

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NELIGH, NEBRASKA
July 9, 2024

The regular meeting of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Neligh was held at the City Council Chambers on Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at 7:00 P.M. Present were Council Members Dale Wilkinson, Stephanie Lundgre, Ted Hughes, and Leonard Miller. Absent was Mayor Joe Hartz. Also in attendance were City Attorney James McNally, Economic Development Director Lauren Sheridan-Simonsen, City Supt. Dan Donaldson, City Clerk Danielle Klabenes, Police Chief Logan Lawson, News Reporter Kelli Garcia, Traci Jacobsen, and Don Zegers. Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Antelope County News on July 3, 2024. Notice of this meeting was given to the Mayor and all members of the Council and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of notice and the agenda is attached to the minutes. The availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Council of this meeting. All proceedings thereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public. Council President Hughes presided over the meeting and noted that a copy of the Open Meetings Law, located on the east wall of the City Council Chambers was available to the public. City Clerk Klabenes recorded the minutes. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member Wilkinson moved to approve the June 11th regular meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Miller, and Wilkinson. Abstain: Lundgren. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

TREASURER REPORT

Clerk Klabenes reported the June treasurer report showed department revenues and expenses with 75% of the budget year completed. She reported the spinning reserves for electric generation for the month of May in the current revenue of \$3,174. She reported this was the city's half of the spinning reserves and Tenaska would have received the same amount. She reported the current revenues in Park Foundation of \$49,685 was the collection of donations for the Neligh Parks Upgrades projects including the Phase 2 Inclusive Playground. *Council member Lundgren moved to approve the June 2024 treasurer's report as presented. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Miller, Wilkinson, Lundgren and Hughes. Opposed: none. Motion carried.*

WATER AND SEWER EAST HIGHWAY 275 PROJECT

City Supt. Donaldson reported that he and the city clerk had spoken with the City Engineer and Rutjens Construction would possibly start on the smaller water projects in September. No action was taken.

DANGEROUS BUILDING UPDATES

City Supt. Donaldson reported the resolution presented was for the property of 102 F Street to be considered a nuisance and dangerous property. He reported the two houses north of the property were currently being demolished by Rutjens Construction and considerably cleaning up the corner lot. He reported he had spoken with the property owner of 102 F Street about options to sell the property to neighbors or improve the lot himself. *Wilkinson moved to introduce for passage Resolution 2024-4 declaring the property of 102 F Street as a nuisance and a dangerous property in violation of the city ordinances. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Hughes, Miller, and Wilkinson. Opposed: none. Thereupon Council President Hughes declared Resolution 2024-4 adopted.*

The City Supt. reported that the property of 108 W 8th Street was not a dangerous building, but contained an outbuilding with chemical, paint, debris, and rubbish. He reported a complaint would be filed if the clean-up was not made by July 25th. He reported a letter was sent notifying the owner. No action was taken.

City Attorney McNally reported a letter was sent to the owner of 105 D Street and follow-up for the clean-up deadline was later in July. The City Supt. also reported that he was waiting for an asbestos report for a 3rd and E Street property that would be demolished by Klabenes Construction for the house, garage, and trees removed.

He reported the church on 8th and P Street was demolished and the hole filled in, and another 3rd Street property was cleaned out and scheduled for a fire department burn training in the fall. He reported he was waiting for the demolition application for a 3rd street and Highway 275 property following as asbestos removal report.

Discussion was held for a property maintenance code shared by the City of Norfolk that would allow the city an option to pursue complaints of an interior dwelling with inhabitable conditions to be inspected and rectified. City Supt. Donaldson reported the Norfolk building inspector was a certified inspector who would be hired at an hourly rate when called upon, but the city would have to adopt an ordinance for the property maintenance code verbatim to Norfolk's property maintenance code. Discussion was held that Battle Creek and Tilden had used the same building inspector and the certification of the building inspector with the property maintenance code were both honored in court. Discussion was held for bringing an ordinance draft back to the August Council meeting. No action was taken.

APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Hartz was absent from the meeting. Appointments were tabled to next month. No action was taken.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS REPORT

Economic Development Director Lauren Sheridan-Simonsen reported the economic development office continued to work with Neligh Community Center to assist them with setup of Venmo and working with LPI Communities for a free monthly newsletter paid with ads and free to all Neligh Community Center patrons. She reported fundraising was underway for a new HVAC system estimated at \$12,000. She reported notice of award for the Certified Local Government (CLG) grant application was anticipated in mid August to September. She reported the Neligh Carnegie Library at 510 M Street was added to the National Register of Historic Places which was one of the first actions of the CLG. She reported Hild Construction paid both loans from the market rate housing loan and the LB840 loan for the duplex project and BTB Construction was almost finished with their first home flip project. She reported \$723,000 was available to lend for housing projects. She presented drafts for new Welcome to Neligh signs. Council members discussed the colors, lighting ideas, and an interest in the thank you message on the back of the sign. She reported that the Phase 1 assessment for the Brownfields application for the theater was submitted which was the first step in the EPA clean-up grant. She reported the contractor, Tetra Tech, was drafting a plan of action to complete Phase 1. She reported the Antelope County Healthcare Foundation golf fundraiser would be held at Summerland this year and funds raised go to all the communities new ambulance purchases. She reported that the entrepreneur contest winner had withdrawn, leaving \$5,000 available for another program. She recommended the \$5,000 be allocated to the childcare website as Neligh would be the first community to initiate the inclusive website for families and childcare providers including insurance, childcare licensing, and direct bill programs. She reported the first phase was estimated at \$15,000 - \$20,000 with the Nebraska Community Foundation providing \$12,500 in matching funds. She reported the program would begin with Neligh with plans to expand to Antelope County and then Northeast Nebraska, before running statewide. She reported the Chamber of Commerce had presented Trent Hoefler with the Father of the Year Award and a \$4,100 grant for the annual BBQ was awarded by TC Energy. She reported the new Christmas lights had arrived damaged and the Assistant Director was working with the company to rectify. The ED Director reported Clearwater was finishing the Veteran's Park project, the Legion was nearly finished with the remodel project, and the Rodeo entertained nearly 3,500 people. *Wilkinson moved to approve the ED Report as presented.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Wilkinson, Hughes, Lundgren, and Miller. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Director reported Hilltop Community Pharmacy had applied for a \$1,000 grant for a \$7,000 signage project through the façade grant program and applied for the Attraction Startup Transition (AST) electric incentive for a 10% discount in electric utilities the first year and a 5% discount in the second year. *Wilkinson moved to approve a façade grant for signage for \$1,000 and an Attraction Startup Transition electric incentive for Hilltop Community Pharmacy at a 10% discount in the 1st year and a 5% discount in the 2nd year on electric utilities.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Hughes, Miller, and Wilkinson. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

ED Board member Traci Jacobsen reported on ED Director Sheridan-Simonsen's annual employee review per the contract of employment. She reported the board recommended approval for another one-year contract and to recognize the US Department of Labor salary thresholds effective January 1, 2025. Discussion was held that the salary could be reviewed further with cost of living increases and the federal salary threshold at the budget workshop in August. *Miller moved to approve the recommendation of the Economic Development Board for the one-year employment contract for the Economic Development Director.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Wilkinson, Lundgren, Hughes, and Miller. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

POLICE REPORT

Chief of Police Logan Lawson reported police presence increased in the park particularly during baseball games in June following suspicious activity in the park. He reported June calls included a shoplifting call, an assault, and a number of dog calls. He reported that all dogs off of their owner's property are to be leashed. He reported other June cases included attempted procuring, overgrown grasses and suspicious activity when cleaning out a vacated home. He reported a good reminder with the summer events and activities in the area to take the time to slow down and observe the stop signs. *Wilkinson moved to approve the June numeric and written police reports as presented.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Miller, Wilkinson, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

CITY SUPT. & ELECTRIC REPORT

City Supt. Donaldson reported another round of potholes would be worked on in July. He reported Tanner Knutson, Brad Thieman, and summer staff were doing a great job in the park with keeping up with mowing and trimming and with the ballfields. He reported with the cold temperatures in June and the pool not opening as much since the temperature outside must be 74 degrees before opening, that the Mondays in July would be open instead of closed for maintenance. He reported the sound system was replaced with a new microphone and the pool inspection had a few minor deficiencies that were already corrected. He reported the inspector was impressed with the pool deck replacement. He reported the sewer had a little grease buildup that was resolved with a chemical treatment. He reported Neligh was one of the locations for the state e-coli testing where any systems releasing water into a recreational river provide samples for testing. He reported that the water system did not pump near as much water in June as last year due to all the moisture June saw. He reported a couple of water lines were repaired in the north part of town during the gas meter relocation. He reported a random and unannounced inspection from Nebraska Department of Environmental and Energy at the Tree dump revealed no violations were found. On the electric side, he reported 2 outages in the north part of town were hit by lightning. In the generation plant, the city did not generate much in June but the City Superintendent anticipated generation time to increase with the forecasted high temperatures and outages in the southern part of the country. *Wilkinson moved to approve the Supt. report as presented.* Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Wilkinson, Miller, Lundgren, and Hughes. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

