

CITY OF FOLEY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING – January 2, 2024

The Foley City Council held their regular meeting on Jan. 2, 2024, 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 Gondeck, to approve the agenda.

Motion carried, unanimous.

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

- Approve minutes of December 5, 2023.
- Approve MOU for building code enforcement in OAA.
- Adopt Resolution #2024-01 Approving Election Judges.
- Approve City of Foley Audit Proposal – Schlenner & Wenner.
- Adopt Resolution #2024-02 Authorizing Putnam Investments.
- Adopt Resolution #2024-03 Authorizing Cetera Advisor networks
- Approve payment of bills.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Mayor's Open Forum

Debra Olson, 600 Dewey Street, asked about administrative costs and why the city was paying out garnishments.

Benton Economic Partnership (BEP)

Amanda Othoudt from the BEP presented the MCPP Agreement for council consideration and approval.

Motion by Voit, seconded by Gondeck, to approve the MCPP agreement.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Othoudt gave an overview of the Housing Study Results report included in the council's packet showing a variety of housing stats including home ownership vs. rentals. Benton County is both a job exporter and importer. 38% of the county workers are employed in St. Cloud. Most county residents commute 25 miles or more. There is very low unemployment. There is currently a high demand for housing – 59% of development in the county is single-family homes. Most of the development is in Sauk Rapids. There is currently a very low vacancy for rentals. Average monthly rent is \$858. Low rents may not attract developers. Subsidized rentals are at 0% vacancy. There is 0% vacancy in Foley. Houses are older stock with most being built in the 1980s. Improving older housing stock is vital to keep affordability in the county. Single-family rentals dominate the market. Senior housing inventory includes independent/assisted living and memory care. Home prices are up 11% annually since 2020. There is a limited sale inventory and they sell quickly. Average cost per square foot is \$144. High

demand for all types of housing through 2035. The study also recommended multiple different strategies to help alleviate the cost.

Discussion and questions followed.

Wastewater Regionalization Project

Jared Voge from Bolton & Menk gave a project update and presented Payment Estimate #15 for \$76,110.85 and recommended for payment. The estimate includes work completed through Dec. 22. This represents completion of 86% of the project. Some control panels have arrived. The crews are focusing on electrical work. The odor control building is still being completed. Discussion and questions followed.

Motion by Swanson, seconded by Gondeck, to approve Pay Estimate #15.

Motion carried unanimous.

2024 Annual Appointments

Sarah Brunn, City Administrator, stated there was one change on the annual appointments regarding the Library Board terms. The city attorney confirmed the current board member whose term is up can't be reappointed, but she can serve until a replacement board member is found. Staff will continue to look for people to fill any open positions.

Motion by Voit, seconded by Mathiowetz, to approve the 2024 Annual Appointments list.

Motion carried unanimous.

Department Reports

Police Departments

Chief Katie McMillin gave an overview to the council. The stat report shows the department responded to 4,515 calls in 2023. December 2023 had a total of 352 calls. Traffic enforcement in December was down. Medical calls were up. McMillin also showed the yearly stats for 2022 so the council could see the increase over last year. Discussion and questions followed.

Voit stated that it was a significant increase.

Brunn added that the yearly stats show a 43% increase over the last 6 years. (Note: this figure was later corrected – the increase shows a 75% increase over the last 6 years). The last full-time staff add for the police department was the SRO in 2018. Brunn stated that the city will need to look at additional staffing options in the future. Staff doesn't expect these call volumes to slow down when we compare our numbers to other agencies.

McMillin shared that she extended the application deadline for the part-time officer position to Jan. 15. She stated she had one application on her desk. Dec. 14 was Cocoa with a Cop – 17 kids participated. McMillin gave a huge thank you to Community Education for helping to run the event. Feb. 15 is Fun with Police. Annual use of force training with the sheriff's department is scheduled for February. On Jan. 9, McMillin will be attending a records management meeting with the county to review other systems. The current system will soon be obsolete. Questions and discussion followed.

