

Canton City Council Regular Meeting Minutes November 10, 2021

The Canton City Council held its regular monthly meeting on November 10, 2021, at the Canton Town Hall. Members present: Mayor Nick Prestby, Carl Ernst, Randy Gossman, Josh Nordsving and Cindy Shanks. City staff present: Brock Bergey, Jim Davis, Barb Kerns and Jon Nordsving. Visitors present: LeRoy Haynes, Bill Richardson, Kyle Ryan and Melissa Vander Plas.

Mayor Prestby called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Motion by Ernst, second by Josh Nordsving to approve the agenda; motion carried. Motion by Shanks, second by Gossman to approve the October minutes; motion carried. Motion by Nordsving, second by Shanks to approve the consent agenda (approval of monthly bills; approval of temporary closure of Main Street on December 11, 2021 for Christmas parade at 6:30 p.m.; waiver of town hall rental fee for Canton Community Association's Santa Day on December 11, 2021); motion carried.

Public comments: None

Reports: In his clerk report, Bergey noted there were 19 delinquent utility accounts, with no service disconnections occurring since the October meeting. 91 pet licenses and 21 UTV/golf cart permits have been issued to-date in 2021. Bergey explained the next scheduled court appearance for former city clerk, Lolly Melander, is January 3, 2022. A jury trial is on the court calendar for January 24-28, 2022. The annual joint meeting with the Mabel-Canton School Board and Mabel City Council will be held November 17 at 6 p.m. in the school library; Mayor Prestby and Ernst will represent Canton. Bergey reminded the council 2022 final budgets will be December agenda items. The Finance Committee (Gossman and Josh Nordsving) will meet prior to the next meeting for purposes of establishing recommendations. Bergey stated a review of town hall annual revenues and expenses is being compiled for presentation at the December meeting, as the 2022 fee schedule is discussed. City hall will be closed November 11 in observation of Veterans' Day. Listed as an action item on the agenda, Bergey informed the council of an employee inquiring about COVID-related pay. Currently, only full-time employees have sick time available for calendar year use. Bergey noted two employees have missed several workdays, this calendar year, due to COVID-19. Motion by Shanks, second by Josh Nordsving to allow employees to use up to one workweek of allocated hours for absences related to COVID-19 in this calendar year, without utilizing existing sick time as applicable; motion carried, with Gossman opposed. In his public works report, Jon Nordsving reported on a water main leak that was recently repaired at the corner of North First and West Fillmore. He stated the annual removal of sludge from the wastewater treatment facility would be occurring in the coming weeks, with it spread on the approved nearby acreage. A tractor will be rented from Shawn Bergey. Fire Chief Bill Richardson presented a purchase plan for the replacement of 20 sets of turnout gear (bibs, boots and jackets), totaling \$55,157. He noted the current gear was purchased in 2007, with the federal expiration occurring in 2017. The lion's share of the proposed purchase would come from two community grant sources: \$30,000 from the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation and \$30,000 from the Arlin Falck Foundation. Richardson reported the Fire Relief Association is contributing \$10,000 toward the cause, along with \$4,500 collected in community donations. Richardson requested the remaining \$10,657 to be paid out of the Fire Department Fund. Motion by Gossman, second by Josh Nordsving to approve the request; motion carried. Richardson expressed appreciation to Councilmember Shanks for her assistance in securing the Arlin Falck and Schmidt Foundation grants. He also sought council interest to establish a committee to look at the long-term facility needs of the fire department. Mayor Prestby and Gossman volunteered to represent the city council on the committee. The June through October monthly police reports were reviewed. Representing the Planning

Commission, Ernst presented two land use permits for council consideration. Craig and Diane Fishel have already started construction on a 8' x 10' addition to an outbuilding on their Second Street property. Ernst expressed his displeasure with the pre-approved activity. Bergey noted he reviewed the application process with Mr. Fishel. Motion by Gossman, second by Shanks to approve the land use permit for the Fishels; motion carried, with Ernst opposed. Bergey again reminded the council of the need to review the City's existing zoning ordinances. Ernst explained the second land use permit application, submitted by Dallas and Karlee Serfoss, did not meet the required property setbacks and the project would require a variance to proceed. A public hearing will be held on the variance request prior to the December 8 meeting. Bergey will notify neighboring property owners, per the zoning ordinance, with a legal notice posted in the *Fillmore County Journal*.

Unfinished business: After months of discussion, and no interest expressed in the position, the position of Animal Control Officer will be eliminated for the annual list of appointments. Motion by Mayor Prestby, second by Gossman to suspend the appointment, effective immediately; motion carried. Bergey explained animal-related concerns become the responsibility of property owners, which are to be handled in accordance with existing animal ordinances. There was no update the exterior repairs planned to the former school bus shed now owned by the City. Two proposals for water and sewer rate adjustments were presented by the Utilities Committee (Josh Nordsving and Shanks). One option included flat, across-the-board rate adjustments for all municipal users, while the other provided a tiered payment system based on water consumption per user. The pros and cons of each method received much discussion. Motion by Ernst, second by Shanks to approve the flat rate adjustments as drafted in Resolution 2021-12 and Resolution 2021-13; motion carried, with Gossman opposed in favor of the tiered system. Starting January 1, 2022, the monthly service charge for sewer will increase from \$33.00 to \$35.00, with the usage charge increasing from \$2.44 per thousand gallons used to \$3.00 per thousand gallons used. The monthly service charge for water will increase from \$28.50 to \$38.00, with the usage charge increasing from \$4.84 per thousand gallons to \$5.00 per thousand gallons. The resolutions eliminate separate commercial water and sewer rates. Mayor Prestby thanked the Arlin Falck Foundation for funding the City's \$9,438.98 grant request to replace the town hall main doors. Since the grant application was submitted, the material costs for the doors increased by \$875.12. Motion by Gossman, second by Josh Nordsving to approve the door replacement project, with the additional costs being covered by the City; motion carried. Bergey noted a thank you had been sent to the Arlin Falck Foundation.

New business: Motion by Ernst, second by Gossman to approve the on-sale/off-sale liquor license application for Vernon Zafft; motion carried. LeRoy Haynes, on behalf of the Canton Historical Society, requested financial assistance to help fund the installation of two "Historic Sites" designation signs on US 52 (one for eastbound traffic and one for westbound traffic), to direct passersby to the Mitson House and train depot. Haynes reported the historical society agreed to pay for one of the signs at a cost of \$989.80, through the Minnesota Department of Transportation. He asked the City to fund the second sign, also costing \$989.80. Motion by Gossman, second by Josh Nordsving to approve the sign purchase, with Mitson Fund dollars being used for the project; motion carried. Motion by Mayor Prestby, second by Ernst to approve a holiday-themed "Adopt-A-Planter" contest; motion carried. The top three vote-getters, through Facebook "likes," will receive Canton Dollars to be redeemed at Sarah's Diner, True Smoke BBQ Pub & Grill and ZZ Tap. First prize was set at \$50; second prize at \$30; and third prize at \$20.

Motion by Ernst, second by Josh Nordsving to adjourn at 7:43 p.m.; motion carried.