

**CITY OF PARK RAPIDS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 24, 2012, 7:00 PM
Park Rapids Public Library-Lower Level
Park Rapids, Minnesota**

1. CALL TO ORDER: The July 24th, 2012 Regular Meeting of the Park Rapids City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Nancy Carroll, and everyone present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Nancy Carroll, Councilmembers Dave Konshok, Patrick Mikesh, and Paul Utke. Absent: Councilmember Sue Tomte. Staff Present: Administrator Bill Smith, Public Works Superintendent Scott Burlingame, Fire Chief Donn Hoffman, Liquor Store Manager Scott Olson, Police Chief Terry Eilers, and Clerk Margie Vik. Others Present: Dick Rutherford, Julie Snow, Amanda Snow, Judy Teiken, and Anna Erickson from the Enterprise.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made by Utke, seconded by Mikesh, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as presented.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

4.1. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes-July 10, 2012: A motion was made by Mikesh, seconded by Konshok, and unanimously carried to approve the July 10th, 2012, City Council Regular Meeting minutes with the following change: Page 1, Item #8.1. all references regarding Evon Spangler should be changed from he/him to she/her.

5. FINANCE:

5.1. Payables & Prepaids: A motion was made by Konshok, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to approve the payables in the amount of \$44,463.70, and the prepaids in the amount of \$47,025.42, for a total of \$91,489.12.

6. CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Mikesh, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to approve the following consent agenda items:

- 6.1. Resolution #2012-125 Approving Wage Adjustment and Step Increase for Park Rapids Police Investigator Sabin Rasmus.

- 6.2. **Resolution #2012-126 Approving Wage Adjustment and Step Increase for Park Rapids Police Officer Jeffrey Hulse.**
- 6.3. **Resolution #2012-127 Authorizing the Sale of Excess City Property from the City of Park Rapids.**
- 6.4. **Approve Transient Merchant License for Keith Evenson d.b.a. S&S Promotional Group Inc for July 26th to the 27th, 2012.**
- 6.5. **Approve Outdoor Dance Permit for American Legion for Friday, August 10th, 2012, from 8:00 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. in their Parking Lot.**
- 6.6. **Approve a Purchase Order in the Amount of \$1,890.67 for Parts to Repair Runway, Taxiway, and Approach Lighting for the Park Rapids Municipal Airport from Genesis Lamp.**
- 6.7. **Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$48,648.05 to Minnesota Public Facilities Authority for Loan Payment on the Water Tower.**
- 6.8. **Approve Pay Request in the Amount of \$1,123.06 to TKDA for Architect Fees for the 2011 Airport Terminal Area Improvements.**

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

7. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: Dick Rutherford presented pictures and an example of one of the weeds that are growing next to his property. He stated this is what's growing in Park Rapids next door to me. Some of them are over six feet tall. The city is mowing the water tower lot. Why are we mowing that, when they don't have to mow next door to me? Tourists are coming to town and seeing this and are asking me what is this growing? The sign there says trees, but it should say weeds. When they get to be this bad it's a disgrace to Park Rapids. I think something should be done.

Carroll questioned have you called anyone at city hall about this? Rutherford answered yes. Bill Smith knows about it and went and looked at it. But none of the Council has seen it. Konshok questioned is this on the DNR Forestry property? Rutherford stated it is. But that shouldn't make any difference if it's in city limits. It's where the trees blew down in that storm last year. Carroll stated hopefully staff will be able to handle this before all the weeds go to seed.

Julie Snow stated I feel like I'm being harassed by the city. I've lived in my home for eleven years. I've never gotten a letter from the city for anything. In the last three weeks I've gotten three of them. My house is in my name. I bought it before I married my husband. The first letter that came was addressed to my husband Jerry Snow. His name is not on my house in any way, shape, or form. I don't understand why it was addressed to him. Even if someone wants to claim his name is on my house, his real name is Gerald Snow, so it wouldn't have come up as Jerry Snow. That letter stated my lawn was too long.

I do understand that. My house is the one that had the grandstand roof land in it last year. My yard is all weeds and tree roots. I'm trying to fix my yard but it's bad and it's horrible to mow. I admit it was bad. I'm still confused as to why that letter would not have come to me.

Snow stated today I got two more letters. One states that I have diseased trees that need to be removed sent by Stephanie Paulson. I called her today and asked her what trees you are talking about. She said she didn't know and that she'd stop by this afternoon and tell me, and she never did. The other letter I got, which I'm most upset about, it says that I need to move my camper by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, because I'm not allowed to have it on my lot. When I called Bill Smith, who signed this letter, to ask him about this, he said that I couldn't have the camper parked on my lot in town. I said the ordinance, which you sent me, says they cannot be occupied for a period of more than two weeks in a six month period. Meaning no one can live in them in my yard, not that it can't be parked there. No one has stayed in my camper. It's been sitting there. I've had a camper in my yard for years. I've never had a compliant. The biggest compliant about this letter is that it says right here, it was observed on my property on June 22nd, and was still located on my parcel upon a follow up site visit on July 20th. That was this past Friday and my camper was with me at Moondance Jam. So that is a blatant lie. The camper was not even at my house.

