

November 12, 2020

PUBLIC HEARING

5:15 p.m.

Mayor Jim Wilkie opened the Public Hearing to the public regarding a Conditional Use Permit submitted by Suzanne Blue, 1400 W 6th St, Red Wing, MN, to operate a vacation rental at 100 E. Bluff Street in the City of Alma.

Missie, daughter of Suzanne Blue, spoke in favor of the vacation rental. She stated it would utilize the home while it is vacant and bring business to the City of Alma.

Randy Brommer, resident in the neighborhood of the proposed rental, stated that he has all kinds of businesses around him. He stated the dental office, former canoe rental and two vacation rentals just down the street from him. He stated that these businesses have never been an issue with him.

Hearing no further testimony for or against the proposed Conditional Use Permit, Mayor Wilkie closed the hearing.

November 12, 2020

PUBLIC HEARING

5:30 p.m.

Mayor Jim Wilkie opened the public hearing to the public regarding the proposed 2021 Budget for the City of Alma.

Hearing no testimony for or against the proposed 2021 budget, Mayor Wilkie closed the hearing.

November 12, 2020

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

6:00 p.m.

Mayor Wilkie called the regular monthly meeting of the Common Council of the City of Alma to order.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Clerk Linda Torgerson took roll call with the following members present: Mayor Jim Wilkie, appearing by zoom Richard Champeny, Gary Ruff, Monica Moham, Larry Farl, Larry Grisen, Gary Jepsen, and David Earney (in person).

Motion by Ruff seconded by Moham to approve the October 8, 2020 Council Proceeding minutes as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Ruff to approve the Special Council Meeting minutes of November 5, 2020 as presented. All members voting yes.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Farl to approve the October 2020 Financial Report as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Moham seconded by Earney to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. All members voting yes.

Citizen comments:

Jerri Schreiber, business owner, addressed the Council regarding the winter lot rent being charged to the marina owners. She stated that \$1,000 is not enough. Schreiber further commented that the rent for the marina being paid is too low compared to the income they are taking in running the marina. Mayor Jim Wilkie informed Jerri that he will talk to her about the harbor lease and its conditions.

Jerri Schreiber inquired about what happened to the donation of a flag for Buena Vista Park. She then asked why the beer and liquor license fees were not pro-rated because of the non-use during the COVID shutdown.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Mayor Wilkie stated that the Planning Commission had met on October 8th and adjourned for a month to go over things and then met this evening prior to Council and recommended denial of the Conditional Use Permit to Suzanne Blue for a vacation rental at 100 E. Bluff St.

Missie, daughter of the applicant, asked the Council to give the business a shot and if there are problems, they can pull the permit. She stated she could rent to long term rental people that also cause problems and does not see the difference.

Randy Brommer, resident in the neighborhood of the proposed rental, stated that he has all kinds of businesses around him. He stated the dental office, former canoe rental and two vacation rentals just down the street from him. He stated that these businesses have never been an issue with him. Randy stated that people do not buy homes to live in Alma because the jobs are not here.

Larry Farl commented that Alma has become a tourist community and this business would fit in to the community.

Monica Moham inquired about the vacation rental above the laundromat. Mayor Wilkie stated that he would encourage as many businesses such as this if they were in the business district like the vacation rental above the laundromat.

Jon Seifert, City Attorney, spoke regarding the Village of Pepin's similar situation with homes being used as vacation rentals. He stated, after a while, there are problems with the neighbors because the people that come are on vacation and like to stay up late, party a little, etc. The business district is used to this type of activity and the residential neighborhoods are not. Seifert commented that it would be difficult to draft and enforce an ordinance to handle the issues that arise, and the Village of Pepin is researching this topic. Jon further stated that when the zoning areas were developed, for example the residential areas and the business areas, they were developed that way for a particular reason.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Earney to deny the Conditional Use Permit submitted by Suzanne Blue for a vacation rental. Three members voting yes (Champeny, Ruff & Jepsen), three members voting no (Farl, Grisen and Earney) 1 abstain (Moham). Mayor Wilkie voted yes to deny the Conditional Use Permit, motion carried.

UTILITIES COMMITTEE

Chairman David Earney went over the committee minutes of October 15, 2020.

Earney stated that the first item addressed was a cost sharing of a wall/sidewalk by the Vicki Schultz residence along Cedar and 2nd Street.

The Council then addressed agenda item 7: Retaining wall at 107 N. Main.

William Haggerty, owner of the property at 107 N. Main St, was present via zoom.

Attorney Seifert explained that Mr. Haggerty's attorney and himself reviewed the agreement and easement and were ready for signing if the Council approved them. All Council had received copies prior to the meeting.

The easement was needed for the soil nails used to anchor the wall would extend into City property.

The agreement states that the City, while not acknowledging any responsibility for the failure of the wall, agrees to pay \$9,000 toward the repair of the wall since the City street cannot be fixed until the wall has been repaired.

Motion by Earney seconded by Moham to authorize the Mayor to execute the easement and agreement pertaining to the wall behind 107 N. Main St. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Chairman David Earney continued with discussion and action taken by the Utilities Committee on October 15th.

Items such as the guardrail for Riverview Drive, water shut off at Cedar Street, Sunset Drive preparations for next year and the 5-year plan were discussed, Earney stated.

Motion by Moham seconded by Jepsen to approve the Utilities Committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairperson Monica Moham stated the committee had met on October 28th and all Council had received prepared minutes prior to the meeting.

Moham stated that the committee continues to work on property conditions throughout the City and that thank you letters for those who complied will be sent.

Motion by Earney seconded by Farl to approve the Service Committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

FINANCE/TAX & LICENSE/ZONING COMMITTEE

Chairman Gary Ruff informed the Council that the committee had met and made recommendation for employee health insurance, wages and the 2021 budget.

Ruff informed the Council that the employees who do not pay toward their health insurance premiums elected to not receive a wage increase for 2021 and have better health insurance.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Jepsen to approve Health Tradition's HMO Platinum Plan for the employee's insurance for 2021. All members voting yes.

Gary Jepsen stated that Health Traditions was not the cheapest plan, however, it was the best value to benefit the city employees.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Moham to approve the Salary Schedule for 2021 as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Farl to adopt the proposed budget for 2021 as presented. All members voting yes by roll call vote.

Mayor Wilkie explained the line item of police retirement. The current Chief of Police does not receive retirement; however, the funds are needed in this line item for the loan that needs to be taken out for retirement not paid during the 60's.

Motion by Ruff seconded by Farl to approve an Operator License to Tiffany Most. All members voting yes.

Motion by Moham seconded by Champeny to approve the Finance/Tax & License/Zoning Committee report as presented. All members voting yes.

Upcoming meetings:

Next Council will be Monday, December 7th at 6:00 p.m.
Finance will meet Monday, December 7th at 8:30 a.m.

Motion by Champeny seconded by Ruff to adjourn. All members voting yes.