The City Supt. reported on issues with a couple of campers and tents in Penn Park that were not staying current with payment of camping fees. He requested consideration for a 14-day camping stay limit that the Park Board had also recommended and requested that the City Supt. have the option to allow another 14-day stay with timely payments and situations where construction employees are working in the area. Discussion was held for options to offer homeless campers, disconnecting utilities for campers, and whether to allow a 14-day stay limit in the parks. *Miller moved to approve to set a 14-day limit for camping in the Neligh parks with the option to extend the stay upon authorization of the City Supt.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Miller, and Lundgren. Opposed: Wilkinson. Motion carried.

City Supt. Donaldson reported the city should be receiving notice from the Attorney General and History Nebraska for a box car agreement and upon receipt of that agreement, the city would budget for the concrete base and rails to be placed 10 feet west of the prior resting spot on the state's property. He reported refurbishing of the box car would start after moving the box car into the resting spot. No action was taken.

City Clerk Klabenes reported the city office was notified that the state legislature had eliminated CDAA state

income tax credits for encouraging large donations to projects for 2024 which were being used to fundraise the city's match for the grant application. She reported a new program was to begin in 2025 that did not coincide with the grant applications in 2024 and the details of the new program were not available yet. City Supt. Donaldson reported the focus of the Neligh Park Projects would remain with the Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in 2024 and work on the nature trails for a 2025 Rails to Trails grant application. He reported the LWCF application would include the phase 2 4-piece inclusive playground in Riverside Park, a dog park in Russell Park, a pickleball court in Riverside Park, a fishing dock in Penn Park, and a 9-hole disc golf following high interest in the sport from a June 24th public input meeting. He reported the ideal location for the disc golf would be placed in Russell Park, but the clearing of brush may be cost prohibitive and by splitting the 9-hole course between Riverside Park and Russell Park, the Elkhorn River could be included as an additional challenge. He reported the option to add an additional 9-hole course could come with the trails application next year to complete an 18-hole course that would allow for tournaments to be hosted. He reported he had talked to the Antelope County Sherriff and Fair Board about using Russell Park for parking overflow during the 2024 County Fair. He reported Russell Park had good lighting now and the LED lighting on the new swinging and walking bridge would be complete. Clerk Klabenes reported an updated resolution may be presented at the August meeting as the projects for the grant application were being further refined. No action was taken.

NEW MOON THEATER REPORT

Council member Lundgren reported she had attended the Brownfields workshop in May and guided a nice tour through the New Moon Community Theater to attendees of the workshop. City Supt. Donaldson thanked and complimented Lundgren and ED Director Sheridan-Simonsen for a nice tour, noting that the attendees were interested in seeing all parts of the theater. Lundgren reported that the CLG would be working on a 80/20 split grant for the theater in the next grant cycle. She reported a different and new to the area Dueling Piano Entertainers would headline a fundraising event for the Theater on August 16th. She reported work continued with a grant writer on various grants available to the theater board. *Miller moved to approve the New Moon Theater report as presented.* Seconded by Wilkinson. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Wilkinson, Miller, and Lundgren. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Wilkinson moved to approve the current claims as presented. Seconded by Miller. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Hughes, Wilkinson, and Miller. Opposed: None. Motion carried.

There being no further business to conduct, *Miller moved to adjourn.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Miller, Lundgren, and Wilkinson. Opposed: None. Thereupon Council President Hughes declared the meeting adjourned. Time 8:41 P.M.

City of Neligh

Ted Hughes, Council President

ATTEST

Danielle Klabenes, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, City Clerk of the City of Neligh, Nebraska, hereby certify that on July 9, 2024; that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such agenda items were sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting; that at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available for public inspection at least twenty-four hours before the meeting; that the said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body; that all news media requesting notification concerning meetings of said body were provided advance notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting; and that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available and accessible to members of the public, posted during such meeting in the room in which such meeting was held.

(SEAL)

City Clerk