

MINUTES
ST. STEPHEN CITY COUNCIL
October 2, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: 6:31 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Lisa Marvin

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Marvin – Mayor, Gene Skaj, Danita Traut, Steve Trobec, and Thomas Vouk, Council

ALSO PRESENT: Ken Lahr, Heather Imdieke, City Clerk and Kurt Niemeyer, Treasurer.

GUESTS: Deputy Klein, Stearns Co. Sherriff's Dept., Susan Dege, City Attorney, Bryce Johnson, Bryant and Michelle Justin, Clinton Steingraber, Lyle Palmersheim, Ed Peternell, Paul Ritter, Bob Hlebian, and Amanda Hawkins

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: There was a request to add Flags under "New Business" by Steve Trobec. There was a request to add Christmas decorations to the agenda under "New Business" by Gene Skaj. Motion was made to approve agenda with additions of Flags and Christmas decorations under "New Business" by Gene Skaj, seconded by Steve Trobec to approve the agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

MEETING MINUTES: The September meeting minutes were reviewed. There are two changes, one on page 2 changing wording to "not been," and on page 4 changing the wording on the resolution from "Relief Association" to the "75th Anniversary Event." A motion was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Danita Traut to approve the meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.

READING OF THE CLAIMS: Claims were reviewed. A motion was made by Steve Trobec, seconded by Danita Traut to approve the claims. All in favor, motion carried.

READING OF RECEIPTS: Receipts were reviewed. A motion was made by Danita Traut, seconded by Gene Skaj to approve the receipts. All in favor, motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: For the period: 8/1/2024 to 8/30/2024

Beginning Balance	\$1,981,100.55
Total Receipts	\$21,702.10
Total Disbursed	\$26,630.86
Ending Balance	\$1,976,171.79
Less Deposits in Transit	\$0.00
Plus Outstanding Checks	\$1,208.41
Total Per Bank Statement	\$1,977,380.20

Kurt is currently working on quarterly payroll taxes, as well as a worker's comp audit.

SLFRF (COVID) money still needs to be spent prior to the end of the year. Currently there is \$10,780.21 left to spend. There was a question on if this could be spent on equipment, it is believed that it can be. If it can, there was a suggestion to put that money towards a piece of equipment for the fire department which is similar to a "Jaws of Life". There will be discussion at November's City Council meeting as to what the funds should go to.

There is a business savings account and a CD at Falcon National Bank. In the last quarter, in the business savings there was \$64.60 made in interest, which brings the total to \$257,046.76 in the business savings account. On the thirteen-month CD, the interest was \$738.32 which brings the balance to \$59,992.69.

St. Stephen City Council Minutes

October 2, 2024

Page Two

TREASURER'S REPORT (CONTINUED):

Everyone who is a signer on the bank accounts may need to go sign again at Falcon Bank and Sentry Bank once Heather Imdieke has been added to both bank accounts.

A motion was made by Danita Traut, seconded by Gene Skaj to approve the treasurers report. All in favor, motion carried.

PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Bryant and Michelle Justin – They would like to purchase Pond's Edge Park on 5th Ave SE (the full lot or partial). They would like to build a detached garage using that land. There was discussion about how the city acquired the lot. The lot was given during the development of the area. Per Sue Dege, if we obtained the lot via dedication, we do not have the right to "sell" it.

Edward Peternell – Mr. Peternell would like to discuss improvements to 9th Ave NW. Per Mr. Peternell, 9th Ave NW is "too low" he can't get past the road in the winter and snow blows over it and feels it is a safety issue if Fire/PD/EMS can't get through. Edward would like to discuss raising the road. Edward says that the road has never been high enough.

RELIEF ASSOCIATION:

Relief audit – There were three issues:

- 1) Need to provide the credit rating for corporate bonds.
- 2) We didn't apply for supplemental reimbursement – can't do this until November.
- 3) Several other minor revisions were made.

All necessary changes will be made and submitted prior to November 1st.

ST. STEPHEN FIRE & RESCUE: Gene Skaj reported that there 15 calls in September, 1 call so far in October, for a total of 93 calls year to date. There will be a meeting offering assistance for fire fighters coping with Jason Trobec's death. Training this month will be on air packs and chimney fires. Firefighter Anniversary's include Jim Schumer 47 years, and Jason Trobec 19 years. 75th Anniversary Celebration has been rescheduled to 10/12/2024. There was going to be an Open House on October 12th, however, it will likely not happen now and the Anniversary Celebration and Open House will be rolled into one event. Memorial shirts have been ordered for firefighters and their families to be worn at the Celebration on the 12th. On Sunday 10/20/2024 at the Saint Stephen Church at 10:00am mass, there will be a blessing for Fire, PD, and EMS, father will also bless the fire trucks. There will be fellowship with refreshments following the mass.

