

**Mayor Sandie Peterson called the council meeting to order on Monday, December 13, 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Lafayette City Council Chambers at 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette.** Present were: Mayor Sandie Peterson, Councilors: Dave Reed, Scott Portner, Tom Polich, and Curt Tauber. Also present were: Utility & Maintenance Superintendent Al Fox, Clerk/Treasurer Sandy Burger, and City Attorney Aaron Walton. Ambulance President Mark Dick and Fire Chief Nick Klingler were absent.

**Guests present:** Lee Zion - Lafayette Ledger arrived at 7:05 pm. **Susan Akland was** in attendance, she is the State Representative for District 19A. She was on hand to meet council and staff and introduce herself. She is on the Environmental and Natural Resources committee.

**Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

There were no guests present for the second Truth in Taxation hearing, so council proceeded with the regular meeting agenda.

**Motioned by Reed and seconded by Portner to approve the meeting Agenda as presented; all ayes, motion carried.**

**Motioned by Reed and seconded by Tauber to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; all ayes, motion carried.** Included in the consent agenda were: 11/8 and 12/7 minutes, bills totaling \$100,485.88 and one (1) sump pump waivers from H Hacker.

**Reports:**

**Portner:** Park & Recreation continues to work on paperwork.

**Peterson:** nothing to report, but is excited for tomorrow's Santa Day and tree lighting activities and invites everyone to attend.

**Polich:** Completed the council member online training.

**Fox:** Flag pole is up just waiting for light to be installed. Removed all equipment from the pop shack to prepare for the updates, MN Dept of AG has placed Nicollet County in quarantine as Emerald Ash Bores migrated to the county. Service line protection information will be sent to residents in January.

**Burger:** Explained that the website will no longer be supported after March 31, she looked into a few options from UBMAX and Rural Water, will continue to get information and add it to the January agenda.

**Unfinished Business:**

**Wastewater Permit:** Due to Representative Akland's visit, Fox walked through what has been done to date to plan reduction of the chloride levels, now at 800, to the new limits of 230 once the new WWTF permit is received. There is not a way to reduce it at the WWTF, so the city has looked to the water supply for solutions. Lafayette has very hard water and all households have softeners. One option is to update the filtration process to reduce the chloride by installing an RO system to the water supply before distribution and removing the need for water softeners. This is a costly fix to a mandated permit limit. Once the study is done by Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc.(SEH), they will give multiple solution scenarios to the city, there is also different funding sources that need to be looked into further, once there is a proposed plan.

**Ord. 137 Amending Code 33.05 Fee Schedule:** Second reading was approved by council after a discussion on the fire charge increase and the line of utility reconnection fee will be removed as there was no change. **Motioned by Polich and seconded by Tauber to approve Ordinance 137 – Amending the Lafayette City Code 33.05 as amended. Roll: ayes, Reed, Polich, Tauber, Peterson and nays Portner, motion carried.**

Lafayette City Code 33.05	Note	2022
<b>Utilities</b>		
Farm Fill Flow Charge	per 1000 gallons	\$6.00
Residential Sewer Base		\$32.00
Residential Sewer Flow		\$6.70
Commercial Sewer Base		\$33.00
Commercial Sewer Flow		\$6.70
Sewer Hook-up		\$1,000.00
Utility Late Fee	water, sewer	
Reconnection Fee		

Residential Water Base		\$34.00
Residential Water Flow		\$5.85
Commercial Water Base		\$35.00
Commercial Water Flow		\$5.85
Water Hook-up		\$700.00
<b>Zoning</b>		
Re-Zone	plus, professional fees	
<b>Community Center Rental</b>		
Non-profit meeting/community band concerts		\$0.00
Non-profit fundraiser		\$50.00
Community Group Activity	ex: senior or sewing group, etc.	\$15.00
<b>Fire &amp; Ambulance Fees &amp; Charges</b>		
Fire Calls	plus, foam, etc.	\$1,000.00
<b>Misc. Fees &amp; Charges</b>		
Document Fee (assessment search)		\$30.00
Returned Check (NSF)		\$30.00

**Certify Utility:** After no response to the letter or hearing that was published in the Ledger and posted at the city office, council approved to certify the unpaid utilities to the county for collection in 2022. **Motioned by Reed to approve Resolution 2021-23 Certifying Past Due Billing to the Nicollet County Auditor for Collection with Property Taxes seconded by Portner; all ayes, motion carried**

**New Business:**

**Resolution 2021-24 Accepting December Donations to the City of Lafayette:**

Included were donations of a \$100 value each of holiday décor from L. Gieseke, D. Burger & T. Fox. **There was a motion by Portner and seconded by Tauber to approve Resolution 2021-24 December Donations to the City of Lafayette. All ayes, motion carried.**

**Resolution 2021-25 Accepting the Redistribution of ARPA Funds:**

The state redistributed ARPA funds which were not applied for from cities across the state, that money was reallocated to the cities who applied. Lafayette received \$854.18. **There was a motion by Polich and seconded by Tauber to approve Resolution 2021-25 Accepting the redistribution of unrequested Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds established under the American Rescue Plan Act ( ARPA). All ayes, motion carried.**

