

CITY OF FOLEY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING – April 4, 2023

The Foley City Council held their regular meeting on April 4, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at Foley City Hall.

Members Present: Mayor Jack Brosh, Councilmembers Jeff Gondeck, Deb Mathiowetz, Gary Swanson, and Brandon Voit.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Motion by Swanson, seconded by Mathiowetz, to approve the agenda.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Motion by Gondeck, seconded by Voit, to approve the consent agenda:

- Approve minutes of March 7, 2023.
- Adopt Resolution #2023-05 Approving No Mow May
- Approve hiring of Emma Thorsten for 2023 Pool Manager.
- Approve payment of bills.
- Staffing Update – Russell Lipinski

Gondeck stressed that No Mow May is a strictly voluntary program. If there are any concerns, residents should talk to their neighbors.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Mayor's Comments and Open Forum

Debra Olson, 600 Dewey Street, welcomed Emma Thorsten as the new Pool Manger. Olson also expressed concern over acquiring and attracting enough lifeguards to be able to open the pool for the season. She also expressed the desire to create a tiered cost for swimming lessons – different price for folks who lived in town versus outside of town. She also recommended the city use more diverse advertising for the pool and other ways to encourage people to use the pool.

Kim Latterall, 511 Broadway Avenue N, addressed the council regarding concerns over a property in his neighborhood. The property is not being cared for and may be in violation of city ordinances.

Michael Vukelich, 170 Gopher Avenue, addressed the council with concerns over his water/sewer bill. He read a prepared statement explaining why they had wanted to live in Foley, but the rising cost of property taxes and his water bill were causing a hardship to his family. He said he understood that the wastewater project was approved for state funding, but expressed frustration that the project was started before the state funds had been received.

Foley CROSS Center Presentation

Jennifer Folkema, the new Director of the Foley CROSS Center, gave an overview of how the organization serves Foley and Benton County. Their mission is to provide encouragement and short-term assistance to residents in the area. They provide food, clothing, small household items, school supplies, and holiday foods such as hams and turkeys. They also started a kids club where students can come in during the summer break to get a bag with quick easy meals, snacks, and beverages every

week. CROSS is always looking for volunteers and financial donations to meet the growing needs of the area. They provide assistance to everyone and will not turn anyone away. They have also seen their own expenses rise. She asked the council to consider adding a donation to CROSS as part of their annual budget. Discussion and questions followed.

Discussion on Hwy 23 Pedestrian Crossing

Questions and discussion followed as the council considered the two proposals in their council packet.

Jarod Griffith city engineer gave an overview to the council and helped answer questions. He stated that staff had a discussion with MnDot who said that if the work on the pedestrian ramps occurred while they were still working on the Hwy 23 project that they would cover that work. He directed the council to the proposal in front of them from SEH which reflected MnDot covering the work. Discussion and questions followed.

Griffith explained that anything that is not on the list in the letter of agreement would be over and above the cost of the project.

Jarod Voge from Bolton & Menk presented their proposal.

Motion by Swanson, seconded by Gondeck, to accept the proposal from SEH for the pedestrian ramps.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Department Reports

Police Department

Chief Katie McMillin gave an overview to the council. The department responded to 353 calls during March. This is up from February. Equipment violations were up (expired tabs, headlights out...etc...). Medical and welfare checks, animal complaints, and civil calls were also up. Parking tickets were down. Winter Parking has now expired as of April 1 unless a snow emergency is declared by the city. Background checks for the three new part-time officers are now complete and two have completed their physicals. McMillin also shared that the department is currently handling large investigations that require a lot of administrative time so the council may not see as many patrols. She also reminded the council that the Bike Rodeo will be held at Lion's Park on June 17. She also addressed the press release regarding the bomb threat that was received at Falcon National Bank. No device was found and there was no threat to the public. Questions and discussion followed.

Swanson asked McMillin to speak to the owner of the property on 4th Avenue that was mentioned during the open forum. McMillin asked which address it was as no specific address was mentioned. Discussion followed. McMillin stated that if the property is the house she is thinking of then the owner is in compliance with the Parking and Storage ordinance based on the changes that the council passed in the Fall of 2022.

City Engineer

Jarod Griffith addressed the council stating that the road restrictions for Hwy 23 are now up. MnDot is estimating that work will begin on May 15.

Public Works and Fire Department

Mark Pappenfus directed the council to the estimate from Kostreba for the tuckpointing for the pool for \$24,750.00.

Motion by Mathiowetz, seconded by Gondeck, to approve the tuckpoint estimate

Discussion and questions followed. Pappenfus stated the work would be completed before the pool opens for the season in June.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Pappenfus also updated the council on the unit heaters in the maintenance shop which had to be replaced. The department also had a blow motor go out last month. Snow removal is going well. The contractor the department has had trouble with did not push the snow into the road this time.

Pappenfus stated the Fire Department will be moving forward to fill the assistant chief position soon.

Administrative

Sarah Brunn gave an overview to the council. The audit field work will begin at City Hall on Tuesday in the Council Chamber. The majority of the audit should be finished next week.

She directed the council to the estimate in their packet for the new financial software. The software upgrade has been in the budget for a number of years. Staff is recommending moving forward with Civic Systems as it seems to be the best fit. Many neighboring cities Foley's size are using it and giving good reviews. Our current system is unreliable – currently down. Civic would also give staff extra security features with the new system. There is an annual fee of \$9,600, but it does guarantee software for life. Discussion and questions followed.

Motion by Gondeck, seconded by Mathiowetz, to approve the purchase of the Civic Systems financial software as presented.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Brunn also shared that Benton County is looking to build a new administrative building and approached the city to see if we'd be interested in the existing buildings sometime over the next two to three years. Brunn recommended establishing a council committee to look at the possibilities and determine if it would be a good option to explore rather than renovations to City Hall. Staff has space needs in the administrative area as well as the police department. The city also has a library that needs to be provide for.

Discussion and questions followed with the council expressing an interest in exploring the options with the county. Brunn stated she would bring more information to the council in the next month or two.

Old Business

Jarod Voge of Bolton & Menk provided an overview for the council on the wastewater project. The updated variance and platting process is moving forward on the odor control building. Crews installed some sanitary sewer west of the Broadway lift station and should be back on Thursday depending on the weather to do seeding and blanketing. He anticipates the work on the project will continue late April or into early May. Three crews are expected to resume work. Questions and discussion followed.

Voge also shared that materials for electrical transformers have been a struggle. They are monitoring the situation. The electrical provider has warned there could be delays in delivering equipment. Voge will keep the council informed.

Brunn added that we've had a number of people come together to get a lot of things done in a short period of time to cut through the processes for the odor control building. There are a few more weeks to go, but it's looking positive that construction will begin in May

Brosh stated he would like to talk about a possible sprinkler ordinance if property owners would like a separate meter for their yards. He asked the council if they would be willing to hear more. The other councilmembers agreed they would like more details.

New Business

Pappenfus addressed the council about the possibility of adding an electronic gate to the compost site once crews complete the nearby lift station for the wastewater project. Discussion and questions followed. Gondeck expressed interest in the idea, especially if it meant extending hours at the compost site. Pappenfus will bring more info to the council.

Mayor's Comments and Second Open Forum

Brosh listed a few events he'd attended as mayor. He also shared that his son had been diagnosed with leukemia so he would be running to the cities a lot and his response time to requests may be longer.

Motion by Swanson, seconded by Gondeck, to adjourn.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.



Sarah A. Brunn, Administrator
(Minutes By: Sara Judson Brown, Administrative Assistant)