



Regular City Council Meeting
Monday, September 28, at 7:00 pm
Adrian Government Center, Council Chambers, 209 Maine Avenue, Suite 106, Adrian, MN

1. **Call to Order:** Mayor Faber called meeting of the Adrian City Council to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Roll Call:** City Council members present: Mayor John Faber, Joe Hornstein, Tracy Kunkel, Dean VonHoltum, and Ron Lonneman.
Department Heads: Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer Jill Wolf and Police Chief Shawn Langseth
Supervisor- Kendal Kane.
Staff: Community Assistant Associate Megan Vortherms and Deputy Clerk Rita Boltjes.
Guests: Deb Kroon, Nobles County Review; Steve Kellen, PUC Commissioner, and Merlyn Inglett.
4. **7:00 Public Hearing for Variance; John & Darcy Kellen**
 - Called to order at 7:00.
 - Motion to approve variance made by Kunkel, second Lonneman. 5/0.
 - Motion made to close public hearing by Hornstein, second Lonneman. VonHoltum abstained. 4/0.
5. **Consent Agenda:** Motion by Lonneman, second by VonHoltum motion, carried 5/0 to approve the City Finances, Minutes and Permits/Licenses.
 - Finance:**
 - Accounts Payable; September 2021
 - City Finances; August 2021 (PUC 8/2021 for information purposes)
 - Parr-McKnight; Fire Relief Account Balance – August 2021- Going in the right direction.
 - Minutes:**
 - Approved:
 - Council- 8/23/2021 Kunkel asked if there was a status update on the property at 108 Kentucky. County did not receive any bids on the property.
 - Park – 9/20/2021.
 - Ambulance – 9/13/2021 Kunkel commented the Adrian Community United group did a great job with the mock accident. Thank you to all involved.
 - Fire Relief Association- no meeting held.
 - Fire – 9/1/2021
 - PUC – 9/21/2021 Hornstein stated that names or addresses were listed on the delinquent list but have been removed. Hornstein and Kellen stated they want the address back on the list. Wolf stated that is confidential information. Kellen asked if they are not credible to be able to see that information. Faber stated there have been issues of information being shared in bars for example wages being posted in bars. Hornstein asked what was wrong with that. He believes the past due list should be posted in the paper. Kellen stated he can do what he wants and will be coming in to get those names monthly. Kunkel asked why the information is needed and if it matters? She also asked if the PUC contacts individuals about the past due list. Vortherms stated she pulls a list of past due customers and sends them notices. She also calls the customers about their past due balance. Vortherms had a customer come in complaining about his neighbors past due utility bill and how it was discussed in the bar by a PUC Commissioner that his past due balance was paid for so he could buy more drugs. Lonneman asked if the information was public information. Start with figuring out if the information can be released and then vote on it from there. Kunkel agreed that Wolf will reach out to the League of Minnesota and see if the information is public knowledge.
 - HRA – 9/22/2021 Kunkel asked if there was any interest in Keith's. Wolf stated there are two parties interested. One of the parties asked the HRA if they would be able to increase the loan amount to \$75,000. Right now, the max for HRA is \$50,000. HRA is asking the council if it would be okay with them to increase the loan to \$75,000. Lonneman stated he thinks a grocery store is an essential service. Hornstein asked if council could just up that amount. Wolf stated it could be due to it being our own program. Lonneman made a motion to increase to \$75,000, if need be, for this one time, second VonHoltum. Motion carries 5/0.

Permits / Licenses:

Zoning:

1. John Kellen- 710 Pennsylvania; sunroom, addition to garage
 2. Brian McCarthy- 608 W 5th St; replace driveway
 3. Richard Eilders- 509 Pennsylvania; replace driveway
 4. Connie Lupkes- 206 W 1st St; addition to existing fence
 5. Michael Mormann- 204 E 3rd St; replace sidewalk and driveway-
Approved pending inspection and approval from Kane.
- There was discussion about a property in town that has not gotten permits to build several structures on their property. VonHoltum can count five structures around town that do not have permits. What is going to be done about this problem. It was discussed that permits should be sent to them and a letter stating an inspection and permit are required or the structures need to be removed. Wolf stated that next week she would be meeting with an individual to go over our ordinances to make them more concrete. Langseth stated he could submit ordinance to the County and then give a situation on behalf of the city. It was discussed to go this route first and then contact an attorney if need be. Kane was told to tell the City crew that if they see a structure going up to stop and tell the property owners a permit is need first. Council believes the problem is property owners not being aware permits are needed. Faber suggested having permits as a Fun Fact Friday.

