

GROVE CITY REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

APRIL 8, 2014 @ 7:00PM

ALL PRESENT

BOARD OF REVIEW – JOE UDERMANN, MEEKER COUNTY ASSESSOR: Mr. Udermann informed the council that there had been 4 “Good Sales” out of 11 for the year in Grove City. The Assessor also informed the council that there were two properties in Grove City where due to inspections and re-evaluations the values went down and the City Council needed to approve the decline in property value. The first of these properties is parcel #25-0271000 located at 310 Sunrise Lane. The value currently is at \$160,900 and the council needed to approve lowering the property value down to \$138,700. The second parcel #25-0022000 located at 204 Atlantic Ave W had a value of \$54,400. The council was asked to approve a revaluation of \$46,000 for this property.

The Mayor opened the regular meeting up at 7:18pm.

Consent to Agenda: Councilmember Cram made a motion to approve the consent to agenda. A motion was seconded by Councilmember Nelson. Motion carried.

Resolution 2014-04 Grove City Royalty as Volunteers during the Aquatennial Parade. A motion was made by Councilmember Cram to approve Resolution 2014-04. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Nelson. Motion carried.

Resolution 2014-05 Donation of a Dish Washer for the Community Center. A motion was made by Councilmember Peterka to accept the donation of a dish washer from Sean Gallagher. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Nelson. Motion carried.

Visitors: Steven Lease came to discuss his outstanding utility bill with the council. He requested to have the late fee waiver until he catches up on his bill indicating that the late fee is preventing him from making progress with his past due balance. He stated that his wife had filled out a payment agreement plan which stated they would pay \$40 over their current balance every month. He did meet with Mayor Drange and Councilmember Miller last fall to discuss his outstanding balance and was informed at that time that the Council would probably be passing an increase to the late fee which would add to his outstanding balance. Lease also admitted that he had missed a couple of payments since the fall agreement. Councilmember Peterka told Lease that if they allowed him to make out a new payment agreement form, he had to stick to it. Any missed payments would result in voiding the agreement and the plan needed to be filled out by the end of the week. Councilmember Nelson made a motion to waive the late fees for Steven Lease until his past due balance was caught up and he had to pay his current bill every month along with an additional amount documented in a payment agreement plan. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried.

Tim Kinney, part owner in the Garden of Eating wanted to discuss that fact that they are charged for two water and two sewer access fees every month. The second access fees are due to the fact that there is an apartment within the building. Kinney stated that the apartment was not livable and has not been used as an apartment the entire time they have owned the building. A question was asked of the Assessor about the apartment and he replied that the space was classified based on its best use which is an apartment. Councilmember Nelson made a motion to reduce the access charges from two down to one until the apartment was brought back to a livable condition and then the access charges will go back up to two. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Peterka. Motion carried.

Back to Board of Review: Councilmember Peterka made a motion to approve the revaluation of the two properties mentioned earlier by the County Assessor. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried.

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The Mayor adjourned the Board of Review at 7:42pm.

OLD BUSINESS:

B. Locksmith: The City Clerk told the Council that Torkelson had been out and changed the locks and rekeyed the Community Center and the Fire Hall along with the utility room off of the gym at South Grove. A copy of the new bill was given to the Councilmembers. Councilmember Peterka told Dave Martin to get bids on changing locks and re-keying the City Shed and South Grove. Because the final bill was more than the original bill provided by Torkelson's, Councilmember Peterka made a motion to approve the higher amount of the bill. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried.

C. Lifetime Pet License: The City Clerk explained to the Council that based on the motion from the last meeting to give out citation to pet owners who don't license their pets, it would require a change to the ordinance which result in legal and publishing fees. The revenue generated from the pet licensing is so little it would not cover the costs. She went on to say the real problem is with animals running at large and the ordinance does state that this is a misdemeanor offense. If animals are caught running at large without a license, pet owners would have to pay for having the animal licensed and provide proof of shots plus pay for the misdemeanor ticket and impound costs. If the pet owners have their animals licensed and then the pet is caught running at large, the officer can return the animal to the owner and just issue the citation directly to the owner. The Clerk also stated that lifetime tags are in the office so people can come in and get their animals licensed. Councilmember Nelson made a motion to rescind to motion from last month's meeting to issue \$50 citations to pet owners who don't get their animals licensed. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Peterka. Motion carried.

