City of Buffalo

City Council Meeting

January 23rd, 2024

Meeting called to order at 6:32 PM by Mayor Jager.

Council members present; Mayor Jager, Steckler, Haseleu, Lawson; Guests present: Auditor Richman.

Motion to approve minutes from December 11th, 2023 by Steckler, seconded by Lawson. MCU.

Motion to approve the agenda as stated with modifications and deviate as needed by Steckler, seconded by Haseleu. MCU.

Moore Engineering, Library – no updates

Cass County Sheriff – reviewed 9 calls for service in December

Park Board – good response from holiday light competition, looking to replace bleachers and scoreboard.

Historical Society – working on grant funding and budgeting

Motion to approve reappointment of three-year terms for Todd Combs and Jodi Shepardson to Job Development Authority by Steckler, seconded by Haseleu. MCU.

Daycare – is up to 17 kids with the new direction, goal is to reach 30 kids.

Motion to approve the financial report and pay the monthly bills by Lawson seconded by Steckler. MCU.

* BEK $44.97; Butler CAT $1493.77; Cardmember Services $337.33; Cass County Gov $12.79, City of Fargo $14; Cass County Reporter $134.87; Fat Man Trash $3908.82; Jim Biggers $100; ND One Call $2.60; Ottertail $33.41, $1035.87, Workforce Safety $108.05; payroll for Richman, Berger, Haseleu, Jager, Steckler, and Lawson

Tables were not put back in order after the past two events the grocery store “hosted” events. A letter had been sent to the store board and the request for a waiver had been tabled for until this current meeting in January. No one from the Food Market Board is in attendance. The waiver has been approved for the December 10th event; however, moving forward the community center must be cleaned up and put back in order or the cleanup fee will be assessed to those who are renting.

Junk Ordinance

* Hanson property at 604 Pearl St and Elevator property – still in violation of junk ordinance.
	+ At the Hanson property of 604 Pearl St Council has decided to move forward with the remainder of the fiscal year of 2023 the $500 per day fee for the remainder of 2023 to be assessed at $93,500 less $1,000 for an immediate special assessment of $92,500.
	+ At the Hanson Elevator Property – there was a building permit provided that was not completed within the time frame council has decided to assess $90 for the expired building permit. The Council has decided to move forward with the remainder of the fiscal year of 2023 the $500 per day fee for the remainder of the 2023 to be assessed at $93,500 less $1,000 for an immediate special assessment of $92,500.
	+ The $500 violation fee is accruing for both Hanson properties starting again for the new year beginning January 1st, 2024.
* Motion to hire an attorney to begin legal proceedings against Hanson property at 604 Pearl St and Hanson Elevator property regarding the junk ordinance by Steckler, seconded by Haseleu. MCU.

Curfman property is starting to gather junk and debris again. This is in violation of the contract established regarding the waived $60,500 fine through October 23rd, 2024 (365 days), in the event that zero of the City of Buffalo’s Public Nuisance violations occur withing this time-frame; after the probation period without any junk violation elapses, the balance due is waived; if any violations occur with the stated time-frame, the entire fine will be placed onto the property’s special assessment within the your property.

Motion to send a letter will be sent to Curfman to remove junk, debris, tires out of the pickup and the black pickup or needs to be removed by February 12th or appear at the next council meeting on February 12th, 2024; failure to comply the $60,500 will be assessed at that time, and the $500 per day fine will begin again starting on February 13th, 2024 by Steckler, seconded by Lawson. MCU.

Discussion held regarding late sewer water garbage bills; no action will be taken at this time.

Cats have gotten worse again, will reach out to local humane societies about live trapping and housing. Jager has attempted to call local humane society with no response. A letter will be sent to Boyers regarding the cats, cats need to be corralled, send a copy of the ordinance and request to attend council in February.

Motion to approve Local Permit for WELCA raffle in March by Steckler, seconded by Lawson. MCU.

Motion to approve hall rent waiver request for WELCA on March 23rd , Community Club Annual Meeting on January 22nd, and Buffalo Wildlife Club on January 15th by Steckler, seconded by Lawson. MCU.

Discussion held regarding SWG ordinance regarding late SWG fees and how to handle habitual late bills and fines. This led into a discussion regarding the current snowbird policy and those who have their water shut off from lack of payment.

Motion to approve the transfer from General Account to Municipal High Fund in the amount of $705.84, from General Account to SWG Fund $15,461.28 and General Fund to Library Fund $83.86 by Steckler, seconded by Lawson. MCU.

* Municipal High Fund reason - This fund was set up during the 2020 audit by the state auditor and was told to include what our income/expenses are and transfer from GEN Fund to Municipal Highway Fund the needed portion to reach $0.
* SWG Fund Reason - Wages for Harmony, Ron, Jim and Anna for their work on SWG. The levied budget includes wages across all areas to help accommodate the SWG Fund. The SWG Fund is not included within the yearly budget requests
* Library Fund Reason - Harmony paid the library insurance from their quarterly levies; however, the payment was made after the 2nd quarter levy payment and there was not enough in the fund after the first two payments to fully cover the insurance. This will be returned back to GEN after the first quarter levy payments have been received in 2024. We can’t have negative values in the funds, so transferring in need of a place holder for the moment.

Next City Council Meeting is Monday, February 12th @ 6:30 PM.

Tax Equalization Meeting is Monday, April 10th @ 6:30 PM

Motion to adjourn at 7:37 PM by Lawson, seconded by Haseleu. MCU.

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Harmony Richman, Auditor