6. Community Concerns

1. 221 Connecticut Ave – This property has been cleaned and has been listed for sale.
2. 211 E 7th St. – There is a family of possums living in the shed located in the back yard. Langseth is working on rehoming them.
3. 400 block of Nevada Ave – Barking dogs all hours of day/night. Langseth talked with the pet owners and will be checking on the situation to make sure it stops.
4. First Street & Oklahoma Ave – Pothole in the middle of the street. Kane stated it has been taken care of. Wolf indicated the property owner stopped back in the office to thank crew for getting it taken care of so fast.
5. Resident indicated the new meter caused utility bill to increase \$100. Vortherms stated she checked the amount of their bill from last summer, it ran about the same amount.
6. Parking by school. VonHoltum stated a resident in the 500 block of Kentucky Ave talked to him about the problem. The resident only has a problem with the school kids parking in front of their house. They can't put garbage out without it being in the street. VonHoltum thinks signs are needed for no parking from 7 am to 4 pm. Kunkel asked if the signs would go all the way down the block. A lot of signs would be going up and when does it stop? VonHoltum stated it should be for the entire block. Langseth stated there used to be signs on that property, but the previous homeowner removed them because he didn't want to mow around them. It was asked if they could be painted yellow. Langseth stated that on public streets they cannot enforce without a sign. Langseth stated the corner by the art room needs to be painted yellow again. Kane stated it would be taken care of. It was decided the city crew would paint the curbs yellow all around the school at the end of everyone's driveways to see if that helps with the problem. It was discussed to have the school talk with the students also. Council will try some of the suggestions and revisit the problem at a later date.

7. Rupp, Anderson, Squires, & Waldspurger Attorney Scott Anderson

- o A summons was sent to the property owner. Wolf stated the homeowner has now started to clean up the property. The summons gives the property owner another twenty-one days. VonHoltum asked if he was going to be sued for the legal fees. It was decided to wait until the attorney suggests the next step.

8. Staff Reports:

Police:

Langseth was contacted concerning a propane tank being placed against a fence by Adrian Auto. The other property owner wants the tank moved away from the fence. Council suggested talking with Adrian Auto and Lakes gas to see if it can be moved away from the fence. It should be placed far enough away for maintenance to be maintained.

Administration/Community Development:

Adrian Community Foundation: The Adrian Community Foundation officially incorporated on August 30th, 2021. The Arnold Memorial Health Fund will be ran through the Foundation. Other non-profits and/or scholarships, memorials, etc are encouraged to learn more about setting up an account through the Foundation. Can also be used for community projects.

Minnesota Main Street COVID Relief Grants: The MN Department of Employment and Economic Development released funds available for grant funding to businesses that can demonstrate financial hardships as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds can be used for working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills, and other similar expenses. Other small business relief programs that were released by

DEED include: Small Business Emergency Loan program, the Small Business Relief Grant Program, Movie Theater and Convention Center Relief Grant Program, and the County Relief Grant Program.

Southwest Initiative Fund: SWIF supports the retention, expansion, transition, creation and attraction of business through Business Finance Programs, Microenterprise Loan Program, and technical assistance. Since the inception of SWIF, nearly \$4.8 Million has been invested in businesses in Nobles County through their loan programs. In the past year, \$790,750 has been awarded in grants directly impacting Nobles County. Several businesses in Adrian have benefitted from funding and technical assistance. SWIF is asking the City of Adrian to consider giving SWIF \$200 to invest in economic development work in Nobles County, including business and workforce development and childcare efforts. Motion was made to give SWIF \$200 by Kunkel, second Hornstein. 5/0.

