

**City Council Meeting
April 5, 2021
6:30 PM – City Hall
Meeting Held Electronically Via Zoom**

Mayor Scott Sherman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present: Mayor Scott Sherman, Council Members Steve Young, Eileen Moeller, Michelle Alexander, Pamela Eyden, George Borzyskowski and Aaron Repinski.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Scott Sherman noted with the phenomenal weather, the bluffside trails have reopened for use; but he asked the public to follow the adage "if leaving a track, please turn back." He noted that the Covid19 vaccine clinics at the East Rec are going well, and he encouraged all residents to sign up to receive it. He also thanked the firefighters who are assisting with this effort.

City Manager's Comments:

City Manager Stephen T. Sarvi reported on a fire last week at the Brookdale Assisted Living facility, and stated that the Winona hospital has taken in all of the displaced residents on a temporary basis. He also thanked the Central Garage employees who drove the spare transit buses to the scene to transport these residents.

3.1 Appointments to the Building & Fire Code Board of Appeals

In a letter to the Council, Mayor Sherman indicated that he was reappointing Brian Buelow and Mike Hansen to serve as the members of the Building and Fire Code Board of Appeals. In addition, he appointed Randy Knutson, Jacob Nicklay and Larry Strange to this board. Each of these appointments would be effective April 6, 2021 through March 18, 2024.

Thereupon Borzyskowski moved to confirm the appointments. Repinski seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

3.2 Renew Liquor Permit for Winona Tour Boat

The City Clerk received an application from Aaron Repinski, doing business as the Winona Tour Boat, for a Consumption and Display Permit for the tour boat operating from the Winona Levee. The effective dates of the license would be April 6, 2021 through March 31, 2022.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the license. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye, except Repinski, who abstained.

3.3 Levee Park Dock Agreement with Winona State University

Assistant City Manager for Park Rec Chad Ubl reported that Winona State University would like to continue the long standing relationship with the City of Winona regarding the docking of the Cal Fremling at Levee Park. The University has requested an extension of their license agreement to December 31, 2022. The City of Winona will continue to make any immediate repairs to the dock, yet further discussions on the long term viability of the dock need to continue.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the agreement and to authorize Administration to execute the same. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

3.4 Request for Drive-in Movie Series

Mr. Ubl reported that Treedome and the Park Rec Department would like to repeat their very successful Lake Park Drive-In Series again this summer. The City has applied for two grants to fund this series and was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, and a \$6,000 grant from the South Eastern Minnesota Arts Council.

The request is to hold a series of eight outdoor concerts and movies with amplified sound at Lake Park – Bandshell Area. The movies will begin at 9:00 p.m. and end at approximately 11:00 p.m. The dates of the events are May 29, June 12 and 25, July 17 and 24, August 7 and 28, and September 11. The Department is seeking the approval to allow food trucks at these events should the COVID restrictions recede.

Staff has indicated to Treedome, that all MDH guidelines for outdoor events and drive-in style programming must be met. Staff has also indicated to Treedome that the City has the right to cancel any one or all events due to the safety of the public.

Eyden moved to approve the request. Borzyskowski seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

3.5 Winona Parks – Ash Tree Planning

Mr. Ubl reported that Mr. Howard Krueger has requested that the Council consider fundraising effort to treat and replace ash trees within City Parks and other community locations. According to Mr. Krueger, his community group would work with the City to transition a city forest canopy of a heavily concentrated ash trees to a more diversified tree population. To lessen the abrupt deforesting of our parks, some trees would be removed by the City which are already dying or damaged from storms or planted in non-ideal locations. The group would fundraise to continue to treat a portion of the ash trees and replant the removed trees with larger trees that are 3 to 5 inches in diameter. Planting larger trees would speed up the process of obtaining a tree canopy and reduce vandalism of those trees.

Alexander moved to approve the fundraising campaign through the Community Foundation. Moeller seconded the motion, and after some discussion, it carried with all voting aye.

3.6 West End Skatepark Proposal

Zack Krage, owner and operator of Anthem Skatepark located within the West End Recreation Center presented a fundraiser proposal for improvements at the West Recreation Center. Mr. Krage said that his goal is \$215,000 in order to install an outdoor skate park and also a stage for music and other events.

Alexander moved to approve the fundraising campaign. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

3.7 Great River Shakespeare Festival Request for the Use of Levee Park

The Great River Shakespeare Festival has requested the use of a portion of Levee Park as an outdoor venue for their Festival in 2021. The area of Levee Park being requested is commonly known as the half patio and flood control drain area near the foot of Center Street. The Festival will construct a stage over the top of the flood control drain area, to host performances. The Festival is requesting the use of the area from June 4 – August 6, 2021.

