

# City of Stewart Council Meeting Minutes

**November 12, 2024**

7:00 pm      Call to Order the Regular Council Meeting

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call;      Mayor: Jason Peirce - here  
                    Council Member: Carol Altrichter - here  
                    Council Member: James Eitel - here  
                    Council Member: Thomas Moon – here  
                    Council Member: Daniel Broucek - here

Approval of Minutes;

Motion to approve October 14, 2024 Minutes, Broucek/Altrichter, all in favor, motion carries

Consent of Agenda;

Motion to approve Agenda, Moon/Eitel, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Balance Sheet;

Motion to approve Balance Sheet, Eitel/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Statement of Revenue and Expenditures;

Motion to approve Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, Eitel/Moon, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Payments (Claims);

Motion to approve Payments, Altrichter/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Utility Billing Information;

Motion to approve Utility Billing Information, Moon/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Approval of Bank Reconciliation;

Motion to approve Bank Reconciliation, Eitel/Moon, all in favor, motion carries

## **Petitions, requests, and communications**

1. Bolten & Menk project update
  - a. There is money with the PFA to help fund the street project – it will still be available next Spring if the City chooses to rebid the project
  - b. The clean water revolving fund will require \$73,594.50 per year to pay back over 30 years
  - c. The drinking water revolving fund will require \$101,203.16 per year to pay back over 30 years
  - d. This will require an increase in water and sewer rates to pay back the loans
  - e. Bolton & Menk is going to ask R & R if they will still honor their bid since it is past the 60-day timeline
  - f. The project will possibly be awarded on January 12, 2025
2. Cribs on the Cobb
  - a. The rental property ordinance gives direction on how to handle situations like this where there is no water or gas in the building
  - b. The building inspector posted a notice on the door indicating violations for water and gas
  - c. Laura will look into the rental ordinances and reach out to the building inspector for next steps

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Motion to give permission to the building inspector to carry out next steps with this property, Moon/Altrichter, all in favor, motion carries

3. City Attorney rates
  - a. Many of the surrounding towns use Gavin, Janssen & Stabenow like us
  - b. Laura has had a good experience with the current attorney
  - c. The rates of the attorneys used by the other towns in the area are very comparable
4. Xcel Energy contract
  - a. Laura will reach out to Xcel to confirm if this needs to be published as ordinance or passed with a resolution
5. Journal entries submitted for the 2023 audit
6. Council code of conduct
  - a. The city has lost some good employees in the past because of disparaging remarks made about them by the council
  - b. One employee had expressed to Mayor Peirce that they were considering looking for a new job because of remarks they had heard said by a council member behind their back- multiple people from the community had come to this employee to inform them of the remarks made by this council member
  - c. Mayor Peirce stated that the City will represent any council member when an issue arises
    - i. However, if the issue is disparaging remarks, the City will not represent the council member and they will be required to find outside representation
  - d. Mayor Peirce has found other cities that use Code of Conducts with their council members and if there are any issues presented then the council can decide on how to handle those situations
  - e. The personnel policy does not give clear direction on how to handle issues that arise like this
  - f. Laura will reach out to cities that have already adopted their own code of conduct and get copies and ask how they implemented it

## **Ordinances and Resolutions;**

Resolution 2024-87 Purchase of furnace for Clerks' offices

-B & R has come out and done furnace repairs. They said we will need a new furnace

-First, Nate will reach out to Foster in Hutchinson to see if they can repair the furnace. If they are unsuccessful, then the council has agreed to replace the entire furnace

Motion to approve Resolution 2024-87 Option 2B if repairs are unsuccessful,

Moon/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Resolution 2024-88 2024 Election Canvas results

Motion to approve Resolution 2024-88, Eitel/Moon, all in favor, motion carries

Resolution 2024-89 Donation Redistribution for Relief Association

-Funds were donated for the Firemen's Calendar but the check was written to the Fire department instead of the Relief Association

Motion to approve Resolution 2024-89, Altrichter/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Resolution 2024-85 Approval of bid for e-payment for Utility Billing

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-Tabled until next meeting so that Laura and Taylor can gather more information on Nuvei and determine if they have access to an in-office card reader

Resolution 2024-91 Approval to raise late fee for utility billing

-Mayor Peirce informed everyone that there is already a fee structure in place that charges \$25 for postings on doors for payments that are a month or more late

-This has not been being implemented in a long time. Mike, Taylor, and Laura have not known this was a policy in place

-Laura and Taylor will look into this and get a plan established for fees to present at the next council meeting

## **Reports of Officers, Boards and Committees;**

### **1. Police Department Report –**

Motion to approve Police Dept Report, Altrichter/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

## **Agreement to provide Law Enforcement Services**

### **2. Emergency Services Report**

#### **A. Fire Department**

-The County Chiefs Meeting is Nov. 26

-5 fires

Motion to approve Fire Department Report, Altrichter/Moon, all in favor, motion carries

#### **B. EMR Department**

-3 Medicals

Motion to approve EMR Department Report, Altrichter/Eitel, all in favor, motions carries

### **3. Public Works Reports**

#### **A. Maintenance Report**

-There has been a lot more leaves to clean up this fall

-Nate has been preparing things for winter

-When the rain stops, they will get the dead Christmas tree removed

Motion to approve Maintenance Report, Moon/Eitel, all in favor, motion carries

#### **B. Water/Waste Water Report**

-To get certain grants, they need a well-head protection plan

-MN Rural Water will help create one for free and then the city will be eligible for grants

-FEMA will reimburse at least \$3,000 to help with the costs for flooding

-There were issues with the computer for the detection tank that was causing issues in the quality of water. After repairs, Mike was told to budget for a new one in the next year

Resolution 2024-90 Attendance of MRWA Workshop

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Motion to approve Resolution 2024-90, Altrichter/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

Motion to approve Water/Waste Water Report, Eitel/Broucek, all in favor, motion carries

## **Building & Planning & Zoning Permits**

Approved Building Permits;

Unfinished business;

Employee Review,

Miscellaneous;

Benefits discussion

-Council member Carol Altrichter asked about the new leave policy that Council approved in July. She wanted to know if that would cover Taylor staying home with her two daughters on the days when she has to bring them to the office

-Mayor Peirce let her know that the 6-week leave was only granted for qualifying events and that would not be covered under it

-The council discussed Taylor having her daughters here on the days when their child care was closed, and as long as it is not disturbing her or Laura's jobs, then there is no issue

ADJOURN

Motion to Adjourn at 9:28, Altrichter/Moon, all in favor, motion carries

By:

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Jason Peirce – Mayor

ATTESTS:

By:\_\_\_\_\_

Laura Ranieri, City Clerk - Treasurer

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