Snow stated I don't know what's going on but I'm really feeling uneasy with the whole thing. I've never had a problem here. I pay my taxes and all of a sudden I'm getting all these letters. When I call no one can explain to me exactly what's going on. If you sign a letter you should be able to tell me the information because you signed it.

Bill Smith stated Ms. Snow called city hall today. I said I'd be happy to look into all these matters. I was able to talk to a few people. I called her back with a couple of explanations and said I was continuing to work on it. It's disconcerting for me to walk in here and you're voicing these complaints while I'm still trying to respond to you. You've got a right to do that. I'm not questioning that. As for the grass letter, I believe that was sent by Brenda Stuemke, the Utility Billing Clerk, who generally mails out our tall grass/weeds letters. She told me today that she knows either your husband or you, that she went to school with one, or the two of you, so I'm thinking that's where the Jerry came from. I talked with Chief Eilers today. He told me that he drives by that place every day and he said I believe Ms. Snow is right, I don't think that trailer was there in the 20th. I believe the person who reported it was not at work today so I wasn't able to follow up on that. I still plan on doing that. I explained that to you. I talked with the Public Works Supervisor Scott Burlingame about the trees. There were about eighty letters that went out. About three people went out looking at trees across the city on this effort to remove diseased and dead trees. We asked Stephanie Paulson, who's the Urban Forester for the city, to please contact you to see which tree we're talking about as to what's the problem. I don't know why she didn't make it there today. I'm sure she will get there to investigate what the problem is with the tree. I ask you to allow me to finish doing my job. I'd be happy to do that. And where we've made a mistake, as Chief Eilers thinks we have, we'll confess right up to it, but give me a chance to get the explanations to you.

Snow stated I have to say it's disconcerting that when I talked to you today, and I said why am I getting all these letters now, and you said because the governor is coming to Park Rapids for the fishing opener so we need to clean up the town. That's like me telling my kids we don't need to clean the house unless there's company coming. This is our town. Shouldn't we always be making sure that it's clean if that's the case? My trees

on my lot, other than the ones that were ruined by the tornado, look the same as they have for the last eleven years. They don't look any different. My camper has been parked there for years and I've never received a letter. I'm not understanding this.

Carroll thanked Snow for her comments. It sounds like Smith is doing the follow up. He can give us a report at our next meeting.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS:

8.1. Modifications to the Airport Arrival/Departure Building: Smith stated there was a suggestion made by the Airport Commissioners that we should work out a way that the public could access the arrival/departure building after hours and on weekends. The suggestion was to put in a keypad and locking system on the airside door. There was concern about security, and the fixed base operator's things in the office area. At the last Airport Commissioner's meeting, the board moved to have a keypad locking system put on the airside door, to have a surveillance camera installed in the arrival/departure building. There were concerns for the FBO's office area, to secure it with a roll down security door at the customer service window and make sure the pedestrian door there was securable. We've obtained some quotes for that work, except for the security camera. The commissioners have reviewed that, and they've moved to recommend to the City Council that these items be purchased and installed with a maximum of \$5,000.00.

Konshok stated this is a routine procedure. A lot of other airports of our size have done this. Most notably, we're taking our cues off of Detroit Lakes. The concern is that pilots that are flying in afterhours can get into the very outside lobby area where the bathrooms, vending machines, and the flight computer are located, but that's about it. If they're going to be here longer than five to ten minutes they'd need a place to sit down. The idea behind this is it does give afterhours access. Public access is limited. There is a keypad system. The codes are put out through the flying community, but otherwise it's not generally disseminated to the public. If someone were to ask, I suppose we could do that. The idea behind it is there is if a pilot there outside of the regular hours they're able to get inside and access more than just the bathroom and the vending machine. I would call it fairly routine. There's a number of other airports that have done it, and have had success with it. There is a bit of concern which is why they're putting in the security camera. We talked with the FBO, Park Rapids Aviation, and they're on board with it. So we wanted to give it a try.

Carroll stated we have a note in the funding sources. We have a number of requests for the use of liquor store revenues. With the submission of the CIP at our last meeting, all those funds were pretty well used up. This would be another request out of those funds. Does that mean we have to reduce the seal coating amount, or something else? We've talked about how the airport is funded with annual allotments for maintenance and operations, and then there's a CIP. Is there money in that fund to be used?

