. A letter from a resident requesting snow removal from their personal/private driveway, who is willing to pay a fee for the service, was reviewed and discussed. For various liability and staffing concerns, the City will continue to not plow personal/private driveways. The Clerk will share this with the requesting resident, along with the name of someone who lives in town that does provide this service for others.
- d. On a motion by Berekvam, seconded by Higbe the Planning & Zoning Commission has permission to send the revised Short Term Rental Ordinance to the city attorney for review before presenting it to the council for further action. Motion carried, with all in favor, via a Roll Call Vote.
- e. Grossell shared an email received from an artist from Badger MN requesting a coffee mug (that represents Whalan) be sent to her for an art exhibit to be completed later this year. No one was aware of any mugs, so Grossell will notify the artist of this.
- f. Mary Bell requested that the City of Whalan serve as the fiscal agent for a grant that she is applying for through the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation for a project titled "The Honoring of Poet and Artist Diane Knight". \$6,750 is being requested and it is believed this would involve the City Clerk to make one deposit and later issue two checks (abiding by the grant requirements). Member Higbe motioned to provide this service, seconded by Johnson. Motion carried, with all in favor, via a Roll Call Vote.

**G. Continued Business:**

- a. Planning & Zoning (P & Z) Commission Vacancy: Member Johnson motioned to approve Resolution 2024-05 appointing Katlyn Evans to fill the P & Z Commission vacancy to complete the 3-year term serving through Dec 2026; Member Lewis seconded the motion. Motion carried, with all in favor, via a Roll Call Vote.
- b. Lanesboro Area Community Foundation Grant Application: Updated information was shared that the grant application process has changed this year, and this will be the only opportunity to apply for grant funds in 2024 and the deadline is now March 1. Several projects were again discussed with anticipated expenses identified. Due to the short turn-around time, Mayor Hallum and Member Higbe offered to work together on completing the grant application.

**H. Miscellaneous:**

- a) Clerk Grossell shared various updates, including that she will be on vacation from Feb 29 – Mar 10. The Council would like her to set an Out of Office Message on both the City's email and voicemail accounts noting the date she will return.
- b) A reminder that the Rural Board Meeting 2024 is scheduled for tonight at 7 pm. Mayor Hallum and Member Johnson both committed to attending to represent the City of Whalan.
- c) The idea of installing a gas meter was discussed to help better track how much gas is being used for various tasks. Member Johnson will get complete pricing before the next meeting, so a decision can be made if this should be considered further.
- d) The final two bands have been selected for the Music in the Bluff Series for this summer in Whalan. A motion was made by Berekvam, seconded by Higbe to secure contracts with Mollie B for Friday, May 31 from 6-7:30 pm; and with Lost Faculties for Saturday, July 20, from 4-7 pm. Motion carried, with all in favor, via a Roll Call Vote. The clerk will post these dates on the City's webpage, and we will need to find other ways to promote these concerts.
- e) The waning condition of two utility poles in Whalan were discussed and the clerk will request MiEnergy come take a look at them. (One on Main Street and the other on Alley Drive.)

**Next Meeting: Monday, March 11, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.**

**ADJOURN:** Member Johnson moved to adjourn at 6:01 p.m.; motion seconded by Member Higbe. Motion carried, with all in favor via Roll Call Vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Teresa L. Grossell  
City Clerk/Treasurer