

Regular Meeting

**Echo City Council  
Tuesday, June 13th, 2023**

The regular city council meeting of the City of Echo Minnesota was called to order by Mayor James Busack at 7:00 pm at the Community Center.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

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

**Citizens/Guests:** City Attorney Matthew Gross, Daneen Dhoore, John Brandt, Roger Wing

**Open Forum:** Matt Dunphy requested a building permit for a 16-foot-high fence on his property. The council was concerned about height restrictions relating to the utility lines running along the alley where the fence would be located. Motion made by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Larsen to approve the fence pending it would be following the utility company regulations. Motion carried unanimously. The city attorney, Mathew Gross, was present to consult the council concerning the course of enforcing city ordinances. The attorney toured the town prior to the meeting with the mayor to view what issues there were within the city. The attorney went through the process of enforcing the city ordinances and addressing properties in violation. Legal fees for this process could be around \$1000. He recommended adding a line to the city budget for this purpose so as to have funds allocated for this matter. Informed the city that there are also state statutes for hazardous conditions of buildings as well if the city ordinances do not have certain policies in place. The attorney will send an email to the city clerk with an outline of the process for future reference. The council has taken no action at this time but will continue to monitor properties that are not in compliance. Daneen Dhoore addressed the council regarding a building permit that was approved at a prior council meeting. She informed the council of a small change to the location of the building mentioned in the permit. Motion made by councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Larsen to approve the change. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes & Resolutions:**

Motion to approve, May 9th, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes, was made by Councilman Larsen, seconded by Councilman Gjerset. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve, May 30<sup>th</sup> Special City Council meeting minutes was made by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Schettler. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2023-007 Accepting Donations was made by Councilman Schettler, seconded by Councilman Gjerset. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2023-0613 Establishing Juneteenth as a City Holiday was made by Councilman Larsen, seconded by Councilman Hanson. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Reports:**

Matt Dunphy, Fire Department – The Echo Fire Department Annual Pork Chop Feed will be held on Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-7:00 pm. A fireman who took a leave of absence from the department would like to rejoin and not be able to lose any retirement credit. The fire department members voted unanimously to reinstate this fire fighter at their last meeting. Motion to approve the return of this firefighter to the department with out any loss of time credited was made by Councilman Larsen, seconded by Councilman Hanson. Motion carried unanimously. A member from ISO was recently in town to inspect equipment. The fire chief was instructed to create an inventory list to update the city insurance policy.

Chastity Kuehn, First Responders – N/A

Maintenance Supervisor Bryan Nielsen– Informed the council that he was recently selected for County, State, and Federal jury duty and will inform them of any time off needed for this service. Bryan will be off for vacation June 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Received another quote for tree removal at Lions Park. Motion made by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Hanson to approve the hiring of Dellwo Property Maintenance at a cost of \$4,500 to remove 7 trees including clean up. Motion carried unanimously. A motion was made by Councilman Larsen, seconded by Councilman Gjerset to give Bryan permission to trim trees along boulevards to prevent damage to city equipment during snow removal. Motion carried unanimously. The clerk will send a letter to a resident who has a line of bushes that are overgrown and blocking access to the sidewalk. Bryan asked the council if he would be able to purchase the sweeper attachment for the payloader since the other equipment is being sold. He said it would be about a five week wait for delivery. Motion made by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Larsen to approve the purchase of the sweeper attachment. Motion carried unanimously. Bryan talked about replacing a water line at a residence in town. Bryan recommended that the total bill for all work performed be sent to the homeowner. The council agreed and the clerk will send the owner the bill when all expenses have been verified.

Mayor Busack – Mayor Busack had information on a refrigerator for the community center. There had been an incident where the fridge wasn't cooling properly. Both the city clerk and maintenance supervisor have been checking the refrigerator on a regular basis and have not experienced any issues. They will continue to keep an eye on it to see if there are any other problems. If any issues arise, the city will contact a repair business to come take a look at it.

Councilman Schettler –. Has been in contact with Steffes Auction concerning the sale of excess city equipment. The fee for listing items on this auction site is 8%. The city would be able to use any items until the auction dates. No minimum bid requirements. An offer was made by councilman Larsen for the payloader. Motion made by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Schettler to list the payloader on the city website for 1 week to allow others interested to bid. Motion carried with Councilman Larsen abstaining. Motion to list other

equipment consisting of the plow truck, sweeper, snow blower and the Mahindra tractor including the loader, blower, and broom attachments, with the auction company was made by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Larson. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Gjerset – Contacted the county concerning semi-trucks parking on the county road going through town. The city will need to adopt a resolution to restrict parking on certain areas of the main highway through town. Motion was made to create a resolution restricting semi parking on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave from 3<sup>rd</sup> St going East to the city limits by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Schettler, motion carried. The city clerk will draw up a resolution to be passed by the council. The city will also install signs to inform residents as to where they cannot park. Addressed the clerk concerning office hours. Currently the office is open 7:30 am to 3:30 pm Monday to Thursday and closed on Friday. Councilman Gjerset would like to see the office open until 5:00 pm at least one day a week. The city office will now be open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Tuesdays, with the other days remaining the same.

Councilman Hanson – Brought up the condition of a property in town. The city had sent a letter to the resident to clean up the excess junk on the property. The owner had told the council that they would be working on cleaning up the property but as of the date of this meeting, it has gotten worse. The clerk will send another letter giving the owner more time to clean up the property but with the stipulation that if not done in a certain time period, the city will remove the excess and bill the property owner. There has been a person parking their semi-truck in front of mailboxes and will be sent a letter explaining that this is unlawful and to find an alternative place to park.

Councilman Larsen –

Clerk Pitzl - The city office will be closed June 15<sup>th</sup> for clerk training and June 19<sup>th</sup> in observance of Juneteenth.

### **Old Business:**

The issue concerning chickens in town was again discussed. It was determined that the council has the decision regarding chickens in the city limits. It was decided that chickens would be allowed to be housed in the city with stipulations. A maximum of 6 chickens per property with no roosters. The chickens must be held in a coup. The city clerk will check with area towns regarding their chicken ordinances and will adjust it to what the city of Echo would allow. Motion to allow chickens in the city subject to complaints was made by Councilman Larsen, seconded by Councilman Schettler. Motion carried unanimously.

### **New Business:**

Aged balance report for past due water bills was discussed. It was brought up at the meeting about the idea of adjusting the past due bills shutoff notification from 90 days to 30 days. It was thought that prior councils had presented a discussion pertaining to this issue. The clerk will look at past meeting minutes to determine if any decisions were made on this issue. The clerk

was instructed to send out letters of disconnection to customers with water bills over 90 days past due.

**Consent Agenda:**

Motion made by Councilman Hanson, seconded by Councilman Larsen to approve the consent agenda consisting of Bills, Payroll, and Bank Information. Motion carried unanimously.

**Adjournment:** Motion was made by Councilman Larsen, and second by Councilman Schettler to adjourn regular meeting at 8:55, motion carried unanimously.

---

Mayor James Busack

---

City Clerk- Brian Pitzl