

**Hazen City Commission
Regular Meeting
November 20, 2023
Hazen City Hall**

Present: President Obenauer, Commissioner Haack, Commissioner Pillar, Commissioner Stern and Commissioner Wiedrich.

Others Present: Attorney Kaffar, PW Brousseau, Jerod Klabunde (Moore Engineering), Auditor Erhardt, Marla & Travis Hagemeister, Anthony Melberg, Antoinette Heier, and Buster Langowski.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by President Obenauer.

President Obenauer led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Pillar said the prayer.

Minutes: Commissioner Wiedrich moved to suspend the reading and approve the minutes of the November 6th meeting, as presented, second by Commissioner Haack. Motion unanimously approved.

Agenda: Commissioner Haack moved to approve the agenda, as presented, second by Commissioner Wiedrich. Motion unanimously approved.

CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY & ENGINEER

Engineer's Report: Jerod Klabunde, Moore Engineering, provided information for the contract on the water storage project with Tand Construction. There is one area of concrete work that needs to be done in the spring by a subcontractor and paid for at that time. A final change order was reviewed to include cover actual costs under the contract and pay estimate #11 was also provided. Commissioner Pillar moved to approve change order #8 to increase \$2,163.50, second by Commissioner Stern. On roll call vote: Pillar, "Aye", Stern, "Aye", Haack, "Aye", Wiedrich, "Aye", Obenauer, "Aye", motion carried. Commissioner Haack moved to approve pay estimate #11 to Tand Construction for \$32,289.00, second by Commissioner Wiedrich. President Obenauer asked about using Prairie Dog Funds for the local share of the project and was advised that this has been done. On roll call vote: Haack, "Aye", Wiedrich, "Aye", Pillar, "Aye", Stern, "Aye", Obenauer, "Aye", motion carried.

Regarding Expedition Estates, Mr. Klabunde reminded the commission that this is a private project that, when completed, will be turned over to the city, if accepted. Not much more work will be completed this year due to the weather. The street, past the residences, has been prepped and graveled for the winter and the engineer will be tracking progress through inspections.

Regarding the alley project north of Main Street, the estimates have been provided in the engineer's report for the project and a Resolution of Necessity has been published for a hearing on December 18th. Pending the outcome of the hearing, there will be time to design the project and prepare for bid letting in January or February, at which time the decision on the additional areas and parking lot will need to be determined.

Travis Hagemeister addressed the commission, and Mr. Klabunde, to thank them for the work to prep the street for winter and commented on a lack of material east of the residences and how this may be impacted in the spring when home construction is being done. Mr. Hagemeister asked if there is any schedule yet for the spring work. Mr. Klabunde said he will request a schedule from the developer. Mr. Hagemeister also asked if the sewer lines would be re-televised when the work is completed. Mr.

Klabunde said this is part of the process, but he has not seen any videos yet. Buster Langowski asked if the paving may take place in the spring and Mr. Klabunde said they will start by getting the schedule and work forward from there. President Obenauer stated that he had contacted Bechtold Paving and they have been hired to do the paving work.

REQUEST OF CITIZENS

Free/Reduced Hall Rent – Heritage Insurance: Commissioner Stern moved to approve free use of the hall, subject to a kitchen fee if applicable, as requested by Heritage Insurance Services for a community event on December 16th, second by Commissioner Haack. Motion unanimously approved.

2024 CVB Budget: The commission reviewed the 2024 Convention and Visitor’s Bureau budget. Mr. Langowski indicated they are anticipating a slight increase in revenue and added that, under the by-laws, 25% of revenue is to be held in reserve. Mr. Langowski added that CVB has pledged \$2500/year, for ten (10) years to Hazen Winter Sports for the digital sign near the all seasons arena. Commissioner Wiedrich moved to accept the CVB budget as presented, second by Commissioner Stern. Motion unanimously approved.

REPORTS

Water/Sewer/Garbage: Commissioner Pillar informed the board that the water department identified eight (8) fire hydrants that are low to the ground and should be raised to avoid any issues in accessing them. Core & Main provided an estimate of \$9,390.00 to purchase eight (8) extension kits that can be installed by city staff. Commissioner Pillar reviewed the budget and funds are available to purchase the kits. Commissioner Pillar moved to purchase eight (8) hydrant extension kits at a cost of \$9,390.00, second by Commissioner Wiedrich. Upon discussion, Commissioner Stern asked if this is being done just because of the visibility due to snow and Commissioner Pillar indicated that visibility is the main concern recognizing that residents are directed to keep snow clear around hydrants in their neighborhoods. On roll call vote: Pillar, “Aye”, Wiedrich, “Aye”, Haack, “Aye”, Stern, “Nay”, Obenauer, “Aye”, motion carried.

Commissioner Pillar reported that the water/wastewater and public works/forestry positions are being readvertised to attract additional applicants.

Street/Cemetery: Commissioner Haack informed the board that he has had discussion with the local funeral home director regarding purchasing a columbarium for the city cemetery since more and more families are looking to cremation. Commissioner Pillar said this would be a good discussion to have with the local faith community organizations to see if they have considered something similar. Commissioner Haack was informed that the cremation option is more affordable as funeral homes are even starting to rent caskets to reduce costs. Auditor Erhard was directed to send a letter surveying local churches on the subject and to get more detailed cost information for the purchase of a forty-eight (48) and seventy-two (72) niche columbarium. No further Action taken.

