

Dawson City Council Minutes  
November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
5:30 p.m.

The Dawson City Council met in regular session Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. in the Dawson City Hall Council Chambers. The meeting was also available via Zoom. Councilpersons present: Jeff Fish, Jeff Olson, Vince Adelman, Dean Petersen, Steve Tufto, and Charlie Prestholdt. Also Present: Mayor Randy Tensen, Acting City Manager Jill Kemen, Deputy Clerk Kristin Daline, Public Works Superintendent Kurt Collins, Public Works Supervisor Colin Lee, City Maintenance 1 Nick Vorvick, City Attorney Rick Stulz, Diane and John Nevins, Duane and Betty Hastad, Mike Cagely, Janell Welling, Peggy Crosby, David Peterson, Lauren Olson, Keith and Judy Kunde, Lowell and Dawn Tyler, Burt Faehn, Dave Hickey, Doc Skordahl, Derek and Hailey Gritmacker, Ben Bothun, Chief Andy Stock, Jim Michels, Lee Gunderson, Gloria Kassel and Rodney Rye. City Engineer Jeff Kuhn, an individual logged in under Dawson, and Dave Falness via Zoom.

Mayor Tensen called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and everyone repeated the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Petersen motioned to approve the agenda with a second from Councilman Olson. Voting in favor Councilman Petersen, Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Against: None. Motion Passed.

Councilman Fish motioned with a second from Councilman Prestholdt to approve consent agenda items number four, October 19<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting Minutes and number 11A, October and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter financials. Voting in favor: Councilman Petersen, Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Against: None. Motion Passed.

Mayor Tensen opened the 10 Minute Public Forum. Councilman Prestholdt asked about AED's at the softball fields and the City office. Kemen mentioned that Chad Felton was working on a grant to get one at the swimming pool. It was suggested to talk with Ann Jenson. Lee Gunderson said that he went out and measured some of the streets in town. He is under the assumption that in Phase 2, it was decided to make all the streets uniform at 36' wide. His concern with this is that more trees will have to come down, and it will cost more. When Pine Street was done in 2012 from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street, it was made to 32' feet, and the trees remained. Mayor Tensen closed the Public Forum to open the Public Hearing.

Mayor Tensen opened the Public Hearing at 5:35 pm for anyone to express concerns about unpaid utility bills and mowing services that were charged. Derek Gritmaker spoke about purchasing a home through the County in December of 2020. At the time of closing, the prior owner said that he would be taking care of any payments owed to the City. That owner did not commit to that, therefore leaving the property with almost \$3,000 in charges. Derek asked for help in this matter, and if there was any way to remove the penalties that have accrued. Mayor Tensen asked for the advice of City Attorney Rick Stulz. Stulz said that it can be looked at, and that he would get back to Derek on the matter. Hearing nothing else, Mayor Tensen closed the Public Hearing at 5:38 pm.

Mayor Tensen resumed the 10 Minute Public Forum. Lee Gunderson continued discussion on widening of the streets. He expressed that it will be many thousands of dollars to widen them to 36' and asked why there are bumpouts along 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Kemen said that they will be getting fixed when 6<sup>th</sup> Street is redone and that everywhere will have curb and gutter. Councilman Olson said that it was discussed at a Road and Bridge Committee Meeting. Hearing nothing else, Mayor Tensen closed the 10 minute public forum at 5:43 pm.

### Requests

A Gambling Permit for Dawson-Boyd Trap has been received by the City. Councilman Prestholdt motioned with a second from Councilman Tufto to approve the gambling permit. Voting in favor: Councilman Petersen, Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Against: None. Motion Passed.

### Reports of officers, boards, and committees

The Police Commission Meeting Minutes are included in the packet as information only. No discussion.

Lac qui Parle Computer Commuter update was provided as information only. No discussion.

Kemen gave a brief EDA update. The EDA has decided to move forward with Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership to write a grant for the City to build five duplexes, which will be Market Rate Rentals. These will be built at the East end of Ash Street. If the City is not awarded the grant, the duplexes will not be built. The EDA has also developed an agreement between the City and HME Holdings to build a 32-38 unit apartment complex, also on East Ash Street.

