**Minutes of the Regular Meeting-7:30pm Wednesday**

**March 14, 2023**

**Mendota VFW 1323 Sibley Memorial Hwy,**

**Mendota Minnesota**

1. Call to order: Mayor Mielke called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Present: Mayor Mielke. Council Members Golias, Perron, Rasmussen and Donnelly. Attorney’s Tom Loonan and Christina Benson, Engineer Lucas Jones, Captain Wegener and City Clerk Kathy Krotter. No Building Official

4. Agenda: Mayor Mielke asked if there were any last minute changes to the Agenda. No changes needed.

5. Approval of February 14, 2023 City Council Meeting minutes. Motion to approve last month’s minutes, with one correction. Motioned by Mayor Mielke and seconded by Council Member Perron. Approved 5-0.

6. Treasurer’s Report: Motion to pay the bills by Council Member Golias and seconded by Council Member Donnelly. Approved 5-0.

7. Building Official Report and MNSPECT Proposal: Clerk stated that Mike closed six permits and has one left open. Mike gave the city clerk a thumb drive of all his permits past and present. Mayor Mielke presented the new application for MNSPECT. Mayor Mielke stated that Lilydale is going with MNSPECT, Mendota Heights is not, they went with Inspectron and Sunfish Lake is going with West St Paul. Council had discussion and voted on accepting MNSPECT as the new building official. Tom requested a Resolution 23-03 to set up contract with MNSpect motioned from Council member Golias and seconded by Council Member Rasmussen. Approved 5-0

8. Jennifer Haskamp - Feasibility Update Jennifer performed Task 1 of the feasibility study for the city of Mendota downtown redevelopment. She passed out two maps, one is the existing conditions map and the other was the development capacity analysis. To determine where the developable area of the parcel would be in the mixed use area, Jennifer took the future land use plan, from the comp plan, looked at the zoning standards from a dimensional perspective and layered them on top of each other. Our 2040 comp plan states that 65% should be commercial and 35% residential. Discussion of changing these percentages around was discussed. Jennifer stated that these percentages for unit counts would never work. She also stated that parking has a direct relationship to the height of the building. Council and public discussed the feasibility study.

9. Matt Carter and Jack Nord –Sibley House: (Sibley Historic Site) Matt is the Executive Director of the Dakota County Historical Society. The organization was founded in 1939. They operate three different historic sites in the county. Matt said they are working on ideas for Mendota Days and are hoping on doing a vintage baseball game at St Peters Church.

Jack is the site supervisor. Jack stated that the attendance at the Sibley site in 2022 was 2009 people. Which included guests, students, the fur trading and Halloween event. For 2023, they have planned eight Mendota after Hours events which are typically on Fridays. They can be found on their website which is dakotahistory/events. Jack asked the council and Mayor if they would like to come to an event they are having June 24 from 12pm to 8pm. They would like the Mayor to speak for five minutes about the town. They are trying to promote more demonstrations, with one example being a snow shoe maker. They have added new event that will celebrate the history of Jazz in Mendota, on September 23rd from 7 to 10 pm. They will have another Halloween event, on October 28th from 4 to 10 pm, adding a true crime tour of Mendota. The Sibley site is working on the landscaping around the grounds. They will be a permit sign for the site. Council member Donnelly asked about the school attendance and Matt stated that all students receive free admission, the only thing that the schools are responsible for is getting the students to the site. The admission is covered through sponsorships by the friends of the Sibley historic site or the Hastings historical society. Jack stated that they do also have a history trunk for students that can’t afford the long bus ride. This way they can bring the history to them.

10. Jen and Grayson- Garage: Jen stated that there is an existing foundation on the property, which has been there since they purchased their home. (20-25 years ago) They would like to build a garage there. Jen wants to know what she needs to do to start this process. Tom stated that the city could do an encroachment agreement between Jen and Grayson and the city, authorizing encroachment onto the city right of way. This would give them the right to construct with limitations. Lucas explained that the city sewer and water might be one of the limitations in the future. This would cause the city to take some of their garage down if the city needed the right of way. Tom will follow up with Jen and Grayson. Mayor and council approved to have Tom move on in this direction with Jen and Grayson.