The license agreement would allow the Festival to use the areas described above for the duration of their Festival season, with a few exceptions due to prior bookings within Levee Park. Levee Park will remain open to the public during the term of the license agreement, however, the City has agreed to block other events that use amplified sound during the Festival's performance.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the agreement and to authorize Administration to execute the same. Young seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye, except Moeller, who abstained.

3.8 Proposal for a Downtown Parklette

The City Clerk received a proposal from Jovy Rockey for a Downtown Parklette, to be installed at 76 East Third Street, in front of her business. This would consist of a 9 foot by 22 foot section of the parking lane on 3rd Street just in front of the public bench that is on the sidewalk. Ms. Rockey would use this space as a complimentary public space.

The space will have a green Astroturf “rug” to set a tone of a grassy area, approximately 9 x 22 feet’ in size. On each short side of the space a 6 foot long bench made of cinder blocks and 4x4 cedar posts, and on the long side of the space (nearest to traffic) would be 3 large wooden planters that would be filled with plantings and signage that would provide a project statement and indigenous peoples’ land acknowledgement this will read as follows:

“Welcome to this gathering place. This space was made to bring people together to greet one another, share stories, and build community. I recognize the land that this space is situated on is on the ancestral lands of the Dakota people. I acknowledge and honor the Dakota Nations and the sacred land of all indigenous people.” - Project Plackmaker, Jovy Rockey.

Alexander moved to approve the request for a semi-permanent installation May 2021 through October 2021. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

3.9 Request to Hold Parade by Lake Winona Manor

The City Clerk received a request from Jennifer Schultz, Lake Winona Manor and the Therapeutic Recreation Department, requesting to host a parade June 15 from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on the Winona Health Campus for the residents of Lake Winona Manor. The community will be part of the parade, including horses to be apart and will dispose of all droppings appropriately. They are requesting to park employee vehicles on one side of Lake Park Road, allowing vehicles to still pass through during the day of June 15.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the request. Repinski seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

3.10 Resolution of Support for the 2nd Daily Train

Mayor Sherman requests that the Council consider adopting the draft resolution showing the City’s support of the 2nd daily train. The following resolution was then presented for the Council's consideration.

Resolution 2021 – 24

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Transportation State Rail Plan includes a proposed 2nd Daily Passenger Train frequency (2nd train) between the Twin Cities and Chicago for which design planning is completed. This new service between the Twin Cities, Milwaukee and Chicago utilizes the current route of Amtrak’s Empire Builder at speeds up to 79 miles an hour; and

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota was awarded a Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) grant in 2020 totaling \$31.8M for infrastructure improvements along the existing freight railroad’s right of way to enable the 2nd train; and

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota needs to provide \$10M in matching funds to receive the CRISI grant; and

WHEREAS, \$19.3M of these funds will be invested in Winona for infrastructure railroad improvements that will not only enable the 2nd train but improve freight operations (See Addendum 1 for full description of proposed improvements in Winona):

- Rebuild siding, switches and signaling, and reconstruct 8 grade crossings: \$10.2 million
- Tower CK, track, switches, and junction rebuild: \$9.1 million.

WHEREAS, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment needed for the 2nd train, enabling greater freight train speeds, reducing railroad congestion, and providing significant improvements at eight grade crossings within the city making auto and truck travel safer; and

WHEREAS, the City of La Crescent will also realize freight rail infrastructure spending of \$20.9M in track and signal work reducing rail traffic congestion, for a total infrastructure spend of \$40.2M in our region creating many good paying jobs; and

WHEREAS, Winona residents are mainly reliant upon highways today for travel and the 2nd train would expand transportation options and access to 13 stations along for the route for our residents who cannot or don't want to drive or fly; and

WHEREAS, approximately 41% of college students in Winona have already used Amtrak train service, the 2nd train would greatly enhance travel options for students at Winona State University and Saint Mary's University; and

WHEREAS, the 2nd train would greatly benefit visitors and tourism for Winona, for such venues as the Great River Shakespeare Festival, Marine Art Museum, and bicycle tourism; and

WHEREAS, the 2nd train would offer greater reliability to points east than Amtrak's Empire Builder which originates its eastbound trip from the west coast, and offer greater frequency and travel choices for our residents; and

WHEREAS, the 2nd train will benefit Minnesota's economy by an estimated \$25M annually, by supporting and increasing jobs, tourism, and creating a more economical travel choice; and

WHEREAS, many states in the mid-west and around the country are investing in more passenger rail service as they realize the economic and mobility benefits of such services. Some of these states include but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, North Carolina;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Winona Minnesota, that it hereby supports funding the proposed 2nd Passenger Train Frequency between the Twin Cities and Chicago, and requests that the Minnesota Legislature approve a minimum of \$10M to provide matching funds to secure the CRISI Grant Award as described above.