Finance/Busing/Library: Commissioner Stern had nothing to report at this time.

Police/Fire/Forestry: Commissioner Wiedrich informed the board that, prior to his resignation, PW Forester Lemer had requested quotes for the removal of two (2) boulevard trees. Quotes were provided by Ternes Tree Services at a cost of \$3,300 (w/out stump removal) and Seven Arrows Tree Service at a

cost of \$2,500 (w/out stump removal). Commissioner Wiedrich moved to accept the quote of Seven Arrows Tree Service in the amount of \$2,500, second by Commissioner Stern. On roll call vote: Wiedrich, "Aye", Stern, "Aye", Haack, "Aye", Pillar, "Aye", Obenauer, "Aye", motion carried.

The city received \$11,538 from the ND Attorney General, "Back the Blue" grant. The funds received can be used for retention bonuses, signing bonuses, or for tuition to hire law enforcement officers, which must be expended by March of 2025. Commissioner Wiedrich discussed retention bonuses with Chief Wolff, and he would like to see a portion of the funds used for retention bonuses at this time with a portion retained for future training or bonuses. President Obenauer agreed with the idea and Commissioner Wiedrich moved to approve a \$1000/licensed officer retention bonus to be paid in December 2023, second by Commissioner Haack. On roll call vote: Wiedrich, "Aye", Haack, "Aye", Pillar, "Aye", Stern, "Aye", Obenauer, "Aye", motion carried.

Commissioner Wiedrich reported that for one-half of October and November, the fire department was called out for a couple of accidents.

Officer Anthony Melberg was present and informed the commission that the department is working speed enforcement through the city, on the bypass. Officer Melberg reported that Officer Beyer and the Sheriff's Department recently arrested an individual with "product" and a probation search was pursued. Officer Melberg reported that he worked with Western Plains Health Unit regarding condemnation of properties that lack basic necessities and how he is looking at other properties for similar condemnation enforcement. Attorney Kaffar indicated the city may want to evaluate the current condemnation ordinances to provide more flexibility in such proceedings.

HCD: Buster Langowski informed the commission that with the Talon Metals announcement he is hoping the company will have representatives in the county after the holiday to provide updates on the project and answer community questions.

President: President Obenauer informed the board that the hearing on the resolution of necessity for the alley project north of Main Street will be very similar to the alley project south of Main Street by the post office where there are properties that may have a different benefit from the proposed project.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Appointment – Housing Authority Board: The commission reviewed two (2) notices of interest for the Hazen Housing Authority Board/Pioneer Apartment Board from Kim Folkerts and Nancy Wolf. After review, Commissioner Wiedrich moved to appoint Kimberly Folkerts to the board, effective immediately, second by Commissioner Haack. On roll call vote: Wiedrich, "Aye" Haack, "Aye", Pillar, "Aye", Stern, "Aye", Obenauer, "Aye", motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

2024 Safety Goals: As part of the recent WSI Audit, Safety Manager Tammy Rahn was directed to establish safety goals for the city for 2024. The goals presented include goals to have zero (0) strain/sprain incidents and zero (0) lost-time accidents, have all staff participate in a safety survey, as well as others. Commissioner Pillar moved to approve the safety goals, as present, second by

Commissioner Haack. On roll call vote: Pillar, “Aye”, Haack, “Aye”, Stern, “Aye”, Wiedrich, “Aye”, Obenauer, “Aye”, motion carried.

January 1, 2024, Meeting: The first Monday of January 2024 is the January 1st holiday. The commission will hold the first regular meeting of the month on January 2, 2024, at 5:30 PM CT.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were received at this time.

Approval of Bills: Commissioner Wiedrich moved to approve the bills presented, second by Commissioner Haack. Pre-paid and bills approved for payment are as follows: Aramark, 376.07; Cenex, 5840.40; Coal Country CHC, 220.00; CVB, 5772.27; Donovan & Kaffar PLLP, 1200.00; Fastenal, 69.61; Fitterer Oil Hazen LLC, 596.43; Further, 19.50; I-State Truck Center, 1058.04; ITD, 28.30; J&M Hardware, 74.57; Jeff Thomas, 606.80; Loren Wiest, 750.00; Marc Corp, 196.22; ND Dept of Health, 294.00; ND League of Cities, 920.00; ND Water Users Assoc, 300.00; NAPA, 292.03; Oliver Mercer Multidistrict Special Education, 1409.00; Power Plan, 2451.42; Promiseland Designs, 30.00; Radar Shop Inc, 128.00; Roughrider Electric Coop Inc, 3691.47; Stamps.com, 160.65; Stein’s, Inc, 190.30; Tand Construction LLC, 32289.00; The Hub, 1555.61; US Postal Service 352.33; Western Steel Builders, 14890.00. On roll call vote: Wiedrich, “Aye”, Haack, “Aye”, Pillar, “Aye”, Stern, “Aye”, Obenauer, “Aye”, motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:26 PM CT. The next regular meeting of the commission is scheduled for Monday, December 4, 2023, at 5:30 PM CT in the Commission Room of the Hazen City Hall.

Approved: _____
Jerry Obenauer, President

Attest: _____
Monte J. Erhardt, Auditor