### Public Works Superintendent Kurt Collin's Report

Collins said that the City has hired two new employees for the Road and Bridge Department. Nick Vorvick has resigned from the Dawson Police Department to fill one of the positions. Aaron Tufto who has a background in diesel mechanics was also hired. Aaron will be starting after Thanksgiving. The new skid loader will be here in November, the blower in December and the broom in March. Collins mentioned that there are many street signs that will need to be replaced in town. A sign on Main Street has been hit and is bent over. This will be taken care of. The City crew will be flushing hydrants next week on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. The new water tower is up and running. The old tower has been taken down and the foundation will be dug up.

### Interim City Manager Jill Kemen's Report

Angie with CEDA was given a list of business owners in town to contact about succession planning. CEDA has a job posting in the local papers to work with Madison and Dawson. Angie is also working with Keith Hontz, a master welder, that has recently moved to town to help promote his business and get his name out there. The CEDA contract with the City is up at the end of the year. The EDA will determine if the contract will be extended. A finance meeting is scheduled for Friday. Prior, it was determined that the stormsewer rate would increase by \$22.20. Ehlers has done a study, with the help of the County Auditor and the City, to base the cost on water runoff. An example that they have given is that AGP is mostly all concrete, that will create more water runoff than a residential property. The hopes is to alleviate some of the impact to homeowners in town.

### Ordinances and Resolution

Kemen presented the Resolution Re-establishing the polling precinct and precinct location for the city. This resolution is done every year so City Hall can be a polling location. Councilman Fish motioned with a second from Councilman Petersen to approve the Resolution Re-establishing the polling precinct and precinct location for the city. Voting in favor: Councilman Petersen, Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Against: None. Motion Passed.

Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership has submitted a proposal to do the grant writing for 5 duplexes to be built in Dawson and owned by the City. The grant writing will not exceed \$3,500, and the design will not exceed \$2,500. If the City does not receive the grant, the duplexes will not be built. SWMH selected four communities to work with and Dawson was chosen. Councilman Olson motioned with a second from Councilman Prestholdt to approve the proposal for professional services with Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership. Voting in favor: Councilman Petersen, Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Against: None. Motion Passed.

On motion by Councilman Prestholdt with a second from Councilman Fish to approve the resolution to assess unpaid utility services, removing Derek Gritmacker. Voting in favor Councilman Petersen, Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Against: None. Motion Passed.

On motion by Councilman Fish with a second from Councilman Petersen to approve the resolution to assess unpaid mowing services. Voting in favor Councilman Petersen, Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Against: None. Motion Passed.

### Old Business

Duane Hastad addressed the Council and introduced himself, his wife Betty, Rodney Rye and Mike Cagley. Hastad said that he is here representing citizens that want trees, and think that trees are important. Widening the streets affect the trees. Trees are planted to absorb. A portion of tile was presented to the group. Hastad doesn't think it is necessary if we have trees. Damage is done in the middle of the street, not by trees. Roots heave up sidewalks here and there. He presented a street view picture of Pine Street which showed mature, canopied trees. The second picture Hastad presented was the West end of Pine Street and the sun glaring off the car windshield, showing that this is a safety hazard. He went on to say that there are many pollutants in Dawson, and that trees absorb the moisture in the air. There are a wide variety of trees that can be planted, Ash, Maple, Linden and Crab. Public Works Director Collins asked about Emerald Ash Boer. Cagley said that in the cities they are treating this disease rather than taking them down. He went on to say that a 50 year old tree takes 50 pounds of carbon out of the atmosphere, and other cities are being paid carbon credits, with 400-500 trees in Dawson, that is a lot of money. Diane Nevins said that Lac qui Parle County is high risk for breathing issues with our industry and agriculture in the area. Hastad said there are guidelines out there for planting boulevard trees, and he held up pamphlets. Dawson is proud of the trees, and the boulevards