D. City Clerk Raise: A motion was made by Councilmember Nelson to approve a 3% raise for the City Clerk which would amount to a .57 per hour and the raise should be retro-active to the one year anniversary date of October 16, 2013. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Peterka. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Bollig – Update on the Environmental Report and Preliminary Engineering Report: Bollig Engineering gave a power point presentation regarding the new sewer project and discussed the funding process for the project. Bollig asked for permission to hire someone to do some digging out by the wastewater plant to collect samples to have analyzed. Bollig also presented the Council with Task Order #3 needing approval. Task Order #3 is in regards to preparation of MPCA Tasks, Pond Topo & Archeology. This project will respond to MPCA's letter of warning on health and safety issues with the WWTP. Councilmember Peterka made a motion to approve Task Order #3. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried. Bollig went on to say the a Public Hearing needs to be held to discuss issues or concerns that anyone might have regarding the Preliminary Engineering Report on the Wastewater System Upgrades. The suggestion is to have it the same night as the regular council meeting in May at 7pm. Brian Bollig talked about sending a letter to MN Dot regarding the Highway 12 project and asking for widening the road due to the added parking on Highway 12 as a result of the Hogn-the-Road coming into town. Bollig will draft a letter and have the clerk send it off to MN DOT.

B. Clean-up Day. It was decided by the Council to contact West Central Sanitation and set a date of Wednesday, May 21st as the clean-up day. West Central Sanitation will pick up various items and charge the residents for the items on their garbage bill. The City Clerk will contact West Central Sanitation to set things up.

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C. South Grove Update: Councilmember Peterka explained to the rest of the council that the apartment that just became vacant is going to need new carpeting and a new refrigerator. There have been problems with the current refrigerator so the board thought it would be a good idea to purchase a new one and have the old one for a spare. Councilmember Nelson made a motion to get bids on new carpeting and the refrigerator. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried. Peterka stated that he would also like to get bids on fixing the heat registers in some of the apartments. Councilmember Nelson made a motion to get bids. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried. There was a complaint by one of the tenants at South Grove that a renter of the bird rooms and gym were extremely loud until after midnight. It was also mentioned that sometimes the doors are not pulled shut or lights turned off. The tenants at South Grove were told to call the Sheriff's Department if the noise issue was to happen again. The City Clerk stated that she had mentioned these things to the City's Officer and he will check doors and lights and have a schedule of the renters of the building so he can check in on them. Councilmember Peterka made a motion to rescind the motion from the last council meeting regarding having the vacant apartment professionally cleaned. Cleaning products purchased from Hillyard can do the same professional cleaning job. The motion was seconded by Mayor Drange. Motion carried.

Rescue: It was reported that there had been one medical call during the month. The Fire Department has been helping on calls due to the shortage of Rescue staff. Chief Munoz reported that the Rescue Department was looking at doing their 44 plan on April 17th at Ridgewater. They are also looking at doing a workshop in Redwood Falls on May 9th. May 18-24 is EMS week. The Rescue Department is trying to determine if they can do a breakfast fundraiser during that week. Dr. Searle is the new medical director for the department. The "Jaws of Life" have been picked up from Dassel. There will be training for this in June. The Rescue Department is going to be renewing their "Adopt a Highway" contract. They have applied for a grant from Centerpoint Energy to help split the costs of pagers with the Fire Department. There has been one person interested in the old Rescue rig.

Sheriff: There were 39 calls during the month. It was discussed with Officer Ryan about the issue of animals running at large and that these situations need to be enforced.

Clerk: Clerk Bergstrom informed the Council that Councilmember Cram had on several occasions asked about whether or not City Employees had to be bonded. After checking with the insurance department at the League, there is not specific bonding process. All City Employees and Council Members are bonded when they are hired or elected into the position. The City Clerk told the council that the Auditors are coming at the end of April and that that will be her main focus area over the next few weeks. An updated list of the residents with outstanding utility bills was presented to the council. It was reported that one individual had been shut-off already. Heartland funds came in to pay off a little more than half of the bill owed but there has been no contact with the resident since. Letters had gone out along with past due notices to people letting them know that they are to be paid up and current by April 15th when the cold weather rule ends. A spreadsheet was given to the council for the past couple of years and the current year's revenue received along with an approximate numbers of times the Community Center and South Grove are rented out or used by various organizations. Bergstrom told the Council that she met with someone from the League about applying for a grant from OSHA for some equipment which would make some of the tasks for the City workers easier and prevent injuries. Prices

on the equipment would be obtained and given to the Council in the next several months. The control boxes for electrical usage had arrived. At some point in the near future a meeting would be held with Steve from Heartland, Jim from Omni-Pro and the electrician who would be installing the boxes to determine which businesses and households they will be installed.

UNAPPROVED

Public Works: Martin reported that the water line at the wastewater plant is still frozen. He is going to need to have running water by May 1st for chlorine purposes. Kyle Ziehl had a plugged sewer line. The line was on a dead-end so they couldn't tell if the City's line was working or not. This resulted in a bill to the City of about \$230. Martin told the Council that Brad Jans would be working more on an electrical project out at Paul Martin's. The street sweeper has been contacted and told Martin that due to the increase in sand and the brutal winter, the sweeping time would be longer. This will result in a higher sweeping cost for the spring. The estimate is around \$2261.25. This price will fall back down in the fall. Martin said he will get prices on curb painting. Councilmember Miller made a motion to allow Dave Martin to make the call on hiring someone to paint curbs. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Peterka. Motion carried. Martin told the council he is going to be getting prices on crack filling and replacement of some street signs.