Thereupon Young moved to waive the reading of the resolution and to adopt same. Motion seconded by Moeller, and carried with all voting aye. Thereupon the Mayor declared the resolution duly adopted.

5.1 Facilities Plan for Wastewater Treatment Plant

Public Works Director Brian DeFrang reported that the City has been informed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) that there will be a phosphorus limit that will be imposed on the effluent from the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) by 2028. The first step in meeting this mandate will be creating and implementing a Facilities Plan for the WWTP. This facilities plan will determine which methods will be most effective for the removal of phosphorus which will in turn determine upgrades and improvements for the WWTP for phosphorus removal as well as other areas that may need to be improved. These improvements are anticipated to have a large cost associated with it, so the report will also explore grant and loan opportunities. Accompanying the report will also be a rate study so that the Sanitary Sewer Utility is able to pay for costs that would be over any grant monies received. This rate study would also provide a cost comparison of similar city's sewer rates.

The result of this facilities plan is anticipated to be presented at a public hearing in July or August and then the Council would vote on the facilities plan following this hearing. SEH Engineering has a proposed cost for this report of \$88,610 and this includes the rate study in this plan. The contract is attached for your review. These costs would be paid out of the Sanitary Sewer Utility.

The following resolution was then presented for the Council's consideration.

Resolution 2021 – 25

WHEREAS, A phosphorus effluent limit mandate will be imposed on the City of Winona Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP); and

WHEREAS, a Facilities Plan for the WWTP is needed to determine improvements to the WWTP; and

WHEREAS, SEH Engineering has provided a proposal to produce this facilities plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Winona, Minnesota, that the proposal dated February 2, 2021 be accepted and enter into a contract between the City of Winona and SEH Engineering and the Mayor and City Clerk are authorized to sign the contract.

Thereupon Borzyskowski moved to waive the reading of the resolution and to adopt same. The motion was seconded by Eyden, and carried with all voting aye. Thereupon the Mayor declared the resolution duly adopted.

5.2 Financial Planning Model

Finance Director Jessica Wojahn reported that the City has capital projects that Council may wish to fund in the future. To facilitate the funding decision of future capital projects, a long-term financial planning model could be created. This plan will enable its users to see the impact of capital projects to the tax rate while taking projected tax base changes into account. City staff will be able to maintain this planning model with anticipated capital projects, tax base projections, and funding sources which will help provide additional information to capital project decision makers.

BakerTilly has a proposed cost of \$15,250 for the development of this plan which will take approximately 10 weeks to complete. The costs would be paid by reassigning priority of the 2021 Finance Department budget.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the agreement and to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the same. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

5.3 Grant Agreement with the Minnesota State Arts Board

The City of Winona, in partnership with Treedome, prepared a grant application for funding through the Minnesota State Arts Board, Creative Support for Organizations, to host a summer Drive-In Series. The Drive-In Series is a repeat of the very successful Music and Movies Drive-In Series held during the pandemic. The City of Winona was awarded a \$15,000.00 grant to continue the program this summer.

The following resolution was then presented for the Council's consideration.

Resolution 2021 – 26

WHEREAS, the Minnesota State Arts Board Agreement for Grant #111900, Creative Support for Organizations is accepted; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Clerk are authorized to execute this Agreement and any amendments on behalf of the City of Winona.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Minnesota State Arts Board Grant Agreement #111900 is accepted; and that the Mayor and City Clerk are authorized to execute this agreement and any amendments on behalf of the City of Winona.

Thereupon Borzyskowski moved to waive the reading of the resolution and to adopt same. The motion was seconded by Moeller, and carried with all voting aye. Thereupon the Mayor declared the resolution duly adopted.

5.4 Friendship Center Grant Request

The Winona Friendship Center will apply for a grant through the Minnesota Department of Human Services. We are wishing to apply for a Live Well at Home grant. This grant is to develop and /or provide services for older Minnesotans to live in the community. It allows local communities to improve their capacity to develop, strengthen, integrate programs, and maintain home and community-based services for individuals' age 65 and older and at risk of long-term nursing home use and/or spending down into Medical Assistance.