are what we are known for. Bert Faehn said back in the day someone planted Silver Maples on Chestnut, and that is the worst tree to plant. He asked if there is or could be a rule as to what type of trees could be planted. Hastad suggested hybrid trees. The roots go straight down. Rodney Rye said that coming in from the South of town and seeing the Ash trees canopy across is so pretty. He suggested planting a variety of three trees in case of disease. Hastad asked if the City had a certified tree inspector. Collins said that the City is working on getting licensed. Doc Skordahl addressed the Council and spoke about a businessperson who travels to different communities. He was told that Dawson was his favorite stop because of the beautiful trees. Janell Welling said that she has had seven house showings in the past week. There are 35 realtors in the area. Showing homes on the northeast side of town she was asked where the sidewalks are and why it is so bare. Without trees the siding and shingles on homes deteriorate, there is nothing to protect them. Councilman Jeff Fish addressed the room. I stand here before you as a council person that you as citizens of Dawson elected to serve on your behalf. While we may not agree on all matters related to the City, I can tell you that as a member of the council I have always tried to do what is best for the City of Dawson. I know that we are at odds on the tree issue with the new street project. I can speak only for myself, but I am pretty sure that the rest of my fellow council members will agree with me, that we are not against trees. However, progress of any kind comes with a price and some sacrifices. Yes, the trees in Dawson are beautiful and provide shade, but many of them are very old and nearing the end of their life cycle. We are not talking about clearing the entire City of all of its trees, rather we need to provide a safe working environment for the crews that will be working on our streets, as well as protecting the investment that we are putting into our City. I can find and quote all kinds of sources that tell us how far to plant a tree from a curb and sidewalk and I can tell you that if we followed the advice of the US Forest Service there would no sidewalks or curb within six to eight feet from any of our trees. I can show you picture after picture of the destruction trees cause to sidewalks and curbs, but that won't change your mind. We are not experts and so we must rely upon the advice of those we have hired to complete the project. While our opinions and yours may differ from theirs, we have hired them to do the job and get it done as safely and cost effectively as possible so that it will last long into the future, long after we and the trees are gone. We as a council have discussed helping the residents plant new trees, not on the boulevard, but in their yards where the city would help them to make sure they are planted in an area that won't disrupt their water and sewer lines. We are talking about trees that are 6 to 8 feet tall. At the last meeting it was suggested that the legacy we as a council would leave would be a negative one if we destroyed all the trees. I respectfully disagree, I believe that our legacy would be that we showed a commitment to our constituents by acting fiscally responsible and protecting the rather large investment we are putting into our street and infrastructure. Diane Nevins said there is new technology now. The streets are how old and have taken a beating. This pipe was not used in 2012. Streets have held up well. Show us where the damage is. Why not put sidewalks on both sides? Judy Clausen asked if there are any tree experts in this community. Councilman Prestholdt stated that the community has hard feelings over someone coming from Alexandria deciding which trees to take down. Kuhn said that he would be willing to meet with Mike Cagley and Duane Hastad and look at trees around town. Jim Michels said in 1985 the City had a tree planting program, and two Maples were planted in his boulevard. In 2001, he put in his own sidewalks because the Maples had raised the sidewalk. He wants his boulevard trees gone, they don't provide any shade at any time of the day as they are 40-50' tall. More discussion on widening the streets. Safe Routes to School and ADA sidewalks were briefly touched on. Hastad brought up the drain tile again. It is not commonly used in streets as in fields. Councilman Adelman thanked Hastad for coming to talk about trees, he voiced that he hasn't been on Council long

and is unaware of how much information the citizens got about trees prior to the project and how are we going to passify residents in the first phase. Kuhn said that ribbons will be tied around trees to notify homeowners about the trees to come down. A representative from the City will talk to each homeowner. Mike Cagley stated that Pine Street is too narrow, what are you going to do about it now? Councilman Tufto said that revising plans comes at a cost. Judy Clausen asked about parking on one side of the street. She asked that the Council be open, and not to dig your feet in and be open. Mayor Tensen asked Kuhn if he could come up with a cost savings to keep the streets how they are and save the trees. Lee Gunderson asked where the North-South crossing is by the school. Kemen displayed the Safe Routes to School Map. Councilman Tufto said that we are hearing your concerns. Lowell Tyler asked if there was a contingency plan for getting trees back. Councilman Prestholdt said that doing some kind of tree program will be brought up again at a Road and Bridge Committee meeting. Kuhn reiterated that he does not like to remove trees. The citizens of Dawson are paying a lot of money for new infrastructure.