11. Public Comments: Opened at 8:41 pm. A resident spoke to council about the height restrictions and how at the last meeting everyone voted and agreed on 35 feet. But now the council is talking about variances so developers can build up to 4 stories. The resident hopes that the city is not entertaining changing the height restrictions. The resident also stated that setbacks are made for a reason, not just for floodplains but for the limestone, which every spring comes down on the bike path causing it to be closed. The resident is also hoping the city will not change the structure of parking since parking is already a problem when Lucky’s and Axels when they are busy. The resident also stated that the people interested in Carl’s home are an LLC company and there philosophy is we make it happen. It was brought up that the police are called to the apartments every week. And the house next the apartments and Jens home is supposed to be a single family home but was sold as a triplex. Another resident ask if we have an ordinance to prevent people from having an Airbnb or a weekly rental. Tom said that there is an ordinance for short rentals. Someone else said that “Mendota is so unique compared to all the cities around us. And one of the appeals for Mendota is because it is so unique and we don’t have these large expansive apartment buildings and all these different stores. We have stores all over the place surrounding Mendota.” She thinks it is unique and attractive and it might be a little run down but that is part of the appeal as well. Following this residents comments, Mary wanted to go on record that no favors have been called in and to suggest that is absurd, she and her husband are tax payers and have been in the city for 20 years. We are asking for due process and more formality. And yes Mendota is charming but there also has to be some modernization and that is a good thing.

Closed public comment at 8:57 pm.

12. Council Comments: Open council comments at 8:57 pm.

Council Member Rasmussen: Nothing

Council Member Golias: Street light by Lucky’s and by Steve’s house is out.

Mayor Mielke: The Mayor had mail with something from the League of Minnesota, if anyone is interested. Mayor stated that he attended the beyond the yellow ribbon meeting today. There will be an Officer Patrick Scott run on June 3rd that benefits Special Olympics. Mendota Days is in full swing and the mayor has started organizing that. The dates are July 7th and 8th. Mayor stated that the application for the parade needs to be updated. Clerk stated that it has been updated but needs to be put on the website. Lance asked for an increase of $50.00 for plowing. Formal motion by the Mayor and seconded by Council member Golias to approve the increase. Passed 4-0, 1 abstained.

Council Member Donnelly: Thanked Lance and Willard for the roads being so cleared.

Council Member Perron: Is there anything we can do about the parking at Lucky’s? Every weekend she gets calls about people blocking the road. Mayor suggested getting No Parking signs.

Closed council comments at 9:06 pm.

 13. Staff Comments: Open Staff Comments at 9:06 pm.

Captain Wegener: February Mendota had 21 incidents, 3 of them that opened cases and investigations. Mendota Heights Police have brought on three new officers as of last Tuesday. Once they are through FTO and training the police department will be at full strength and the last time this happened was in 2014. We had a discussion about police calls to the apartments and is there anything we can do. Mayor suggested that we invite the Management Co of the apartments to a council meeting.

Lucas Jones: Fielding calls for 255 E Street or Carl’s property as far as the street vacation, on what they could or could not do. So Lucas gave them some recommendations. After talking to Tom, Lucas recommended that it was not a good idea for the city to part with that property. There is the sewer line, two drainage ways, power and gas lines, and the potential for our water main to go there. So Lucas stated to the buyer that it just did not seem like a good idea. Tom stated that the city has not received any formal application on the vacation.

Lucas had some calls on Tracy’s property next to Grayson and Jen’s place that is up for sale. They were looking for setbacks, height restrictions, and what utilities are available. Lucas stated the only restriction would be that there is no water available. They would have to install a well or some kind of water extension from half a block away.

Lucas did get contacted by the state from the department of health who administers our application for our water main project and asked if we had an updated cost to submit since things are getting cheaper. Lucas asked if the city would you like him to update that for the city. Mayor said yes we should go in that direction.

There are still a few things we have to clean up on the MS4 permit. We could have a planning commission meeting or we could discuss it at a council meeting. We need to do a couple ordinances, the salting ordinance and pet waste. Along with some forms for reviewing applications for storm water. Maybe the city should pull the storm water ordinance out of the ordinances and put it in some kind of public works design manual. That way the city can reference it and update it as needed so the city does not have to go through the ordinance update process. This all should be completed in June, since technically it was supposed to be done in September of last year.

Lawyer Tom Loonan: Tom talked to the same woman Lucas talked to about Tracy’s property. Then the property at 255 E Street. The vacation was discussed and Tom told him that the city would probably not approve it, but he could fill out an application and come to the meeting. Seeing that we have not received an application makes us think he decided not to go through with it. Tom referenced the letter from John Benson. Tom has talked to Mr. Benson and he is talking to the new buyer and working with MNDot. Tom will be talking to Mr. Benson’s attorney about the property. Tom will follow up with Mr. Thompson. (Mr. Bensons lawyer) and MNDot about purchasing the lot from MNDot. The city would buy it from MNDot then we would sell it to Bridget and her daughter. A Title review could be done.

City Clerk: Clerk stated she had a quote from Village Lawn and they have raised their rates. $350.00 for 13 mowing’s. Sent the building permit application for 255 E. Street to Mayor, council and lawyer. Mr. Frank is going ahead with his lawsuit.

Closed staff comment at 9:28 pm.

 14. Adjourn: 9:29pm. Motion to adjourn the meeting by Council Member Donnelly and seconded by Mayor Mielke. Approved 5-0.