The tractor loader, according to Martin, is on its last leg. The price two years ago to fix was \$6,000. A decision to scrap or sell might be needed because the City could just rent a bobcat. Dave Martin presented the Council with two options; one being he could completely retire as of June 30th from his employment with the City or he could phase into retirement by continuing to work for the City part-time after June 30th. He told to Council to think about it and not make a decision that night. Martin informed the Council that he is planning on taking vacation on May 12th.

Mayor: The Mayor presented some billing history on a customer's bill. She explained that a couple of years ago, several months showed huge water/sewer bills which they felt were incorrect. She asked the rest of the Council to consider giving the customer a credit on his bill. After some discussion, Councilmember Peterka made a motion to credit the customer's bill for \$500. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Voting yes: Peterka, Cram and Drange. Abstaining: Miller and Nelson. Motion carried. Mayor Drange wanted to remind everyone that the next Augustfest Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, April 30th at 6:30pm.

Cram: Councilmember Cram told the rest of the Council that here meter for the month of March read around 5,000 gallons when her normal monthly usage is only between 500 to 800 gallons. She did say she checked her meter and the manual read did match what her billing card stated but that she had no leaks and has all of her plumbing checked on a regular basis. The Council agreed to average out her billing charge. The City Clerk asked Cram about listing the laundry mat. Cram said she hadn't listed it. Terry Miller had talked to someone who was interested. The Clerk informed Cram that a public building has to be publicly listed. Cram said she would talk to someone about listing the building.

Nelson: Councilmember asked Dave Martin about needing summer help. Martin said that Doug Pratt worked out well last summer and they have had him help out on occasion during the winter. He didn't want to hire more help for the summer. The Clerk mentioned to the Council that Doug Pratt should get a raise of some sort, his wages being only \$8 per hour. Councilmember Nelson made a motion to increase Pratt's wage by \$1 per hour. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried.

Peterka: Councilmember Peterka asked Councilmember Miller if he had looked into increasing the rent for the City's farm land. Miller stated that he was still looking into it.

Miller: The Clerk had asked earlier if Miller had talked with the school who wanted to rent out the gym. Miller said he had talked to them and got a better understanding of the situation. They are a school needing to use the gym as a way of trying to meet the phy ed requirements and have a tight budget. They don't come over every day during the week and when they do they are only here for about 40 minutes top. Terry told the teacher that he would bring up a suggesting to the Council of renting it for

UNAPPROVED

\$30 per month but if any damage were to occur to the gym floor or if the kids left a mess behind, then the agreement would become void. The rest of the Council agreed to these terms.

Old Business:

A. Interviews for the Public Works Superintendent: The Council had chosen four candidates out of all of the applicants to go through a second round of interviews with two other Councilmembers. Councilmember Miller stated that his number one choice was the candidate that had some electrical background, had indicated that he already had ground training and was about six months away from getting his Journeyman's License. Miller felt that since none of the other candidates had water or sewer licenses, this individual did have something else to offer that could benefit the City with his electrical knowledge. There was further discussion by other Councilmembers. Councilmember Nelson made a motion to hire Mark Larson pending he pass all background checks. Councilmember Cram seconded the motion. Councilmember Peterka wanted it mentioned that if the City wants this individual to continue and finish his Journeyman's License, then they need to have him sign a contract just like the one Brad Jans did stating he had to stay with the City for a length of time or pay the City back for the training. Voting yes: Miller, Nelson, Drange and Cram. Abstaining: Peterka. Motion carried.

The starting wage was discussed and Councilmember Miller made a motion to have the starting wage be \$20. The Motion was seconded by Councilmember Nelson. Motion carried.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Miller. Motion seconded by Councilmember Cram. Motion carried.

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COMING EVENTS:

Fire Safety Training begins on April 21st @ 7pm at the Grove City Community Center.

April 28th from 1:30-3:00pm its 4H Club at the Library.

May 4th – Lions Annual Spring Breakfast Fundraiser at the Grove City Community Center from 8-12:30.

June 30th – The annual Grove City CARE Auction. As you do your spring cleaning, please donate items to the CARE Auction. Questions call 857-2274.

*** Don't forget to get your lifetime pet licenses for \$5.00 at the City Clerk's office. ***

*** City Wide Clean-up Day Information and Mike, the Recycler's info is attached. ***

***** Notice of Public Hearing on the Preliminary Engineering Report regarding the Wastewater and possible Road Improvements at the beginning of the next Regular Council Meeting on May 13th @ 7pm *****

Please come and bring your questions and concerns.