The hiring of a new City Manager was tabled from the last meeting. On motion by Councilman Fish with a second from Councilman Tufto to forgo hiring either of the ones that were interviewed. Voting in favor Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Absent: Councilman Petersen. Against: None. Motion Passed.

Discussion was had on whether or not to purchase an extended warranty for the skid loader being purchased. Kemen spoke with Todd from Ziegler and said that a warranty can be purchased at any time within the next two years, we just wouldn't be able to get the premier warranty. There will be three separate purchase agreements, one each for the skid loader, blower and sweeper. Councilman Prestholdt expressed that he did not think it was necessary for the City to purchase an extended warranty at this time. On motion by Councilman Fish with a second from Councilman Tufto to forgo purchasing an extended warranty for the skid loader. Voting in favor Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Absent: Councilman Petersen. Against: None. Motion Passed.

### New Business

City Engineer Jeff Kuhn gave a brief update of the street project. The paving complete, with one or two small areas to be addressed next spring. The seeders are in town today, adding top soil and seeding to areas in need. It is unknown at this time if 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets North will be finished this fall. Completion of seeding will wrap up in the spring and any settlement and grass that didn't grow will be addressed. Town and Country will be in town on Wednesday to touch up 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Viking and other areas that need to be addressed. Councilman Adelman asked if the City should be worried about the asphalt that was laid in 40 degree weather. Kuhn said that it isn't ideal but it is towards the end of the project and doesn't see it being structurally hampered. It's not 100%, but was an acceptable job. Councilman Olson asked Kuhn when the City should consider seal coating the new streets. Kuhns recommendation was between three to five years. Councilman Tufto asked about Pine Street, and if there are any settling issues to worry about. Kuhn stated that it was wet when it was being put back together, and there were unforeseen circumstances.

Pay request #11 was provided by Keuchle Underground. They are requesting \$1,236,554.72. On motion by Councilman Fish with a second from Councilman Tufto to approve the pay request for Kuechle Underground. Voting in favor Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Absent: Councilman Petersen. Against: None. Motion Passed.

Pay request #13 was provided by Maguire Iron. They are 99% complete with the project, and are requesting \$24,700. On motion by Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Tufto to approve the pay request for Maguire Iron. Voting in favor Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Absent: Councilman Petersen. Against: None. Motion Passed.

Nick Vorvicks resignation letter was included in the packed.

#### Miscellaneous Announcements

The Office will be Closed November 26<sup>th</sup>, the day after Thanksgiving. This has been done in the past and any employee not working has to take vacation time. On motion by Councilman Fish with a second from Councilman Olson to approve the office being closed November 26<sup>th</sup>. Voting in favor Councilman Fish, Councilman Adelman, Councilman Olson, Councilman Tufto and Councilman Prestholdt. Absent: Councilman Petersen. Against: None. Motion Passed.

The next Council Meeting/Truth & Taxation Meeting will be December 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm, please take note of the time change. This meeting will go over the final budget for 2022. Kemen said that it doesn't pay to have another Council Meeting next week. The City will not receive any more pay estimates this month, and are still waiting on information from the County on 6<sup>th</sup> Street and ADA. Their will also be a Police Commission Meeting and Road & Bridge Committee Meeting coming up.

#### Adjourn Meeting

Hearing nothing else, on motion by Councilman Fish with a second by Councilman Olson to adjourn. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Fish, Councilman Olson, Councilman Prestholdt and Councilman Tufto. Absent: Councilman Petersen. Against: None. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

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Deputy City Clerk

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Mayor