

Regular Meeting

**Echo City Council**  
**Tuesday, January 10th, 2023**

The regular city council meeting of the City of Echo Minnesota was called to order by Mayor James Busack at 6:00 pm at the Community Center.

**Present:** Mayor James Busack, Councilman Mark Schettler, Councilman Reid Hanson, Councilman Darren Gjerset, Clerk Brian Pitzl, Public Work Supervisor Bryan Nielsen, Fire Chief Matt Dunphy. **Absent:** Councilman Dan Larsen

**Citizens/Guests:** Ray Sweetman, Daneen Dhoore

**Approval of Minutes & Resolutions:**

Motion to approve, December 13th, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes, was made by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Hanson. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent. Motion to approve Resolution 2022-400 Accepting Donations made by Councilman Schettler, seconded by Councilman Hanson. Thank you, letter, will be sent to donor. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent. Resolution 2023-1 Appointing acting mayor, motion made by Mayor Busack, seconded by Councilman Schettler to appoint Councilman Gjerset as acting mayor. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent. Motion made by Mayor Busack, seconded by Councilman Schettler to select Citizens Alliance Bank of Echo as the Depository of City Funds. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent. Motion made by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Schettler to Designate the Tri-County News as the official Newspaper for the City of Echo, Motion passed with Councilman Larsen absent.

**Consent Agenda:**

Motion to approve consent agenda including Bills for Payment, Payroll, and Bank Information made by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Gjerset. Motion passed with Councilman Larsen absent. Motion to approve that Maintenance Supervisor Nielsen be the primary lead for all committees and all council members will also be responsible for all committees for 2023, made by Councilman Schettler, seconded by Councilman Gjerset. Motion passed with Councilman Larsen absent. Motion made by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Schettler to appoint Dan Larsen, if still interested, as Cemetery Grave Marker/Stake Person. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent. Discussion was held regarding the city rates and fees. Clerk will put a note on next month's water bill reminding residents that if they have a pet, a license is required for that pet, per city ordinance 14.102. The cemetery rates were discussed. Currently the city pays a fee to have the grave marked. This fee is absorbed by the city. After speaking with the local funeral home, it was learned that other cemeteries pass this fee on to the party that is the owner of the plot. Discussed many options for creating more revenue. Motion was made by Councilman Schettler and seconded by Councilman Hanson to

set the fee for marking of the grave at \$100 to be paid by the owner of the plot. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent. Some other cemeteries also charge for snow removal or prohibit burials during certain months of the year. Council suggested that snow removal for the cemetery would be secondary to the removal of snow for the streets and other areas of town that need to be cleared. Plot rate will remain at \$200.00.

### **Reports:**

Fire Department - Chief Matt Dunphy: The department will be purchasing a new motor and pump for the grass rig. The department will use funds from the relief association so no cost will be put to the city. A firefighter who recently resigned due to health issues, informed the city that he would like to return to the department. The department members gave encouraging reviews of the individuals past performance and said he would be an asset to the department. Motion made by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Gjerset to approve of the rejoining pending a doctors note stating that the individual is physically able to perform the duties that will be asked of him. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent. Several fire fighters will be attending training in March. Jaws of Life training also in March.

First Responders - Chas Kuehn: N/A

Maintenance Supervisor – Bryan Nielsen: Will be attending the Water/Wastewater Conference in March. Had an outside firm at \$270 per hour to come in to help with pushing of snow. Motion by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Gjerset approving to pay the costs for 3 hours of work. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent.

Mayor Busack – N/A

Councilman Schettler – Inquired about the pest control contract with Ecolab for the community center. Clerk received a quote of \$590.00 per year for pest control services from Southwest Pest LLC that would cover all city buildings. Motion by Councilman Gjerset and seconded by Councilman Schettler to terminate contract with Ecolab and enter an agreement with Southwest Pest LLC. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent.

Councilman Gjerset – Councilman Gjerset has been in contact with Senator Gary Dahms and the League of Minnesota Cities, regarding the 2021 second half of town LGA that the city didn't receive due to state legislatures not passing any budget bills in the 2022 session. He will continue to invest time into this matter.

Councilman Hanson N/A

Councilman Larsen- N/A

Clerk Pitzl – Reminded the council of Board of Appeals and Equalization training. City needs at least one council member to be trained for the Annual Appeals and Equalization Meeting. Clerk will send link for training to the 3 council members interested. Talked with Shannon Sweeney

from Drown & Associates pertaining to expanding the TIF District created with the building of the elevator. Mr. Sweeney recommended having a work session with the council and a member from Bollig Engineering to discuss the process and what the needs of the city are. Clerk will see what dates would work for all parties. Clerk will be in Lynd on Wednesday January 18<sup>th</sup> to process year end reports and tax papers. Office will be closed that day.

**Old Business:**

**New Business:**

Discussion was held concerning water rates and other fees pertaining to the water bills. No changes made at this time. Aged balance report for past due water bills was discussed. Clerk was instructed to send out letters of disconnection to customers with water bills over 90 days past due. City received emails from a couple citizens regarding snow removal concerns. Council took into consideration these concerns and decided that the snow removal was handled properly during the past snow events.

Discussion was had regarding signatures for the city bank accounts.

Motion made by Councilman Hanson, Seconded by Councilman Schettler to remove Ray Sweetman, Mark Schettler, Sue Paradis, and Jacob Kolander as signers of the Bank Accounts and approve Mayor James Busack and Councilman/Acting Mayor Darren Gjerset as check signers as well as Clerk Brian Pitzl. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent.

Motion made by Councilman Schettler, seconded by Councilman Hanson to remove Ray Sweetman as signer for the city CD and add Mayor James Busack to the signature card. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent.

Motion made by Councilman Hanson seconded by Councilman Schettler to remove Ray Sweetman, Sue Paradis, and Daneen Dhoore as signer of Safe Deposit Box and add Mayor James Busack and Clerk Brian Pitzl to the signature card. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent.

Russel Hennen was left as the signer for the Fire Department Safe Deposit Box.

**Adjournment:** Motion was made by Councilman Gjerset, and second by Councilman Hanson to adjourn regular meeting at 7:50, motion carried with Councilman Larsen absent.

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Mayor Jim Busack

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City Clerk- Brian Pitzl