Equipment update: Air packs have been tested and certified this month. New Grass Rig is complete, it was recommended that we should consider selling the old grass rig.

As for the grass truck, we can offer to other municipalities or do sealed bids. Per Gene, the truck is pretty old, so sealed bids would be best. There was a motion to sell the grass rig on sealed bids. The motion was made by Danita Traut, and seconded by Tom Vouk, all in favor, motion passed.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Charger for the batteries for the siren near Parish Hall needs to be replaced, unsure of what caused it to go out.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

- Road and Bridge: The new snow plow truck is in and ready to go. Bob would like to discuss street signs when the newest road is updated.
- Snow Plow Plan: Need to get together with Burski to come up with a complete plan as to what the snow plow assignments will be for this winter.
- Parks: Tree was removed at pond's edge park. Needs minor cleanup – Ken will handle minor cleanup.
- Albany Communications: 5th street has an old cottonwood tree which is in the right of way. Heather or Ken will reach out to contact at Albany Communications, and we are going to ask them to remove the tree with no cost. The cottonwood is already dying and dropping branches onto the street. There is a motion for the issuance of the permit to start the Albany Communications building in Smoley Field. Gene Skaj made a motion to approve. Steve Trobec seconded. All in favor, motion carried. We are going to move forward with the issuance of the permit for Albany Communications. A motion was made by Gene Skaj and seconded by Steve Trobec. All in favor, motion passed.
- Lawn Care: Our Lawn care service would like to know if we would like to do fall cleanup which is \$75/hr. There was discussion around if we want fall cleanup and how to handle the \$75/hr bid. It was determined that the parks will not require fall cleanup. City hall will take the \$75/hr cleanup. There was a motion to approve 2 hours of cleanup at \$75/hr at city hall made by Steve Trobec. Tom Vouk seconded. All in favor, motion carried.
- Sprinklers: GM will blow out the sprinklers at city hall, Ken will schedule that.
- Planning Commission: Amanda Hawkins gave a report on the planning commission meeting from September 10th 2024. This report included the following:
 - o Lyle Palmersheim – Request to remove a building on his property so he can build a gazebo. This was approved in 2020. Planning commission recommended to extend the variance and that Mr. Palmersheim remove the building so he can complete the gazebo. Mr. Palmersheim must apply for the building permit within 90 days of the city planning meeting in order for the Planning Commission's recommendation to be followed. A motion to extend the variance for the gazebo was made by Gene Skaj, seconded by Thomas Vouk. All in favor, motion carried.
 - o 12 6th Ave SE: There was discussion regarding zoning questions. Planning clarified the following: regarding the property at 12 6th Ave SE, the current owner has 12 months to rebuild after the fire occurred. The trailer was a non-conforming use, and when the non-conforming use is discontinued for 12 months such use should not thereafter be used. So, after the fire there is 12 months if the current owner would like to put a new trailer on the lot. The new trailer home may not be larger than the previous trailer home on the lot, and must be fully hooked up to utilities and be functioning within 12 months of the fire. If the property is purchased prior to a new trailer being put on the lot then the new owner would need to go to the planning committee to request approval through a conditional use permit, and there is no guarantee that this would be approved. If the lot is purchased as is, it can be used as a used car lot without a trailer on the premise.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES (Continued):

- 528 Main St E: Discussion was held regarding fence height requirements. It was determined by the planning committee that there can be a fence no taller than 8ft in height with the proper set-backs per the ordinances.
- Feed Lots: There was discussion surrounding permitting new feed lots. It was determined that planning will need to carefully consider all options in the next meeting should the new owners of the property come forth.
- Personnel: There is a new applicant for the planning commission, Clinton Steingraber. There was a motion made by Gene Skaj to approve the newest member of the Planning Commission. Danita Traut seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

- Health Committee: No Update

SHERIFF'S REPORT: Deputy Klein reported there were eleven traffic stops and issued one speeding ticket. On 9/13 there was a report of an injured racoon, when deputies arrived, it was gone. On 9/15 there was another report of an ill racoon, the animal appeared very lethargic and the deputy did find it and put it down. No testing was done to check for any illnesses.

