

City of Wabasso
City Council
Monday, March 27, 2023
5:00 pm

The meeting opened the meeting with the recitation of the pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Atkins called the meeting to order with Council members Chad Altermatt, Amanda Guetter and Roger Baumann present.

Also present was City Clerk/Treasurer/Administrator Larry Thompson, City Attorney Matt Novak, and City Engineer Matt Miller.

The purpose of the meeting was to consider amending the City Personnel Policy relating to Workers Compensation payments and relocation of Arvig Communications lines during the Sewer Rehab Project.

Personnel Policy - Workers Comp. Mr. Thompson noted that the city had received payment from the League of Minnesota Insurance Trust for Jim Jenniges' injury and the city's personnel policy was silent as to how it should be processed. Staff recommended continuing to pay Mr. Jennings his salary and that he endorse the work comp payment for city deposit. Mr. Novak indicated he could find no preferred method for processing the work comp payment and indicated the policy would prevent employees from double dipping. Concern was expressed regarding long term leaves. It was suggested the policy be capped at three months. Motion by Guetter, second by Bauman that staff process the work copy payments as described above, and directed staff to prepare an amendment to the personnel policy incorporating the process with a three month cap for consideration at the next council meeting.

Atkins – yes; Altermatt – yes; Guetter – yes; Baumann – yes

Sewer Rehab Project – Small Utility Relocation. Mr. Novak stated since he and Mr. Thompson were not at the last meeting he would like the council to again consider the relocation of small utilities and clarify its position. Mr. Novak stated that based on discussions that if Arvig was ordered to relocate their services during the sewer rehab project that there may be an interruption in services. Arvig had expressed concerns that they wished to use the existing conduits to run the new fiber optic cables used for the Border to Border Broadband project. Normally it would not be a problem but the Border to Border program was placing tight deadlines for the installation of the utilities. Mr. Miller stated that normally utilities were required to relocate their lines at their own expense, but understood this constraints placed by the Border to Border project. He indicated the city should be clear that it was not setting a precedent. Mr. Novak indicated Arvig had \$1.14 million for line relocation, but that it did not appear it would cover the cost of relocation if the city ordered them to move the lines this fall. Mr. Thompson recommended the Council adopt a position of relocating the lines at Arvig's expense without service interruption while leaving the door open for cost sharing depending on the total costs. The council was cognizant of Arvig's concerns, but it was difficult to set a position without knowing the actual costs as well as keeping an incentive for Arvig to relocation costs at a minimum. Motion by Baumann, second by Altermatt that the City Attorney communicate to Arvig that it will need to move its lines during the sewer rehab project without service interruption, and to return to the city for possible city participation once the costs are known.

Atkins – yes; Altermatt – yes; Guetter – yes; Baumann – yes

Mr. Miller also noted that Redwood Electric may require Clara City Telephone to remove its lines from the electrical poles as part of the project.

Mr. Thompson gave a brief update regarding the Library Land Lease, noting that the Land Trust agreement required the city to manage the lease and that he had notified the Library Director. Mr. Thompson added that the city could require the Trust to cover legal costs.

Motion by Guetter, second by Baumann to adjourn at 6:20 p.m.

Atkins – yes; Altermatt – yes; Guetter – yes; Baumann – yes

Larry Thompson
City Clerk/Treasurer/Administrator