City Engineer

Jarod Griffith, City Engineer, gave an overview to the council on capital water improvement projects and the grant funding the city as awarded. The next steps are to fine tune our project estimate for the next submittals. He directed the council to the proposal for a water treatment plant feasibility study.

Jeff Ledin from SEH addressed the council regarding the water quality. There is currently a manganese health advisory from the state. He recommended a new feasibility study with a fresh cost estimate for a water filtration plant. It would greatly improve the water quality and allow the ability to react quickly to anything else that comes along. He also recommended including another well by well #5 along with the filtration plant. The filtration plant would also help reduce the amount of brown water the city sometimes experiences. Questions and discussion followed.

Griffith stated that if the council is willing to move forward with the feasibility study tonight that would update the construction and project costs. Brunn added that the money for the feasibility study would come from the enterprise funds. Griffith added the city has been assigned grant dollars from the state. The city should continue progress on planning for improvements in order to keep access to the potential grant funding.

Motion by Gondeck, seconded by Swanson, to update the feasibility study.

Motion carried unanimous.

Public Works and Fire Department

Mark Pappenfus, Director of Public Works, stated there was not much new with Public Works. No snow plowing. The crew is trimming trees and working on building maintenance. The weather has not been cold enough to set up the ice rinks yet.

Pappenfus shared the compost site was open and will remain open through early next week for Christmas tree drop off. The new Christmas decorations on Hwy 23 look nice – it would be good to get some more. The Fire Department's Santa Parade was successful.

Chief Pappenfus presented information for the tanker #3 replacement is in your packet. Questions and discussion followed.

Voit asked if the Fire Department could sell the old tanker. Pappenfus said he would look into it.

Pappenfus said we should be caught up on trucks. We should look at the fire hall roof and the parking lot someday. There are other expenses coming up. He directed the council to their packet for the breakdown on how the new truck would be paid.

Brunn explained what funds were available. It would require cash from fire fund. She also stated she wasn't able to recommend borrowing cash from another fund in the city like the last truck purchased because those funds are needed for other projects. Brunn also indicated that a final contract has not yet been provided.

Brush stated he was comfortable waiting another month to vote on it.

Discussion continued. Gondeck asked what the longevity was on the new truck. Mark responded 25-30 years.

Motion by Swanson to approve the entire purchase of the truck with the \$10,000 down payment.

Pappenfus stated the city just needed the \$10,000 to start the process.

Brunn explained staff had just received a template contract shortly before the meeting and it requires \$10,000 within 10 business days.

Mathiowetz seconded.

Gondeck asked if the motion was to approve the contract.

Brunn explained that staff has not received a final contract. The council can authorize approval and moving forward but she'll have to bring back the final contract for approval.

Voit expressed he'd like to know what the old tanker could sell for.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Pappenfus added the new Tahoe for the fire department is in service and will be lettered and striped next week. The old one hasn't been sold yet.

Administration

Brunn had to forgo her verbal report as she had to leave to go to the township meeting.

Old Business

No old business.

New Business

No new business.

Second Open Forum

Debra Olson, 600 Dewey Street, addressed the council and referenced the email she had sent earlier requesting a list of receipts/money receivables in addition to the bills list. She mentioned that Brunn had shared with her that the city follows the guidelines from the League of Minnesota Cities. Olson stressed these are guidelines. Olson also requested more information about the city's meeting with the town estate farms. She said that the land in question was zoned agriculture and if it's turned into housing it would be going against the Planning Commission. Olson also asked when the council looks at housing development that they delineate between different types of housing and referenced the Waite Park townhomes. Olson added she had a question about how notifications are sent out when there are abnormal findings in the water as she felt it was not done in a timely fashion.

Brosh stated that prior to the meeting the council met with the City Administrator for a performance review and her performance was deemed satisfactory.

Voit thanked the Fire Department for helping during a power outage.

Mathiowetz also shared a compliment from a resident who walked his dog by the creek on Norman Avenue.

Swanson appreciated the Santa Parade.

Gondeck also spoke on behalf of the estate of Robin Gondeck for the condolences received in support of his family on his brother's passing.

Motion by Gondeck, seconded by Mathiowetz, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.



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