

**MINUTES
ST. STEPHEN CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 5, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Blenkush

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Blenkush – Mayor, Gene Skaj, Danita Traut, Steve Trobec, and Thomas Vouk

ALSO PRESENT: Kurt Niemeyer, Treasurer, Julie Jacobs, City Clerk, and Dolores Supan, Outgoing Treasurer

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Dennis Jensen and Jerry Hettwer

Jeff Blenkush stated individuals are attending this meeting via Webex.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Steve Trobec, to approve the agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

MINUTES OF JULY MEETINGS: The July Council Meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Danita Traut, to approve the July 1, 2020 minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

READING OF THE CLAIMS: July claims were reviewed. The Schmidty's charge on the city account is unknown to City Council Members and the Fire Department Chief, also the signature is unknown. The council is asking Kurt Niemeyer to dispute this charge. A motion was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Steve Trobec, to approve the claims, with the exception of the one charge being disputed. All in favor, motion carried.

READING OF RECEIPTS: Kurt Niemeyer explained the bond funding is not recorded this month due to not having a receipt. A motion was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Danita Traut, to accept the receipts. All in favor, motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: For the period: 6/1/2020 to 6/30/2020

Beginning Balance	\$948,595.55
Total Receipts	\$125,395.42
Total Disbursed	\$169,582.80
Ending Balance	\$904,408.17
Less Deposits in Transit	\$209.17
Plus Outstanding Checks	\$20,674.94
Total Per Bank Statement	\$924,873.94

Dolores Supan inquired if the CD monies at Falcon Bank will be depleted with the road project. Dolores stated the business savings interest has decreased extremely. Dolores explained the CD process (i.e. when to remove the funds, what penalties accrue, when they mature, etc.). Jeff Blenkush understood the business savings would be used first, and then possibly one CD. Randy Sabart shared the \$750,000 grant funds will be used first, which will be depleted within the next month. Jeff Blenkush stated the City's last resort would be to use all CD monies.

Tom Vouk explained talking with Sentry Bank after the July 1, 2020, minutes are approved and signed, the new authorized signers, Jeff Blenkush, Julie Jacobs, Kurt Niemeyer, and Tom Vouk can go to the bank to sign. Reminder to bring your ID.

Treasurer's report was reviewed. A motion was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Danita Traut, to approve the treasurer report. All in favor, motion carried.

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PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS: **Dennis Jensen – St. Stephen Lion’s Club.** Dennis Jensen is requesting a raffle permit for the St. Stephen Lion’s Club to hold a raffle on October 10, 2020, similar to the past years. Gene Skaj stated before the St. Stephen Lion’s Club starts advertising with posters the permit first needs to be approved by the City Council. A motion was made by Tom Vouk, seconded by Danita Traut, to approve the raffle permit for St. Stephen Lion’s Club, with the reminder the permit needs to be approved before advertising this event. All in favor, motion carried.

Jerry Hettwer – Bishop Trobec Council, Knights of Columbus. Jerry Hettwer is requesting a raffle permit for the Bishop Trobec Council, Knights of Columbus to hold a raffle, no bingo this year, on October 25, 2020 at the St. Stephen’s Parish Hall. A motion was made by Steve Trobec, seconded by Danita Traut, to approve the raffle permit for the Bishop Trobec Council, Knights of Columbus. All in favor, motion carried.

ST. STEPHEN FIRE & RESCUE: Jeff Drais reported there were 13 calls in July, total 72 calls in 2020. Training will be done on advanced airway.

RELIEF ASSOCIATION: Gene Skaj reported schedules are getting done. The Relief Association has a \$15,000 donation for the fire equipment fund. Danita Traut inquired if there will be an open house in September. Jeff Drais stated probably not. Tom Vouk stated a resident who lives in the Lakewood Valley Addition, has a culvert with four to five inches on sand in it, and was wondering if a firefighter would be willing to empty the culvert. Jeff Blenkush stated he could ask someone to volunteer for this, some names were mentioned. Randy Sabart stated it is the responsibility of the resident. Tom Vouk will follow up with the resident.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Paul Ritter reported the quarterly emergency management meeting was held on-line with an update on COVID numbers and future plans, also a new disasters map has been completed. Paul inquired what the outcome with the locks being placed on the sirens. Jeff Blenkush suggested Paul and him look at how many locks are needed, and these will be purchased. Noted that both sirens worked during July.

