

**MINUTES of the ST. CHARLES CITY COUNCIL
for Tuesday, May 10, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
830 Whitewater Avenue
St. Charles, MN 55972**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilmen:
John Schaber
Dave Braun
Orv Dahl (absent)
Wayne Getz
Mayor Bill Spitzer

STAFF PRESENT:

Nick Koverman, City Administrator
Kyle Karger, PW Supt.
Bill Eckles, Police Chief

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Pat Glynn and Craig Hilmer (St. Charles Press).

1). ESTABLISH QUORUM/CALL TO ORDER

Quorum was established with Mayor Bill Spitzer calling the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2). PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3). APPROVAL of the AGENDA: addition of item 7g). School Board report

Motion to approve the agenda: John Schaber

Motion carried.

4). Meeting Minutes

-April 12, 2011

Motion to approve: Wayne Getz

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

-April 26, 2011

Motion to approve: Dave Braun

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

5). May Payables.

Motion to approve: John Schaber

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

6). NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS. Mayor Spitzer reminded Council of May 19th St. Charles Wellness Day.

7). Reports of Boards and Commissions. Various reports were given.

13). 2011 Mayor's Conference Update and Recommendations. Mayor Spitzer began by expressing that the occurrence of the City of St. Charles budget increasing in the public safety area was a common theme around the conference. Each community is dealing with rising costs in different ways he added. He provided similar highlights from a speaker with regard to the "new norm" in society. He offered a suggestion that many mayors and councils were doing was "First Cup of Coffee with the Council" an idea whereby residents could gather to just talk about their city. Mayor Spitzer expressed he had already been in contact with one of the local coffee shops as to their interest and was well received. He asked that Council consider the idea. In addition, he added that the 2012 Mayor's Conference will be held in Winona, but hosted by St. Charles as he was named the president of the Minnesota Mayor's Association. Plans will begin for to organize the event.

8). Olson Wind Project. The Council began a discussion to consider the proposal of an Exploratory Agreement with Olson Energy to investigate the potential project/implementation of two 1.5 GE Megawatt wind turbines. Mr. Olson approached the Council over 4 weeks prior to the meeting to discuss this opportunity to procure two turbines and to partner with potential investors U.S. Bank to complete the project in a relatively short timeline. To investigate this proposal Mr. Olson was requesting a total of \$57,000 in three monthly installments to continue investigating this plan. Mr. Olson was looking for a commitment in order to possibly negotiate a purchase agreement for the proposed turbines which had recently become available because of a project that did not materialize. Admin. Koverman began the discussion by outlining a few of points of information within the memo distributed within the Council packet. The compilation of information summarized the various opinions and statements from the Upper Midwest Municipal Power Association's attorney, Richard Heinemann, the City's electrical engineer, Juhl Wind representatives, discussions and emails from Mr. Olson himself, as well as a summarization of questions asked by various Councilmen. The total project cost was roughly \$5-6 million based on various assumptions with the final cost to the City at the end of 5 years of ownership by the investor group was projected to be roughly \$2.5 million to the City. The Council continued to discuss various points that they felt they did not have enough information or did not feel comfortable with the process. Mayor Spitzer expressed that if the Council did not feel comfortable with this agreement as a first step, he questioned what they felt the City could do. He questioned what we want to do. Clm. Schaber expressed that he is still in favor of wind, but was not in favor of the agreement and plan to date. Clm. Braun agreed that he felt that in order to do the project due diligence he was not willing to jump into the program. The Council briefly discussed the formation of a subcommittee. It was also concluded to contact Juhl Wind to finish the wind study and present it at the May 24th Council meeting. A motion was made to allow Admin. Koverman and Supt. Karger to investigate with Merle Lebakken the possibility of buying into a wind farm and the big pictures aspect of a Power Purchase Contract through UMMPA or other venues and to have the feasibility study brought back to the May 24th council meeting.

Motion to approve: John Schaber

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

9). Resolution #10-2011 PERA Plan Part-time Officer. It was explained that when an officer exceeds the \$600 mark for services rendered the City is obligated to take PERA out of the check and contribute for its part-time officers. This is required by the State of Minnesota and has been done previously. A motion was made to approve Resolution #10-2011.

Motion to approve: Wayne Getz

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

10). City Proclamation-May 19th Wellness Day. Mayor Spitzer read the proclamation for St. Charles Wellness Day in St. Charles. A motion to approve the proclamation was made.

Motion to approve: John Schaber

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

11). Street Closure Request-Northern Hills Trail. A request was made by Marti Ellinghuysen for the street closure of Northern Hills Trail to be used as part of the graduation party by Mr. Ellinghuysen. It was questioned if the temporary street closure could impede traffic and due its location it would not. A motion to approve the street closure was made.

Motion to approve: Dave Braun

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

12. Weather and siren equipment. Information was brought to the Council with respect to providing St. Charles the ability to independently sound the town's sirens prior to Winona County. The information from Federal Warning Systems estimated the amount at approximately \$11,000 with installation of \$2,000-\$3,000. The Council agreed that because the community has invested in updating and adding sirens in hopes of alerting its residents that this last detail would be helpful. Currently, Winona County monitors and

sounds the alarms for the City, but it has been determined that at various times the sirens have been delayed. A motion was made to approve the additional equipment that would provide the fire department and the storm spotters the ability to sound the equipment at the fire hall and with an additional redundant unit to be placed at City Hall not to exceed \$15,000.

Motion to approve: John Schaber

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

A second discussion was held with respect to the WeatherBug application that would provide current data for the City of St. Charles. It also allows for storm information to be gathered directly from St. Charles that may be helpful in case of emergency. The cost for the service was \$7,000 with a \$1,000 discount for a total of \$6,000. The application was shown on the display in the Council chambers. After a brief discussion, a motion was made to approve the purchase and service agreement from WeatherBug.com.

Motion to approve: Wayne Getz

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

14. Whitewater Country Coalition. Both Mayor Spitzer and Police Chief Bill Eckles attended the first meeting of the Coalition task force that will operate a 5 year long grant for the purpose of drug and alcohol education. The grant was attained by Dover-Eyota and St. Charles School Districts with support being given by local units of government and various agencies. The report focused on the advertising for a position and the goals of the program.

15. 2011 Gladiolus Days Button Contest Winner-Gracie Davis. The Park Board recommended the approval and awarding of the 2011 Gladiolus Days Button Contest winner to 6th grader Gracie Davis. The Council reviewed the button design and a motion was made to award Ms. Davis the honor.

Motion to approve: John Schaber

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

16). 2011 Private Swimming Lesson Rates. Park and Rec Director Rick Schaber was present to discuss the item of the private swimming lesson rates. Mr. Schaber indicated that the program has grown for the one-on-one service and that currently the rate was \$70. After comparing services and prices of other area and region pools it was the recommendation of the Park Board to consider \$120 rate with a 50/50 split between the City and guard. A discussion was held on the value of the program and service and felt that the service justified the cost. A motion was made to increase the cost of the private swimming lessons to \$120 with an equal share going to the guard and the aquatic center.

Motion to approve: Dave Braun

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

17). 2011 Summer Park & Rec. Employees. The Council briefly reviewed the 2011 Summer Park and Rec job list and a motion was made to approve the hiring of those individuals at the appropriate rate as indicated in the information.

Motion to approve: John Schaber

No further discussion.

Motion declared carried.

Unscheduled Appearances. None.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Motion to approve: Wayne Getz

Motion declared carried.

William J. Spitzer, Mayor

Attest: _____

Nick Koverman, Administrator