For the past two years, we have been providing Chore opportunities for older adults. If we receive this grant, it would help us expand into more areas of home services such as grocery shopping, meal preparation, and transportation to shopping. We also hope to collaborate with the Fire department and 1st Responders to decrease the number of calls they receive for lift assist due to falls. We would do this by providing resources and referrals to the resident in gaining access to better home maintenance and/or strength training for better stability and lessen the risk of a fall. We would utilize our Bridges Health Winona Athletic Training students and nursing students for home assessments, as well as the current Senior Advocates.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the grant application. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

5.5 Friendship Center – Air Conditioning Repair

The air conditioning unit that services the first floor of the Masonic Temple – Friendship Center experienced a failure early in 2020. At the time, the City did not repair the unit due to the planning of the Masonic Temple HVAC replacement/upgrade project and closure of the Center due to the pandemic.

The Masonic Temple HVAC replacement/upgrade project has had several delays as we work through SHPO requirements for that replacement. Due to this delay, staff requested quotes and options for temporarily cooling the first floor space. The most reasonable and cost effective solution is to fix the compressor on the existing air conditioning unit. The estimated cost is \$12,250, and staff is recommending a transfer of up to \$12,250 from the Facility Fund to complete the this project.

Moeller moved to approve the funds transfer to complete this repair project. Young seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

5.6 West Lake Winona Curly Leaf Pondweed Treatment

John Howard, the City's Natural Resources and Sustainability Coordinator, submitted a \$1,800 grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) to continue efforts for treating the invasive curly leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) in Lake Winona. The City will still need to spend approximately \$3,200 to \$3,700 to complete the treatment. In past years, this funding has come from the stormwater fund, and staff proposes doing so again this year.

The treatment this year would build off the progress from the 2020 treatment and cover 12 acres. Approximately 11.85 acres were treated last year with passive treatment via diffusion of the herbicide to other lake areas. Another 5 or 6 years of treatment will be needed to treat the entire lake, and after that time, only periodic and highly targeted treatments should be necessary.

Staff would contract with an applicator to apply herbicide late in the spring or early in the summer. The herbicide of choice is known as endothall, which is a contact-based herbicide. Curly leaf pondweed is the first plant to begin growing, and the only one active at that time of year, so no more than minimal damage would be done to native plant species. Toxicological studies by the EPA have found the chemical to be safe to water recreationalists and has no significant adverse effects to aquatic life.

Moeller moved to approve the grant and proceed with treatment program. Repinski seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

5.7 Community Forestry Corps Program

Mr. Howard reported that the City was invited to submit an application to host a Community Forestry Corps (CFC) member for the 2021-2022 service term. The current CFC member with the City, Katie Grannes, has been instrumental in updating our City tree inventory and coordinating tree planting. The CFC program is within the AmeriCorps family of programs, and is administered locally by Serve to Grow out of the Twin Cities. The City's specific work plan still needs to be developed and finalized, but staff anticipates having the member principally focus on tree planting and invasive species removal. There is no required match in dollars or in-kind time.

There are two types of service terms: full time (40 hours/week) and part-time (25 hours/week). Given the expected workload, staff suggests applying for a part time member to ensure they can be fully engaged now that the tree inventory is nearly completely updated. The City's natural resources and sustainability coordinator would be the primary supervisor and will work closely with the City's forester and outdoor recreation coordinator on projects.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the CFC application. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

7.1 Council Concerns

Borzyskowski asked for an update on the repairs for the Hamilton Street railroad crossing. Mr. Sarvi has not received a response yet from the railroad company, but he noted that the legislation for the 2nd daily train includes funds for track improvements in the city. Mr. DeFrang reported that the Street Department did do some patching there.

Moeller thanked the Fire Department and other city staff involved with the vaccine clinics being held at the East Rec.

Repinski relayed complaints he has received about excessive noise from motorcycles and trucks in the area around Huff and Broadway.

8.1 Consent Agenda

The City Clerk presented the Consent Business Agenda as follows:

- Item No. 8.1: Approval of Minutes – March 15, 2021;
- Item No. 8.2: Final adoption of ordinance to amend the Unified Development Code;
- Item No. 8.3: Claim against the City by Vic Noland.

Borzyskowski moved to approve the consent agenda. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

The time being 7:45 p.m. and there being no further business to come before the Council this evening, Borzyskowski moved to adjourn. Moeller seconded the motion, and it carried with all voting aye.

Monica Hennessy Mohan
City Clerk

Scott D. Sherman
Mayor