Burlingame stated we always use the M&O funds every year. There is never anything left over. Carroll stated if that's not a possibility, what about the CIP list? I'm suggesting instead of taking it out of the liquor store, if it's not something that you have to have right now, can it wait until the next fiscal year? Burlingame stated they also discussed

phasing this in. Maybe they could put in just the locking system. One key pad is about \$900.00. Carroll stated getting access to the building would be the number one thing.

Smith stated I looked through some of the old financial reports. Brumbaugh's not here and I can't get into the computer and verify the fund balances as of today, at the end of May the building maintenance money remaining in the airport budget was \$4,000.00. I don't know if we paid for anything in June or July. When did the fuel monitoring system go in? I don't know if that bill has been paid. I'm thinking buy the keypad for now and put the rest on hold pending verification that there is money in the fund.

Konshok stated that has been discussed. The total money figure is around \$5,000.00. I said let's seek whatever funding we need and just get it done. I think it's more disruptive to string this out. This is a relatively small improvement project. Every time you string these things out, that's when you start running into extra costs and inconveniences. I would propose we secure the funding. If we're not sure of funding right now, we should table this until we know for sure. Carroll stated I would be more comfortable with that. Konshok stated I would like this to be considered as a whole to get the project done and then move on.

A motion was made by Konshok, seconded by Mikesh, and unanimously carried to table the modifications to the Airport Arrival/Departure Building, pending verification of funds.

8.2. Request to Approve Funds Transfer for the Fire Department: Fire

Chief Donn Hoffman stated we released the last engine we had to the city, we're hoping to secure those funds. It's not about the money, we've given the last three of our trucks to the city. What's happening in the new automobiles is they're using titanium in the door posts, columns, and along the floor boards. Our cutters won't cut the titanium. They don't have enough down pressure and they aren't fast enough. The new ones speed up so it actually shatters it, instead of cutting it. It's just that hard to cut. You're looking at pressure of 8,500 psi for what we have now, to 15,000 psi for a new jaws of life. That's what's needed. The titanium is in the cars built over the last three or four years. The fire department is willing to put up more than 2/3rds of the money to purchase a new jaws of life. We did get a price to trade in the present one we have for \$2,000.00. We don't feel it's worth giving it up for that. There may be some funds available from donations that came into the city. I couldn't verify that because I didn't talk to Brumbaugh prior to this.

Carroll questioned the total is \$16,000.00? Hoffman answered just over that. Carroll questioned what are the fire department discretionary funds? Hoffman stated it's a fund from the relief association that are not tied to the them. It's a separate account, which is totally legal. It's money from our annual fundraiser. Burlingame stated we raise money to be used for small tools. Carroll questioned what is the balance on that? Hoffman stated it's around \$20,000.00 to \$24,000.00. That's money that is used for things that don't come through the city. There is a balance that has to stay there. We probably spend in house \$12,000.00 to \$13,000.00 a year for banquets, township meetings that we put on.

Smith stated for minor equipment for the fire department we didn't budget anything for this year. There is a capital improvement fund for major equipment, but I don't know what the balance of that is. Brumbaugh isn't here to get the latest number. Hoffman stated we did write a check for a \$280,000.00 fire truck this year. I wouldn't guess there would be a lot there.

Carroll questioned what about the transfer? Burlingame stated I don't have anything in my budget to transfer. For the three trucks from the fire department that we've used in the public works department, they never got a transfer back for the value of those trucks. Basically, they're asking if we can find some money somewhere to put towards the purchase for a new jaws of life.

Hoffman stated it's not about that truck. We don't care about that. I think it's a good way to transfer things within the departments of the city. We're all being paid out of the general fund. If we can do anything to help each other, then we're all gaining.

Carroll stated you do have the funds in your discretionary fund to cover the whole total cost. Hoffman stated probably. Carroll questioned do you feel like this is a purchase that you need to make right now? Hoffman stated I have mixed feelings. This request came from the body, and that's how we run our station. I personally feel that ladder needs to be addressed. I'm here to represent them. It doesn't need to happen today, but it should happen sometime in the near future. There's not a department within our mutual aid area that has the tool to do this. We're not the only ones that don't have it. Unfortunately, the new cars make the tools like we have obsolete. It's only five years old and it cost \$20,000.00 to purchase it. The only reason the new purchase is \$16,000.00 is because we have some attachments that will work with the new tool.

Utke stated I know it's important, but how often do you use it? Hoffman stated there are about ten calls a year for it. Burlingame stated we've cut a lot of people out of cars with it. Hoffman stated the new cars are so much safer. They're built to encapsulate the driver and passengers in the car. The car turns into a ball and you have to get them out of there. We had a head on collision at sixty miles an hours. Everybody lived through that accident, with only broken legs. Burlingame stated a few years ago there wouldn't have been anyone left alive.

