



The Wells City Council convened on Monday, May 12, 2014 at 5:00 pm in the Wells Community Center Council Chambers.

Mayor Ron Gaines called the meeting to order with the following councilmembers present: John Herman, Gary Robbins, Ann Marie Schuster and Ashley Seedorf. Councilmembers absent: None. Also present: City Administrator Robin Leslie, City Engineer Travis Winter, Police Chief Jim Ratelle and Street Foreman Mike Pyzick. Mayor Gaines led the group in the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

### **AGENDA**

The agenda for the May 12, 2014 meeting was reviewed. Motion by Robbins and second by Schuster to approve the agenda with the addition of three items. Motion carried.

### **Public Hearing, Wells Municipal Liquor Store Continuation**

Mayor Rob Gaines opened the public hearing at 5:02 pm and stated they were here to discuss the continuation of the Wells Municipal Liquor Store pursuant to Minnesota Statute 340A.602, which states if any municipal liquor store audit shows a net loss in two of three consecutive years, a public hearing is required and at this hearing, the Council must ask the question of whether or not the City of Wells wishes to continue to operate a municipal liquor store.

Ron Hartman spoke in favor of discontinuing the on-sale noting it that seems to be where the problems exist and stated this would help out other businesses in town. In addition, he stated other towns have done very well with just the off-sale.

Gary Hagen spoke in favor of discontinuing the on-sale stating the City needs to be responsible to the public and voters, and the profit is with the off-sale. He also stated a government entity should not be in competition with private business and that the former Casey’s building would be a good alternative location for the off-sale.

Illa Teskey stated she agrees with what had been said so far and that the liquor store needs a more welcoming building because otherwise you are chasing customers away.

Bill Groskreutz, Jr. agreed with what had been stated so far, that the City cannot keep pouring money into the on-sale and that the City needs to “stop the blood from flowing.”

Mayor Gaines closed the public hearing at 5:30 pm.

Scott Berg, Wells Municipal Liquor Store Manager, stated they have been doing the best they can with what they had and definitely wants to continue the retail business. He also stated that this decision has probably been put off too long and hopes the Council will make a decision soon. In addition, he reminded the Council that at one time the City invested in the Theatre and brought it back and appreciates all input.

Ashley Seedorf stated that if the Council is considering closing the on-sale to look at savings from transfers from off to on-sale and also look at a possible location change to the Casey’s site or incubator building.

Ann Marie Schuster stated the City has tried to fix the problem for many years and it is not Scott's fault. She stated another thing to consider is if the Council relocates the store, they would have another vacant building downtown and that they should consider remodeling the existing building.

Some other suggestions from the public for a new location were the former Bumps Auto and the land between Marketplace Foods and the Dollar Store.

City Administrator Leslie stated, according to the audits, the Liquor Store has had net losses in the years of 2005, 2009-2012 and 2013 will most likely show a loss as well when the audit is completed. She also suggested the Council take a look at the analyses that were provided and to send this item back to the Liquor Store Committee to make some recommendations to the Council at the next meeting.

Motion by Robbins and second by Herman to table this item until the meeting on June 9, 2014. Motion carried.

## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on April 28, 2014 were reviewed. Motion by Herman and second by Schuster to approve as presented. Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **CONSENT ITEMS**

### **Payments**

The list of bills for were reviewed. Motion by Herman and second by Robbins to pay bills totaling \$277,483.92. Motion carried.

### **Police Department Report**

Police Chief Ratelle gave an oral department report stating they will be doing end of the month TZD patrols for seat belt violations where there is more than one officer on duty. He also stated the department is recognizing kids for wearing bike helmets by awarding them DQ certificates through a program from the MN Chiefs Association and MN Sheriffs Association. He also provided updates on: the missing shotguns and that one has been located, getting an appraisal for the Crown Victoria squad car and that two of the part-time officer candidates declined the offer of employment (Chad Bonin & Joseph Johnson).

### **Street Department Report**

Street Foreman Pyzick provided a written and oral report and stated weather was playing a factor in getting the pool ready and blacktopping projects. He also stated the failure at the Wells Concrete lift station was by a bypass valve damaged by frost. In addition, he reported the alarm at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave NE lift station was caused due to a private property not having a cleanout cap and their ground water was free flowing into their sanitary connection.

### **City Administrator Report**

Ms. Leslie stated that the personnel issue is still ongoing and is hopeful for resolution at the June meeting, that the auditors are in the office this week and that she is in the process of updating the City Work List she had provided Council at a prior meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolution 2014-08 Accepting & Awarding Bids For 2014 Street Projects**

The Council discussed the bids received and was disappointed they only received two bids. Motion by Seedorf and second by Schuster to table this item until a May 20, 2014 special Council meeting where City Engineer Travis Winter will bring additional information and references for Thorstad Companies. Motion carried.

**2014 Liquor Licenses**

Motion by Seedorf and second by Herman to approve 2014 liquor licenses for the Frank J. Kalis Post (VFW) and the Wells American Legion. Motion carried.

**Part-time Liquor Store Appointment**

Motion by Seedorf and second by Robbins to appoint Samantha Seipp to a part-time bartender/clerk position at the Liquor Store subject to a satisfactory reference and background check and a six month probationary period. Motion carried.

**Seasonal Lifeguard Appointments**

Motion by Robbins and second by Schuster to authorize City Administrator Leslie to hire seasonal lifeguard positions. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**COUNCIL REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Gaines - none

Councilmember Herman - none

Councilmember Robbins - none

Councilmember Schuster - none

Councilmember Seedorf – She mentioned complaints about 8<sup>th</sup> St SW and asked if this street was on the schedule for any work this year.

Mayor Gaines reminded the Council that the next meeting will be held on Monday, June 9, 2014 at 5:00 pm at the Wells Community Center Council Chambers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Robbins and second by Herman to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 pm.

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Mayor Ronald Gaines

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City Administrator Robin Leslie