There is a new contract from the sheriff's office. New hourly cost is \$60/hr and new estimated annual payment would be \$24,960. Gene Skaj made a motion to approve police services under the new cost, Steve Trobec seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- White Oak County Estates: The road was recently paved, and a punch list was issued to Doug Klass (developer) on 9/30/2024. The developer still needs to complete the shouldering on the road. There are a couple washouts to fix in the area, as well as roughly 20 other items. There was discussion on if this road will be plowed this winter. We will need to plow it this year as the road is going to be opening. However, the road cannot be opened until the shouldering is completed, which should be this year.
- East Crest Development: Punch list sent to Jason Ferche (developer) on 9/12/2024 with no response. The list includes dredging the silt out of the ponds, and provide records and drawings from their grading. Prepare a washout near the street surface and remove and reinstall the signs per our detail. Sue Dege will send a letter to the developer stating that they cannot build any new homes in this development until these items are taken care of.
- Fire Department 75th Anniversary Event: Rescheduled to 10/12/2024. There will be a band, and Trobec's will be catering. The sportsmen group will be running this event and have had prizes donated for this. There will be several games in which participants can win prizes such as corn hole and hammerschlagen. There will also be a silent auction to help raise money for the new piece of equipment that is similar to a "Jaws of Life". The goal is to raise \$36,000, as of now, we have raised \$18,900 in donations alone.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Continued):

- Military Convoy: There will be a military convoy to travel from Canada down to New Orleans on October 5th and they will be stopping in Saint Stephen between 9:00am and 9:15am until roughly 10:30am. Central Minnesota Model A Club will also be in attendance with a number of retired military vehicles. Saint John's University will be donating rolls, donuts, and cookies to be shared with convoy members and they will also be for sale. Trobec's will be providing coffee. The women's auxiliary is making bars and other treats. All proceeds will go toward the convoy. Saint Stephen will use their Fire Trucks, and the first Saint Stephen Fire Truck will also be in attendance. and the Sheriff's department will be helping as well as the Saint Augusta Riders to assist the vehicles through Stearns County, and helping with traffic control. Mike Legatt has made dash plaques that say "Saint Stephen" as a gift to the drivers, and 70 gift bags have been made for the drivers. The VA will also be bringing in two busloads of vets for this.
- Winter Extravaganza: Saint Nick program will be December 1st. The Winter Extravaganza will be on December 8th at 11:05am. Santa has been contacted; we are waiting to hear back. Danita is looking for more volunteers and ideas for activities.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Donation Resolution: There is a donation resolution for the Fire Department's 75th Anniversary Celebration to the equipment Fund. There is a motion to approve donation #10022024 made by Gene Skaj and seconded by Danita Traut. All in favor, motion carried.

There was a second donation resolution, resolution number 10022024 – 1 for fire equipment. This is from the Saint Stephen relief association for \$10,000. There is a motion to approve donation 10022024 – 1 by Danita Traut, seconded by Tom Vouk. All in favor, motion carried.

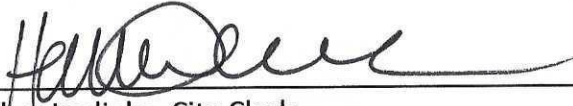
- License Application: There is a license application for tobacco for Saint Stephen Gas and Grocery. They currently have a liquor license, and this was not submitted in the past, so we requested that this get completed. There was a motion to approve the application submitted, pending the \$450 application fee. The motion is made by Steve Trobec, seconded by Tom Vouk. All in favor, motion carried.
- Election Judge Resolution: There is a resolution to appoint election judges for the 2024 General Elections which will be held 11/5/2024. The appointed judges are as follows: Heather Imdieke, Dayna Then, Diane Blonigen, Theresa Lalim, Marilyn Schumer, Joyce Ryan, Marian Fischer, Rick Swenson, Angela Peternell. A motion was made by Steve Trobec to approve the judges for the 2024 General Elections. This motion was seconded by Danita Traut. All in favor, motion carried.
- Flags: Steve went to purchase new flags at Coils. Can no longer get the old MN flag. Another city purchased all of the flags for their city. There was discussion surrounding if we should follow the state recommendation and adopt the new flag, or not fly a state flag for the time being until we can get more of the old flag. The recommendation of the council is that we check back in a month or two to see if we can continue to get the old MN flag. We have a contact with Omega Flag & Pole out of Paynesville, and Heather Imdieke will look into if we can get the old MN flag there.
- Christmas Decorations: There are definitely two decorations that are no longer functional. We need to potentially look into any additional decorations. These cost roughly \$700 or more. Gene to look into what decorations are still usable and what are not.

NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED):

- Sportsman Club: No Update

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Ste Gene Skaj seconded by Danita Traut to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Heather Imdieke, City Clerk



Lisa Marvin, City Mayor

RESOLUTION NO. 11132024
A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A DONATION TO THE CITY

WHEREAS, the City of St. Stephen is generally authorized to accept donations of real and personal property pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 et seq. for the benefit of its citizens and is specifically authorized to accept gifts.