Jeff Drais explained there’s a disinfectant sprayer that can be used on fire trucks, cost is approximately \$1,200. Danita Traut expressed it seems costly. Jeff Blenkush explained the benefits for the Fire Department and the City Hall. Tom Vouk feels if this sprayer can be used in the future, once COVID is over, he’s in agreement with the purchase, but inquired how this would be paid for. Paul Ritter stated this could be purchased through the CARES Act. Gene Skaj stated it may take a while to receive the funds. Steve Trobec’s not opposed, especially if the CARES Act will pay for some of the cost. Discussion held how the sprayer would be paid for. Paul Ritter will check the details of the CARES Act. A motion was made by Tom Vouk, seconded by Gene Skaj, to approve the purchase of the Graco disinfectant sprayer for the City Hall and the Fire Department equipment, after CARES Act funds are used the City will pay a maximum of \$1,200 for the sprayer. All in favor, motion carried.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

1. **Road and Bridge:** Jerome Supan 9th and 12th Avenue and stated the Knettel property is within the city limits. Randy Sabart verified the Knettel property is within the city limits, to the east of the Knettel property is the Crever parcel which is in the township. Jerome stated back 50 years Donald Knettel bought some land from Jerome’s Dad to make this road 30 feet deep and up to the end of his property, which was approved by the City Council, but this was not recorded. Jerome stated this road has been maintained for several years. Randy explained, per Tom Jovanovich, if roads are maintained annually for a period of six years or more, the statutory definition of a city road applies.

Tom Vouk inquired if correspondence was received from residence on 9th Avenue NW. Randy Sabart shared that Liz Halet updated him on 9th Avenue, a survey crews marked the Right A Way, so there's something visual for residents to see. Someone inquired with Randy if there's been action for road improvement. Randy stated no formal plans or no council discussion, they intent was only on the Right A Way. Jeff stated the existing home owners at the time of the acquisition would not be assessed. Jeff will e-mail Liz for more of an update.

Randy Sabart shared the Right A Way on 12th Avenue that attorneys has been discussing this, and the Right A Way plat went to Stearns County for final review. Should be ready for signatures soon.

Randy Sabart gave an update on 11th Street South regarding the seal coating. Randy explained this street is due for seal coating or micro seal coating. The micro seal coating looks blacker, like an overlay. Randy could contact Astech. As for 1st and 3rd Avenues, Randy suggested not to invest in seal coating these roads currently. Dennis Jensen commented he works for MnDot, and suggest to have them give the city a quote for this project. Randy would be willing to contact MnDot and get a quote. Suggested was to receive more than one quote. Much discussion held. Gene Skaj inquired about 2nd Street regarding the cracks. Randy stated there weren't very many, it was what he expected.

- 2. Planning Commission:** Dan Schultz stated the Planning Commission met in July, but Mark Rodenwald cancelled. August's meeting date moved to Monday, August 10, due to elections being held on Tuesday, August 11. Rodenwald will be present at August's meeting. Meeting will be offered by WebEx also. Dan stated the former Werlinger property, behind Legatt's garage, site permit expired in August, and property is over grown. Jeff Blenkush suggested the City sends a letter stating the site permit is expired and they need to reapply for a new one, and the weeds on the property need to be taken care of.

SHERIFF'S REPORT: Danita shared there's a lot of noise violations and assaults are up from the previous months. Jeff Blenkush will contact Kellan regarding the assaults and if these are at general areas or at a specific address. Tom Vouk inquired on the Smoley Addition complaint regarding the speeding. Randy Sabart shared a statutory speed limit of 30 mph maximum is in the addition. Discussion held. With increasing the law enforcement presence, and a recommendation to set up a speed trailer the speeding violations will decrease.

HEALTH COMMITTEE: Nothing reported.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: **6th Avenue SE Improvement Project.**

Application for Payment # 2. Randy Sabart reviewed the application for payment # 2 of \$214,526.93 (document attached to original minutes). Highlighted was the standard practices for a city is to hold 5% (\$32,538.71). Randy explained how the payments work with the \$750,000 grant. Jeff Blenkush will sign the Application for Payment, and the city clerk sends the signed document to Melissa Blommel and Randy at SEH. A motion was by Gene Skaj, seconded by Tom Vouk, to approve the application for payment # 2. All in favor, motion carried.

Randy stated there are low points on 6th Avenue and the contractor will need to do an additional 300 to 400 feet of excavation of grid change approximately \$15,000. This application for payment will be ready for approval at the next City Council meeting.