**Fire Relief Years of Service:** Mayor Peterson shared with council that Doug Hoffmann requested the annual Fire Relief years of service payout be increased to \$2,500, after he had met with the Relief Auditor. This is the amount that if something should happen to the entire department, the payout would be covered by the Relief funds. **Reed motioned to approve the increase to \$2,500 per years of service for the Fire Relief, Portner seconded it. Motion passed with ayes from Peterson, Polich, Reed and Tauber; Portner abstained.**

**2022 Fire Officers:** The fire department requested council approval of the 2022 Fire Department Officers as follows: Chief N. Klingler, Asst. Chief M. Voges, Secretary S. Clemon, Trainers L. VanDeest & D. Morenco, Marshall S. Portner, Truck Runners W. Portner, K. Liebl ( L. VanDeest will assist until Liebl has recovered from surgery. **Polich motioned to approve the Fire Department's 2022 officers, Tauber seconded it. Motion passed with ayes from Peterson, Polich, Reed and Tauber; Portner abstained.**

**Elections:** Mail-in voting was a discussion at the budget workshop last week, Polich had asked for clarification to the mail-in voting process, with a main concern of the flux in the final date votes were accepted in the 2020 election. Nicollet County's election official, Jaci Kopet, explained to Burger that it was due to the pandemic. The 2022 election and any elections to follow will only accept ballots which arrive in the mail on election day, or any ballot dropped off by 8 pm at the county government building election area; no ballots would be accepted after the polls close. She also shared that going to mail-in voting historically, in the county, there is an increase in voter participation. A big concern state-wide is finding election judges. The county will mail ballot packets to registered voters only in the City of Lafayette precinct approximately a month in advance of the primary or general election.

If a voter wishes to vote in-person, they can bring the ballot packet to the courthouse on election day or a week prior where they can vote and put their ballot into the machine. Voting by mail can happen at any time after the ballots are mailed. The election officials will work in teams, starting no sooner than 14 days prior to the election, to begin opening the mail ballots, then verify and feed them into the machine – there is no tabulation until the close of election night. There were concerns shared by a few council members that people want to vote in person. Peterson pointed out that during the last election's mail-in voting due to the pandemic, we did not see a decrease in voters, people who want to vote will. **Reed motioned to approve Resolution 2021-26 - A Resolution to Conduct Elections by Mail for Registered Voters in the City of Lafayette, Nicollet County, Polich seconded, motion carried. Roll: ayes, Reed, Polich, and Peterson; nays Portner and Tauber.**

**2022 Budget and 2022 Property Tax Levy:** There was discussion of the 2022 budget at the budget workshop and continued into the December meeting, council had many discussions on the budget as to where funding was needed, as the cost of everything has risen, updates are needed to buildings, needs for the fire department, parks and pop shack, in the end the council was satisfied with an \$11,723 increase or 6.69%, down from the preliminary budget approved in September of a 12.3% or \$19,580 increase.

**Motioned by Pollich to approve the 2022 budget and adopt the 2022 property tax levy as follows:**

**General Fund: \$144,949.00**

**Debt Service RS Fiber: \$35,488.00**

**Ambulance: \$6,600**

**Total: \$187,037.00**

**Seconded by Reed; all ayes, motion carried.**

**End of year Budget moves:** Burger supplied council with a list of probable End of Year (EOY) moves including: 2021 Ambulance assessment received to General fund - \$6,768.06 (this fund was set up to repay the general fund the \$33,000 borrowed to the Ambulance fund to purchase the new ambulance and then, once repaid will continue to save for the next ambulance)

Streets to Street Savings \$25,000 future sealing

Streets to Street Savings \$5,000 future vehicle

Revolving Local Funds to Culture \$10,232 (this is the amount of expenses minus the donation from Citizens and the Legion rounded to the nearest dollar)

Fire to General Savings \$5,000 restricted for saving for a city pumper, \$2,200 towards new equipment

Water to WWTF \$16,500 to make a payment on the \$80,000 loan

Ambulance to ARPA – \$3,715.57 – Washer Extractor

Fire to ARPA – \$3,715.57 – Washer Extractor

Culture to ARAP – \$1460 – cost of porta potties for the city park

Waste Water to ARPA – \$17845 – the cost of the generator purchase

**Moved by Reed to approve the moves as presented, seconded by Portner; all ayes, motion carried.**

**Personnel – Resignation: Portner motioned to approve the resignation of Jenna Wenninger, Polich seconded; all ayes, motion carried.** Council directed Burger to run ads in New Ulm, Winthrop newsletter, website, Mediacom channel, Facebook and posters.

**2021 Audit Engagement Letter: Reed motioned to approve the 2021 Audit Engagement Letter, Portner seconded the motion; all ayes, motion carried.**

**Motioned by Portner and seconded by Tauber to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 pm; all ayes, motion carried.** The next council meeting will be held on Monday, January 10, 2022 at the Lafayette City Council Chambers at 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette at 7:00 pm.

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Sandie Peterson – Mayor

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Sandy Burger – City Clerk- Treasurer