

## **Canton City Council Regular Meeting Minutes February 9, 2022**

The Canton City Council held its regular monthly meeting on February 9, 2022, at the Canton Town Hall. Members present: Mayor Nick Prestby, Carl Ernst, Randy Gossman and Josh Nordsving. Cindy Shanks was absent. City staff present: Brock Bergey, Jim Davis, Barb Kerns and Jon Nordsving. Visitors present: Jennifer Dowling, Wanda Hanson, Bill Richardson and Kristy Ziegler

Mayor Prestby called the meeting to order at 6 p.m., with the Pledge of Allegiance recited by all.

Motion by Ernst, second by Josh Nordsving to approve the agenda; motion carried. Motion by Nordsving, second by Ernst to approve the consent agenda (approval of January minutes, approval of February disbursements and approval of proposed 2022-2023 city prosecution agreement with Fillmore County); motion carried.

**Public comments:** None

**Mayor's report:** Mayor Prestby briefed the council on his participation in the 2022 Elected Leaders Institute: Foundational Program through the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC). The two day event, held in Plymouth on February 4 and 5, included sessions on integrity and ethics, strategic planning and decision-making, managing risk, finance, equity and inclusion, community engagement, communication, policymaking, and meeting facilitation. Mayor Prestby encouraged councilmembers to consider attending future learning opportunities sponsored through LMC.

**Clerk's report:** In his clerk report, Bergey reported there were 15 delinquent utility accounts, with no service disconnection occurring since the January meeting. 32 pet licenses have been issued for 2022. Updates were provided on the employee wage study and preliminary engineering report on the water and wastewater systems, with final presentations expected in March. Two inoperable motor vehicles were brought to the council's attention. Bergey was directed to send letters to both owners asking for voluntary compliance in removing them from their respective locations. Failure to comply within seven days will result in a citation issued by law enforcement. Bergey shared information about an opportunity to apply for a free study for downtown district renovations. Such downtown assessments typically cost between \$5,000 and \$10,000, but thanks to a grant from Southeast Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) there are not costs for the recipient cities. Applications are due on March 31. The council instructed Bergey to submit an application.

**Public Works report:** Nordsving noted the transmission went out of the 2008 Ford truck, which has approximately 193,000 miles on it. He was directed to get price estimates for a refurbished transmission.

Nordsving revisited the \$2,800 quote for a 2022 Hustler Excel Zero Turn lawn mower, first presented to the council in January. The 2022 budget includes \$3,000 for the purchase. Motion by Josh Nordsving, second by Ernst to approve the purchase; motion carried.

**Fire Department:** Fire Chief Bill Richardson provided a 2021 annual report. He stated the fire department responded to 17 calls last year: 4 for motor vehicle crashes, 4 for mutual aid services, 3 for fire services, with six additional calls for other emergency response services. On

behalf of the 20-member department, Chief Richardson expressed gratitude to the community for its generous financial support in 2021.

**Police:** None

**Planning Commission:** Zoning Administrator Josh Nordsving stated his intent to have the council review and make needed updates to the City's zoning ordinances in the coming months.

**Unfinished business:**

Motion by Ernst, second by Josh Nordsving to approve Resolution 2022-04 to place conditions on the public sale of the former school property, set to be auctioned off by Fillmore County on March 1, 2022, for \$1.00 from tax forfeiture; motion carried. The resolution will be shared with the Fillmore County Board of Commissioners.

Mayor Prestby encouraged the council to prepare a victim impact statement to present at the court sentencing for former city clerk/treasurer Lolly Melander on March 7, 2022. This is the council's opportunity to address Ms. Melander and inform the court as to how her actions have impacted the City of Canton. Mayor Prestby offered to take lead on preparing the statement on behalf of the citizens of Canton.

Motion by Ernst, second by Gossman to amend the animal ordinance to allow for the permitting of up to six hen chickens on a residential property; motion carried. It was stress that an annual permit is required, which includes an acknowledgment form that must be signed by all adjoining property owners.

**New business:**

Motion by Josh Nordsving, second by Gossman to redeem the Mitson Fund CD (\$21,592.14 balance on December 31, 2022), with the funds transferred into the Mitson Fund checking account for future improvements to the facility.

Motion by Gossman, second by Josh Nordsving to grant a partial release of mortgage for the Galligan Estate; motion carried.

Bergey presented the 2021 internal financial report. Cash balances, for year ended December 31, came in at \$318,868, with reserve fund balances totaling \$313,907. General Fund expenditures totaled \$264,459, with revenues totaling \$314,150 last year. The nearly \$50,000 gain includes Canton's American Rescue Plan Act funds. The Water Fund experienced a more than \$15,000 loss in 2021, with the unexpected \$30,000 in repairs to Well #1 accounting for the budget shortfall. In order to cover the costs, Bergey noted all Water Fund reserves were depleted last year. On paper, the news was better for the Sewer Fund, with a \$10,500 gain reported in 2021; however, last year, there was no bond payment issued due to a refinancing note. Had there been a bond payment due in 2021, Bergey stated the Sewer Fund would have shown a loss of approximately \$10,000. The complete 2021 financial report is available on the City's website.

The council approved a logo and slogan to help brand Canton as "Southeast Minnesota's First Stop." The blue and green design plays off of the City's geographic location, as the first incorporated Minnesota city on the busy U.S. 52 corridor.

At the suggestion of a resident, the council discussed the current operation hours of city hall. The resident inquired about additional afternoon hours, at least one day a week. On a three month trial basis, the council opted to expand city hall hours to 5 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. Residents will be notified of the change in the March newsletter.

The council was informed of a resident's offer to cover the costs to purchase four additional snowflake streetlight decorations to illuminate Main Street during the holidays. The five foot snowflakes, featuring 90 LEDs, are on sale through March 31 for \$417. Their regular list price is \$518. With the four additional donated snowflakes, 12 of the 15 Main Street light poles (equipped for such displays) would be decorated. It was decided to see if additional community members wish to contribute toward additional displays. The topic will be revisited in March.

Motion by Ernst, second by Josh Nordsving to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.; motion carried.