Smith stated we start 2013 budgeting process next month. We can try to fund it for 2013. If it's in the budget, and we're able to project a balanced revenue and expense budget, then we should be able to buy it right away. We don't do this, but it would be a best practice to make our major purchases toward the end of the year to make sure we're going to make our budget. Hoffman stated I don't have a problem tabling this so we can do a little more research as to the funds. Utke stated it's an important piece, we all understand that, we just have to know where all the funds are going to come from.

A motion was made by Mikesh, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to table the request to approve a fund transfer from the public works budget to the fire department budget for the purchase of a new jaws of life.

8.3. Resolution to Appoint Alex Torkelson to the Position of Volunteer Firefighter for the City of Park Rapids: Hoffman stated this particular young man has more training than the chief. Typically it costs the department, for a firefighter's first year, about \$4,500.00. Torkelson will cost us less than half of that. There were two talented people in this group that we interviewed, but Torkelson was the standout. Carroll questioned where did he get his training? Hoffman answered in Bemidji. **A motion was made by Konshok, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution #2012-128 Appointing Alex Torkelson to the Position of Volunteer Firefighter for the City of Park Rapids.**

9. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE: Smith stated we expect our city forester to make an annual inspection. There were almost eighty letters that were mailed out. We might hear from a few more citizens about the letter. Burlingame stated he heard from a few more today, but we'll address everybody. The letter states they should call the City Forester Stephanie Paulson. The problem is she's working, so she has to get the message and then get back to these people as quick as she can. It's going to take a few days. There's a lot of dead and dying trees. More letters have been sent out than we normally do. Carroll questioned is there a deadline on responding? Burlingame stated the letter says thirty days, but we'll be flexible on that. The dead and diseased thing has been handed down to us by the state to control bark beetles and dutch elm disease. We're mandated to control this as best we can. They want them cleaned up as soon as you can to prevent damage to the rest of the trees. Most people, once it's explained to them, are understanding. If the dead tree is on the boulevard, we'll cut it up. We've already started on that. Dick Rutherford questioned did the city get a letter? There's a park on Main Street that has a dead tree in it that's been there for years. Smith stated it's been identified for removal. Burlingame stated we have dead trees in all of the parks. Carroll stated the trees in Pioneer Park have been included in the landscape plan. Smith stated there's a tree against the Liberty building that has to come down. Carroll reiterated that's in the landscape plan. Burlingame stated he would be going over the plan with the landscaper.

Smith stated the Planning Commission is struggling. They weren't able to meet due to the lack of a quorum at their last meeting. One of their newest members has indicated that he has accepted out of town work. We need to be shopping for more Planning Commission members.

Smith stated no one has stepped up to the role of chair for the Library Board. Also, no one has been attending the Regional Kitchigami meetings the last two times.

10. DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES: Hoffman stated it's already been a busy year. We're pushing the ninety mark if it doesn't slow down. We've had a lot of structure fires, both in town and out of town. Most of them we've saved the structure. One was so far advanced that we couldn't save anything.

Eilers stated the MS Tram is in Park Rapids, along with Crazy Days, and Music on Second Street on Thursdays. It's a very busy summer.

11. MINUTES/REPORTS/INFORMATION: There were no comments.

12. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL: Carroll stated I attended a town hall meeting in Bemidji last week. It was put on by the Minnesota State Commissioner of Revenue. He was seeking input on taxes to help with preparation of the next budget cycle for the legislature. He had props, three legged stools. One represented 1999 when those legs were about the same length. The legs represent income, sales, and property taxes. At that time they were 33% to 34% each. For 2009, the sales tax has shrunk, income tax is relatively the same, and property tax has an extra twelve inches on it. The stool can no

longer stand up. There were government officials from all over Northern Minnesota in attendance offering suggestions of what to do differently.

Mikesh stated the Second Street Music Night is bringing in a lot of people. I was surprised to see the number of holes in the tar. Is there any way we can stop them from pounding stakes in the tar? Carroll stated the stage is self-supporting. Smith suggesting things are just sinking in. In the past, when people set up booths, their poles sink into the asphalt. Burlingame stated that happened last year when the tar was fresh. Utke stated they may have to put some plywood underneath the legs of the stage, and use sandbags to anchor things down. Mikesh stated it reminded me of holes from stake poles.

Utke questioned is the water looping done? Burlingame stated they haven't opened the housing. They're waiting for the test results on the bacteria test, but they had it all done in four days. Utke stated they're putting the finishing touches to the landscaping.

13. ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Mikesh, seconded by Utke, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

[seal]

Mayor Nancy J. Carroll

ATTEST:

Margie M. Vik
City Clerk