

**Harris City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 11, 2024**

- I. **Call to Order:** Mayor Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. **Roll Call:** City Clerk Shannon Geier conducted roll call. Present were Mayor Randy Carlson, Councilmember Diane Miller, Councilmember David Maack, Councilmember Al Siedow, and Councilmember Garret Pearson. City Clerk Geier announced that a quorum was present.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** Pearson made a motion to amend the agenda to add Gravel Bids to the regular agenda and approve the February 12 regular meeting minutes and accounts payable. Siedow seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- V. **Public Comment:** None.
- VI. **Regular Agenda:**
 - A. **Fire Department** – Chief Chapeau was present to review the written reports. Pearson made a motion to approve the purchase of a 45-gal. flammable safety cabinet from Interstate Products for \$1,002 plus shipping. Siedow seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. Siedow made a motion to approve the purchase of gloves, hoods, and helmets from Fire Safety USA for \$2,702.85. Miller seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. Siedow made a motion to approve FireCatt on a one-year trial basis for fire hose testing at a cost of \$2,365. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. Chapeau stated that a federal grant has been filed for a new tender @ \$480,000 and a complete package of all-electric extrication equipment @ \$60-70,000. The grant requires a 5% match from the City.
 - B. **North Branch Community Service Day** – This year’s North Branch Schools Community Service Day will be Thursday, May 23. Depending on the number of students, clean-up will be at Stark Field, Firemen’s Park, Schoolhouse Park, and/or Railroad Park.
 - C. **2024-02 Solar Ordinance** – Siedow made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-02, an ordinance regulating solar energy. Maack seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-1, Pearson opposed. Miller made a motion to authorize a summary publication of Ordinance 2024-02. Siedow seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-1, Pearson opposed.
 - D. **Pine Electric grounding of electric panel bid** – Miller made a motion to authorize Pine Electric to complete city hall electrical work by grounding the electric panel at a cost of \$494. Maack seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
 - E. **Harris Days** – Harris Club requested items for the July 26th, 27th, and 28th 2024 Harris Days event include closing Ginger from CR9 to CR10 and closing 439th from Ginger to Georgia on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and closing Gates for a touch-a-truck event on Saturday; city hall rental for a history presentation; ballfield and concession stand

rental; parade permit; gambling permit; and special event permit. The special event permit will include car show, vendor booths, live music, street dance, beer garden, touch-a-truck, kiddie Olympics, kickball tournament, food trucks, performances, and family fun events. Also requesting permission to place signs on the ballfield fence. Pearson made a motion to approve the requested items and waive fees for all. Maack seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

- F. **2024-04 Resolution Auer Steel** – Siedow made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-04, a resolution accepting a donation from Auer Steel to the City of Harris in the amount of \$100 to be used for the fire department. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- G. **Press Release** – Congressman Stauber issued a press release on the Community Project funding that was included in the March appropriations package. Funding was secured in the amount of \$1,574,000 for the City of Harris to extend sewer and water to I-35.
- H. **City council member / Staff** – The Mayor introduced an issue brought up by a local resident concerning a council member also working part-time in the city office. Miller explained that this issue has been researched multiple times over the years as there have been numerous council members working as part-time employees for the City of Harris in various positions. The Minnesota Attorney General issued a finding based on a MN Court case that states there is no compatibility of office problem if a holder of an elected or appointed office also occupies a volunteer or paid position that is not defined as an “office.” The definition of an “office,” in this context, includes all elected offices and those appointed positions that have independent authority under law to determine public policy or to make a final decision not subject to a supervisor’s approval. City Clerk Geier stated that there is also a law that provides for a small city exception to certain “offices” that are deemed incompatible for larger cities but compatible for smaller cities. She also stated that she is the one that makes any decisions and if the Council is not comfortable with the way she does her job, then give her specifics. The Mayor stated there are other people upset by the City Treasurer telling the fire department what they can buy or what shirts they can wear. City Treasurer Riesing responded that is part of her job as a fiduciary to the City and to the taxpayers to advise the city council when any department is overspending and suggesting ways to reduce costs. The Mayor questioned why Planning Commissioner Denny had been working in the office. It was explained that Denny had questions about a subject the Planning Commission was working on, and she was researching. Denny also helped with some filing and other tasks that the Clerk assigned her. All activities were supervised by the clerk, and it was strictly volunteer. The information at city hall is public and anyone has the right to request. There is a policy and process already in place that is being followed which includes the files will be made available but must stay in city hall. The Council acknowledged that there will always be people questioning how or why things are done. That is the reason for policies and procedures and the need to be transparent with what the city is doing.

- I. **City FB page** – The Council determined that the City does not need an official Facebook page. The source of truth should be the City website.
- J. **Disc Mower bids** – Pearson made a motion to approve the purchase of a John Deere R200 Disc Mower (5 discs) 6.58 cut width from Minnesota Equipment at a cost of \$11,361.48. Maack seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. The old flail mower and disc mower will be sold at Heidelberger’s Equipment Auction.
- K. **Definition of a Berm for the mineral extraction ordinance** – Siedow made a motion to approve the definition of berm for the mineral extraction ordinance as “A level space, shelf, or raised barrier separating two (2) areas”. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- L. **Gravel Bids** – Pearson made a motion to accept the bid from Rydberg and Sons for 3000 CY class 5 gravel @ \$18.58/CY. The gravel will be delivered to 480th St. east of Galaxy, Holman Ave., Evergreen Ave., and Elmcrest Ave. Miller seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

VII. Staff/Department Reports:

- A. **Public Works** – Written report. Problem with the grader. RDO will be out to inspect. Siedow asked when the supervisor position will be discussed. Put on next agenda.
- B. **Planning Commission** - Written report.
- C. **Parks and Rec** - Written report. The area of Schoolhouse Park that could be a potential trail site has fifteen acres that would be buildable if the City wanted to split it and sell off lots.
- D. **PeopleService Report** - Written report.
- E. **Treasurer’s Report** - Written report.
- F. **Clerk’s Report** - Written report.
- G. **Mayor and Council Reports** – Written report. Carlson asked if we should change the logo because it was used for the centennial celebration. Pearson made a motion to leave the logo as is. Maack seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-1, Carlson opposed.

VIII. Adjourn: Miller made a motion to adjourn. Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. There being no further business, Mayor Carlson adjourned the meeting at 8:52 pm.

City Clerk – Shannon Geier

Randy Carlson - Mayor

Date Approved