



MINUTES

Regular Evening Meeting

6:30 PM - Wednesday, September 4, 2024

City Hall Council Chambers

The City of Pine City Council met in Regular Evening Meeting on Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at 6:30 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

Mayor Kent Bombard, Councilors Dave Hill, Gina Pettie and Kyle Palmer Present. Councilor Mary Kay Sloan was not in attendance with an approved absence. City Administrator Marcy Peterson, Tom Miller, Nicole Tricker, Maury Montbriand, Adam Zemek, Brock Bloomquist and Melanie Bloomquist present.

3. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Palmer wishes to include two items under Old Business: the preliminary budget discussion as item 9.4 and the matter of 315 Main Street as item 9.5. Councilor Palmer made a motion to approve the agenda with the above changes, Councilor Hill seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

This is an opportunity for citizens to present items to the Council that are not on the agenda. Each presentation is limited to three (3) minutes and a maximum of fifteen minutes is set aside. If your item needs follow-up from the City, Staff will arrange for that.

4.1. KYLE BORGSTROM - PINE CITY CIVIC CENTER

A letter concerning a special assessment was mistakenly sent to the Civic Center instead of the school, which owns the property. City Administrator Peterson informed that the school is already in contact with the city regarding this matter. Greg from SEH has issued an apology for the oversight.

4.2. BOB MARX - OWNER OF POKEGAMA PINES STORAGE IN BEROUN

Bob wishes to report an incident to the council. He admits to starting a fire at his business without a permit, which led to someone notifying the police department about the fire. The police and fire departments responded to the incident. Subsequently, he was billed \$750 for the emergency response, a charge he finds unfair and frustrating. Councilor Pettie acknowledged his concerns and expressed appreciation for his transparency.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS / CORRESPONDENCE

5.1. BEAVER POND TOWNHOMES - DISCUSS SNOW REMOVAL ON 9TH AVE NE

City Administrator Peterson informed the council that Lee requested to be added to the agenda, as snow removal does not extend to the end of his street, which is not maintained by the City. Lee Anderson of the Beaver Pond Townhomes Association contends that the city originally constructed the road. He notes that the city no longer plows the cul-de-sac at the road's end. Janet Weiner clarifies that the association owns the final 200 feet of 9th Ave, and city plowing ceases where this property begins. She expressed concerns about the city's handling of snow if it's not pushed to the street's end, a matter previously discussed with City Administrator Matt Van Steenwyk, who had agreed the city would plow to the street's end. Councilor Palmer raised issues from the Public Works Committee about potential damage to city equipment due to the street not meeting city standards. He suggested the city could assume responsibility for the street at the association's expense, or the association could absolve the city of liability for any damage. Maury proposed drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the association to ensure the city is not liable and agrees to plow to the road's end, noting the cul-de-sac is 30 feet smaller than city requirements. Councilor Palmer sought further clarification on the city's non-liability, while Councilor Pettie urged the Public Works and the association to draft the MOU.

Councilor Hill motioned for a MOU to be drafted and presented at the next council meeting, with Palmer seconding the motion, motion carried unanimously. The MOU is expected to be presented at the first October meeting.

5.2. 8TH & GOLF STREET IMPROVEMENTS FINAL ASSESSMENT

Greg from SEH delivered the Final Assessment for the 8th and Golf project. The assessments were compiled, including a special benefit assessment, consistent with the City's previous assessments. Sidewalk costs were excluded from the assessment. Greg emphasized that a final decision is required tonight for inclusion in the 2025 property tax bills.

Mike Christensen - 820 Golf Ave, the individual has formally notified the intention to appeal the property assessment in district court, citing multiple grievances regarding the assessment process. He contends that the assessment should reflect market value rather than the cost of improvements, arguing that improvements do not necessarily correlate with increased market value. Furthermore, the individual disputes the appraiser's right to devalue a property based on water and sewer conditions. He states that he requested the special assessment data with the appraiser's personal notes, however, was only given the full appraisal. Conversations with two real estate appraisers led the individual to believe that the improvements did not greatly enhance the property's value. Questions were raised about the lack of assessment for Hilltop cottages and Northern Pines, which presumably benefited from street improvements. The individual also inquired about the criteria for deeming sewer lines defective, noting an absence of rust or cracks upon personal inspection. Repeated requests for information on the pipes' age went unanswered. The individual suspects that the City has breached several state statutes, including the exclusion of certain residents from the assessment process, as detailed in the notice provided.

Greg Anderson, City Engineer, Acknowledged and addressed each of his concerns. Council accepted and signed his formal appeal.

Mark Peterson - 735 Golf Ave, Inquired whether it would be logical to proceed to the resolution and then carry on with the public hearing.

6. SHERIFF UPDATE

Deputy Moe reported to the Council that the calls for August were typical, with no unusual incidents. There have been multiple complaints about speeding and ignoring the stop sign on Golf Avenue, leading to an increased police presence there. He reminded everyone that with school back in session, the speed limit in town is 30 mph, and adhering to it will help reduce the likelihood of accidents.

Dan Swanson (Citizen) informed Deputy Moe of a rise in close calls at the elementary school crosswalk. Deputy Moe has committed to heightened patrols in that vicinity.