Senior Dining: A small committee is continuing efforts to improve Senior Dining and the options available. The City of Adrian has partnered with the City of Worthington to submit a grant to provide activities and events to coincide with Senior Dining. Funding announcements will be made in October 2021.

2021 Street Project: After inspection and measurements, it was determined that nine of the sidewalk approaches are not ADA Compliant. The maximum grade is 8.67% to comply. To meet the grade requirements, Creative Curb will need to take out additional panels of the sidewalk. We have met with DGR and CSI to correct the situation. This is all being done at their cost. Kane stated this will also cover the manholes.

Wellhead Protection: The MN Clean Water Fund bus tour stopped in Adrian on September 13th. They highlighted the efforts the City of Adrian has taken to protect the groundwater sources to the wells. Nitrate levels are continuing to decrease. We continue to work with MRWA, Nobles County Soil & Water and the DNR to plan for future improvements and search for funding that will continue to bring down the nitrate levels and naturally filter the water.

Midco: Midco is continuing to bore fiber-optics throughout town. They are aiming for boring approximately 1500 feet per day, with three crews. This has created a surplus of locates. It was recommended by the PUC to have MRES assist with the locates and use it as a hands-on training opportunity for city utility staff.

Water Valves: Eight water valves and 2 fire hydrants (one by the County shed and the other on 1st and Kentucky) are being replaced. There were some issues that came up during the replacement of the valves on Kentucky and 4th, which resulted in the water being shut-off for longer than anticipated and late hours for city staff. This is routine maintenance on the water system and an approach to repairing the underground infrastructure. The city averages about 20% water loss each month, repairing leaky valves and hydrants is one step to recouping some of the lost water.

9. MN Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA) 2021/22 Safety Program

- Agreement for Safety Training. Motion made by Hornstein, second VonHoltum. 5/0.

10. City Budget: Year 2022

- Notes for changes made to the 2022 Proposed Budget.
- Health Insurance- acceptance of the 2022 Health Insurance Plan with the SW/WC SC
- Faber asked the PUC to give money to the general fund so the levy can will not increase. Four percent is a lot for seniors on a fixed income. Kunkel stated it sound like most cities do this to keep the levy down. Faber stated that Granite Falls has their PUC give money to the general fund every year to keep the levy down. Kellen stated the PUC is very open to transfer money but is waiting to see what number the council is looking at. Council stated \$21,700.
- Approval of the personnel committee's recommendations for merit increases and Public Works Crew Leader. Hiring Committee met. Kendal Kane, Jill Wolf, Shawn Langseth, Tracy Kunkel, Jared Henriksen, and John Faber attended the meeting. Kane, Wolf, and Langseth met and went over their employees to discuss merit raises. Kunkel, Faber, and Henriksen met to discuss Wolf, Kane, and Langseth. Kunkel contacted different cities and asked about wages for City Administrator/ Clerk-Treasurer. Kunkel will be typing all the information up and getting the information to the council. Council will review the information and discuss at the next meeting.
- Levy – a motion was made by Lonneman to approve the levy, second VonHoltum 5/0

11. Other Business:

- Hiring- Hornstein stated he didn't know anyone was being hired and heard on the street a public works employee was hired. Hornstein wanted to know who made that decision. Kunkel stated the Hiring Committee already had the application from the last hiring. They called them in for an interview and the individual was hired. It was agreed at the PUC meeting in August to move forward also with the City Council meeting in August as well. Discussion continued regarding the powers the hiring committee was given and whether final hiring should rest with the City Council as a whole. It was noted the committee does

much research and gathering of information prior to hiring. It was noted at the PUC meeting the hiring committee had the power to hire.

12. Upcoming City Council Meeting: By consensus, the Council acknowledged Monday, October 25th, 2021, at 7:00 PM, within the Council Chambers of the Adrian Government Center, as their next Regular Meeting date, time, and location.

13. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Motion made by VonHoltum, second Lonneman. 5/0.

Signed:

/s/ Jill Wolf; Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer

/s/ John W. Faber; Mayor