Randy Sabart shared at the progress meeting paving of the road will start next week. Casey Zins from SEH is working with residents regarding rebuilding their driveways, six residents have been in contact with him. Randy gave a brief explanation of how this will work. A paid receipt is turned into the city clerk for payment, and they'll

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receive a credit check from the city. Discussion held about what Ferche covers for property owners, and what grade gravel will be placed. Much discussion held about the utilities work during this project.

Danita Traut stated concerns of residents:

- Inquired about stakes that were placed. Randy answered these are radius stakes for grading the ditch.
- Posted speed limits, restore a 30-mph speed limit that was previously there. Statutory speed limit is to allow the city a reduction to speed limits. Randy presented a Minnesota Speed Limits handout, and gave a brief overview. Randy explained how a speed study works, and shared a posted speed and design speed are different.
- Will there be a stop sign at 9th Avenue for emergency services. Randy stated once the road is paved, the plan accounts for stop signs at the minor involved intersections.
- Weight limit sign. Randy stated there are no formal weight limit signs in the contract, this needs to be a formal action from the council. No sign would be posted.
- Culvert too high at the swamp area. Randy doesn't agree with this opinion, but he's willing to look at this with someone who feels differently.
- Questions from property owners. Contact Jerry Sigfield 320-980-4107, or Randy 320-250-9187 or Casey Zins.

Jerome Supan inquired about culvert height. Discussion held about height of culverts. Expectations would be that it would be higher.

12th Avenue NE Improvements. Randy Sabart shared the handout of the Design and Construction Phases Services for 12th Avenue NE. Gene Skaj shared that Jason Ferche stated the ditches were place so the water would run correctly. Randy explained the tree line, and where the ditch would need to be. 32 feet is the street design, similar to 6th Avenue. Jeff Blenkush is in favor of building this road like the city has in the past. The was the consensus of the members. A motion was made by Danita Traut, seconded by Gene Skaj, to approve the agreement for professional services from SEH. All in favor, motion carried.

Randy Sabart presented the Proposal for a Geotechnical Evaluation. Randy has some concerns about the underlying the soils on the south end in the wetland areas. A motion was made by Danita Traut, seconded by Steve Trobec, to accept the proposal from Braun Intertec. All in favor, motion carried.

Tom Vouk inquired about placement/reconstruction of culvert on the end. Randy stated SEH are looking at this culvert.

NEW BUSINESS: Falcon Bank Approval

A motion was made by Danita Traut, seconded by Steve Trobec, to approve the three authorized signers being Jeff Blenkush, Julie Jacobs, and Kurt Niemeyer for Falcon Bank. All in favor, motion approved.

Sentry Bank was also discussed.

LGA: In 2021 the city will receive \$191,399.00, compared to in 2020 the city received \$183,105.00. Noted that it's a nice increase this year.

MISCELLANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

2021 Budget Planning Meeting is set for Wednesday, August 26th at 6 p.m. Confirmed that this works for all council members.

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Newsleaders deadline dates for 2020: Aug. 7 & 21, Sept. 4 & 18, Oct. 2 & 30, Nov. 13 & 17, and Dec. 11 & 24

Tom Vouk inquired if Chris Nelson is still an active attorney for the City of St. Stephen. Jeff Blenkush will check with Liz Halet.

Gene Skaj inquired about the National Night Out, is this happening. This event has already been rescheduled for this year, consensus of the council members is that it will be cancelled. Julie will check on this.

Julie Jacobs commented the computer screen is gone from the clerk/treasurer's office. Jeff Blenkush thinks the screen possibly belongs to Jeff and Cris Drais. Jeff will follow up with this.

A reminder that election candidate filing is due by Tuesday, August 11th at 5 p.m.

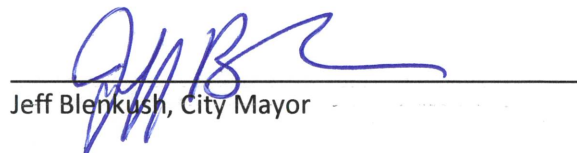
Julie Jacobs reminded council members that per the ordinances the deadline for the City Council Agenda is the Monday before City Council meetings by 4:30 p.m. Danita Traut suggested publishing this in the next Newsleaders insert. Gene Skaj requested that Julie e-mails agenda and minutes the weekend prior to the City Council meeting. Even if the agenda may change. It nice to have this information ahead of time.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Danita Traut, to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Jacobs, City Clerk



Jeff Blenkush, City Mayor