WHEREAS, the following persons and/or entities have offered to contribute the cash or property set forth below to the city:

Donated from: Elizabeth Pogatshnik - \$150.00, VNOSCARPARTS, LLC - \$50.00,
St Stephen Storage LLC - \$50.00, Donna Vouk - \$25.00, GM Drilling - \$500.00,
Twin City Garage Door Co - \$500.00, Digger Dave - \$500.00, Sentry Bank - \$500.00,
DCI - \$500.00, Short Elliot Hendrickson - \$500.00, Debra & Mark Hall - \$50.00,
C&H Truck Repair - \$500.00, Susan Caye \$1,000.00, Joseph Cordie - \$400.00,
Scheels - \$500.00, Trobec's - \$2,000

Fund to go to: The Fire Department 75th Anniversary Event

WHEREAS, the terms or conditions of the donation, if any, are as follows: Fire Departments 75th Anniversary Event Fund

WHEREAS, this donation has been contributed to the city for the benefit of its citizens, as allowed by law; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that it is appropriate to accept the donation offered.


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. STEPHEN, MINNESOTA AS FOLLOWS:

1. The donation described above is accepted and shall be used to establish and/or operate services either alone or in cooperation with others, as allowed by law.
2. The City Clerk is hereby directed to issue a receipt to the donor acknowledging the city's receipt of the donor's donation.

Passed by the City Council of St. Stephen, Minnesota this 13th day of November, 2024



Mayor



City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 11132024 - 1
A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A DONATION TO THE CITY

WHEREAS, the City of St. Stephen is generally authorized to accept donations of real and personal property pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 et seq. for the benefit of its citizens and is specifically authorized to accept gifts.

WHEREAS, the following persons and/or entities have offered to contribute the cash or property set forth below to the city:

Donated from: Cornerstone Insurance – (1) 2.5lb Fire Extinguisher

Fund to go to: City of Saint Stephen for the Snow Plow Truck

WHEREAS, the terms or conditions of the donation, if any, are as follows: Donation for the Snow Plow Truck


WHEREAS, this donation has been contributed to the city for the benefit of its citizens, as allowed by law; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that it is appropriate to accept the donation offered.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. STEPHEN, MINNESOTA AS FOLLOWS:

1. The donation described above is accepted and shall be used to establish and/or operate services either alone or in cooperation with others, as allowed by law.
2. The City Clerk is hereby directed to issue a receipt to the donor acknowledging the city's receipt of the donor's donation.

Passed by the City Council of St. Stephen, Minnesota this 13th day of November, 2024



Mayor



City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 11132024 - 2
A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A DONATION TO THE CITY

WHEREAS, the City of St. Stephen is generally authorized to accept donations of real and personal property pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 et seq. for the benefit of its citizens and is specifically authorized to accept gifts.

WHEREAS, the following persons and/or entities have offered to contribute the cash or property set forth below to the city:

Donated from: St Stephen American Legion Post 221 - \$100.00

Fund to go to: The Winter Extravaganza

WHEREAS, the terms or conditions of the donation, if any, are as follows: Donation for The Winter Extravaganza

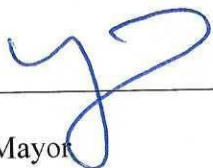
WHEREAS, this donation has been contributed to the city for the benefit of its citizens, as allowed by law; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that it is appropriate to accept the donation offered.


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. STEPHEN, MINNESOTA AS FOLLOWS:

1. The donation described above is accepted and shall be used to establish and/or operate services either alone or in cooperation with others, as allowed by law.
2. The City Clerk is hereby directed to issue a receipt to the donor acknowledging the city's receipt of the donor's donation.

Passed by the City Council of St. Stephen, Minnesota this 13th day of November, 2024



Mayor



City Clerk

RESOLUTION Certifying the 2024 Municipal General Elections

WHEREAS, the City of St. Stephen held its general Election on November 5, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 205.185, Subd. 3, required that the city canvass the result of the election between the third and tenth day after an election; and

Now, therefore be it resolved by the city council of the city of St. Stephen, MN, that the city council declares the results of the election as identified on the following canvassing list and authorize the City Clerk to notify Stearns County of the result of the said canvass.

Absentee Voting + General Election Day Results = Total

Number of persons registered as of 7 a.m. 560

Number of persons registered on Election Day 53

Number of accepted regular, military, and overseas absentee ballots and mail ballots 72

Number of federal office only absentee ballots 0

Number of presidential absentee ballots 0

Total number of persons voting 540

Mayor (St. Stephen)

NP

Edward Paul Peternell

208

NP

Lisa Marvin

278

WI

WRITE-IN

5

Council Member (St. Stephen) (Elect 2)

NP

Stephen J. Trobec

399

NP

Thomas J. Vouk


340

WI

WRITE-IN


14

**PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. STEPHEN
ON THIS 13TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2024.**



Handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'yo', written over a horizontal line.

Mayor



Handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'H. W. ...', written over a horizontal line.

City Clerk