7. DEPARTMENT / COMMITTEE REPORTS

No concerns from council.

8. CONSENT ITEMS

Councilor Pettie made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Councilor Hill seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

8.1. AUGUST 22, 2024 MINUTES

8.2. CHECK DETAIL REPORT

8.3. PAYROLL REGISTER

8.4. PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCIES

8.5. ECM PRIDE IN THE PARK - SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT

9. OLD BUSINESS

9.1. 8TH AND GOLF ASSESSMENT - RESOLUTION 20240904-35

Greg from SEH presented the resolution. Councilors Hill and Palmer posed several questions, which Greg addressed. The council noted an objection to the assessment from Mike Christiansen.

Councilor Pettie made a motion to approve Resolution 20240904-35, Councilor Hill seconded the motion. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Councilor Hill, Pettie and Mayor Bombard voted yes, and Councilor Palmer voted no.

Discussion: Councilor Palmer has called for all data to be made public, arguing that it is funded by the citizens of Pine City and criticizing the current lack of transparency. The rest of the council concurs with his viewpoint. Councilor Palmer has proposed releasing this information to the public, while Councilor Pettie has suggested consulting the City attorney prior to making a decision.

Councilor Palmer made a motion to consult the City attorney to release information, Councilor Hill seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

9.2. GREG ANDERSON (SEH) 2024 STREET IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE

Greg updated the council on the progress of 10th Street SW. He proposed options for marking the bike path, recommending ten-foot lines from the centerline. The street will feature double lines for the bike path, complemented by signs and pavement markings. These markings will be temporary, allowing for adjustments or permanency with the final application in the spring, providing an effective trial period. Additionally, Greg offered two choices for delineators, pending a decision. He sought the council's guidance on adding a stop sign on 2nd Avenue. Councilor Hill suggested installing solar-powered flashing lights on the new stop signs if approved.

Councilor Palmer made a motion to approve pavement markings, bike lane signs and adding additional stop signs, Councilor Hill seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

Jim France (Citizen) would like to see bike lane markers also added to 6th Ave going toward the beach from 10th Street SW.

9.3. 2025 PRELIMINARY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

City Administrator Peterson informed the council that department heads have reviewed their capital budgets, and the figures have been updated accordingly.

9.4. PRELIMINARY BUDGET DISCUSSION

Councilor Palmer inquired about the discussion of the preliminary budget. Nicole informed that she received the preliminary audit figures today and is finalizing the budget, aiming to present it at the upcoming council meeting. Councilor Palmer also queried about the enhancement plans for Robinson Park. Brock responded that he is seeking a grant to ensure the park meets ADA standards and intends to replace the gazebo's shingles.

Councilors Hill and Palmer have asked for a detailed breakdown of the preliminary budget and requested it be emailed for review before the next council meeting.

9.5. 315 MAIN STREET

Councilor Palmer noted that 315 Main Street is largely unoccupied and is incurring significant costs for the City. He feels that a decision should be made before the adoption of the 2025 budget. Mayor Bombard has asked for a discussion to take place once all tenants have vacated the building, mentioning that Lezlie has some promising ideas for the work group.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1. PARKS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS DISC GOLF MEMO

Brock Bloomquist, Parks and Public Buildings Director has requested permission to proceed with the Disc Golf Course planning in collaboration with the school district. Councilor Pettie has asked for a map of the proposed course and more detailed figures before giving approval. Brock has a work group meeting scheduled for tomorrow to outline the project's plans and procedures. Councilor Hill suggested that Parks & Recreation and Public Works could jointly budget for a brush hog, while Maury advised considering the purchase of a second-hand brush hog.

10.2. PINE COUNTY RETAIL ADULT-USE CANNABIS ORDINANCE

Lara Smetana, Liquor Operations Manager - introduced the County Retail Adult-Use Cannabis Ordinance, indicating that the City has the option to oversee Cannabis Licensing or allow the County to handle it. She advises that the County should be authorized as the licensing agent for Cannabis.

Councilor Pettie made a motion to approve the County Cannabis Ordinance, Councilor Palmer seconded the motion, Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Mayor Bombard, Councilors Hill, Pettie and Palmer all voting yes.

10.3. PLANNING COMMISSION WELIA MEMO

City Administrator Peterson briefed the Council on the Welia expansion project, confirming that Welia has accepted all recommendations. Councilor Hill inquired whether the Fire Chief and the Fire & Life Safety Inspector had been consulted about the expansion. Chief Miller responded that he had yet to review the plans.

Councilor Palmer made a motion to approve the development review plan with staff recommendations, Councilor Hill seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

11. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bombard announced that he and City Administrator Peterson have met with the local Fiber Committee. They received clarification on the configuration and integration of the City's fiber network. Additionally, it was noted that Midco is interested in purchasing the City's Dark Fiber and leasing it back to the City, with the potential acquisition occurring in 2025.

12. COUNCIL CONCERNS

No Council Concerns


13. ADJOURN

Councilor Pettie made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Councilor Palmer seconded the motion, Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.



CAO



Mayor

Meeting Minutes Completed By: Melanie Bloomquist, Deputy Clerk