

MORRISTOWN CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, May 6th, 2024

**PUBLIC HEARING 7:00 P.M. – PROPOSED ASSESSMENT HEARING, 2024 STREET PROJECT
 PUBLIC HEARING 7:00 P.M. OR SOON THEREAFTER – THE PORTAGE PRELIMINARY PLAT
 PUBLIC HEARING 7:00 P.M. OR SOON THEREAFTER – LOT SPLIT BETHLEHEM CHURCH**

Members Present: Tony Lindahl (Mayor), Jake Golombeski, Linda Murphy, Leon Gregor, Joe Caldwell
 Others Present: Ellen Judd (City Administrator), Mark Rahrck (City Attorney), Austin Schulz (Public Works), Bruce Morris (Fire Chief), Jack Schwichtenberg, Doug Scott (SEH), Steve Nordmeier, Mike O'Rourke, Dave and Lynda Schlie, Cindy Stopski, Grant Stopski, Emily Kasperek, Nate Sailor, Pam Golombeski, Jan Rossow, Toni Ahlman, Vivian Dulas, Richard and Carolyn Gauthier, Lisa Karsten, Evelyn Miller, Terri Byers, Jason Smith, Johnathon and Stacy Chmelik, Charlene Hildebrandt, Lisa Meritt, Sue and Val Kruger, Kelli McMullen, Shelly and Jeff Wenker, Tyler Quale, Jackie and Keith Saemrow, Ralph Barney, Chad Hoepner, Jake Duncan, Mike Schumacher, Oscar Gonzalez, Wunderlich's, Lynette Bohner, George Leppert, Michael Bohn, Justin Duncan, Nancy Larsen, Mary Shafer, Dave Underdahl, Elizabeth Prescher, Pamela Petersen, Ramon Medina, Matt Wagner, Lori Strobel, Darla Carter, Brian and Sherrie Brunner, Sharon Krenik, Lee Anderson, Troy Roth, Diane Pitan, Mark Morris, Marvin Velzke, Kari Roth, Rick Vollbrecht, Tim Flaten

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** A regular meeting of the Morristown City Council was called to order on Monday, May 6, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Hall at 402 Division Street South by Mayor Tony Lindahl.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. **ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS:**
 - A 7H Correction Bathroom Update agenda item to now include a quote for consideration
 - B 7S Correction Resolution 2024-24 Appointing Election Judges to be removed from Agenda
 - C 7U Addition Letter from Resident Regarding the 2024 Street Project
 - D 7V Addition Approval to Purchase Flowers for Downtown Planters
 - E 7W Addition Hire Public Works Full-Time or Repost Position

Motion by Caldwell seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to approve the Agenda with three additions and two corrections.
 Motion by Murphy, seconded by Caldwell and carried unanimously to close the regular meeting and open the Public Hearing on the Portage Preliminary Plat.

PUBLIC HEARING – THE PORTAGE PRELIMINARY PLAT

Owner of the land explained that he would like to subdivide lots for future development, and to give the land more uses. The lots would have a private road, shared with the people that own the land.

Motion by Murphy, seconded by Golembeski and was carried unanimously to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting.

Motion by Murphy, seconded by Golembeski and was carried unanimously to close the regular meeting and open the Public Hearing for the Lot Split Bethlehem Church.

PUBLIC HEARING – LOT SPLIT BETHLEHEM CHURCH

The Bethlehem Church said that they would like to get the parsonage sold, and to do so, they need to split it off from the new parsonage and obtain a new address.

Motion by Gregor, seconded by Golembeski and carried unanimously to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting.

Motion by Murphy, seconded by Gregor and was carried unanimously to close the regular meeting and open the Public Hearing for the Proposed Assessment 2024 Street Project.

PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED ASSESSMENT, 2024 STREET PROJECT

Several citizens expressed their concerns regarding the property assessments relative to the 2024 Street Project.

Doug (SEH) explained the city's assessment policy and gave an example as to how this works using an example project during a slideshow presentation.

Lynda Schlie, 110 Ann St W – Resident read a letter to council, included in the agenda packet 7U, asking them to delay the 2024 Street Project until further funds can be secured.

Pam Petersen, 107 Bloomer St E – Concerned about the ramifications to the residents. Seems as though the council wants to do all the projects at once. Doesn't think the City needs sidewalks.

Val Kruger, 203 1st St NE – Resident asked why the assessment can't be divided up to the whole city. Asked questions about Rice County's assessment practices.

Kari Roth, 204 2nd St SE – Resident talked about the 2022 Street Project and mentioned that she thinks that project was a wake-up call to the whole community. She agreed that infrastructure needs to be updated, as well as roads, but would like to see the City secure other funding.

Richard Gauthier, 304 2nd St SE – Resident questioned why storm is being installed when drainage has never been an issue in the past. Doug explained that storm inlets will be installed to take the drainage off the street.

Jason Smith, 25 Washington St E – Resident asked why curb and gutter is being installed. He feels the assessment is very inflated and feels it should be scaled back. He expressed concern over being able to rent out his apartment building due to the fact that he will have to raise the rent.

Jake Duncan, 110 Division St S – Resident expressed concern over the installation of curb and gutter and the amount of concrete replacement for his driveway. Doug explained that the contractor will need to replace that much concrete to get a smooth transition. Doug said if this passes tonight, it becomes the final assessment roll.

Justin Duncan, 205 1st St NE – Resident asked that the City Council take another look at the project in a year and get a final number before starting the project.

Jeff Wenker, 203 Washington E – Resident stated that streets should have been kept up prior to this project, and stated that the City should only be replacing blacktop. He also asked questions about costs related to contractor and asked why storm sewer is not getting replaced all the way to the river.

Carolyn Gauthier, 304 2nd St SE – Resident asked what happens if the contractor starts digging and finds out that the storm sewers are in good shape. She reiterated that everything works fine with the infrastructure and added, "don't touch it if it isn't broken." She also expressed interest in the City hiring a grant writer.

Lisa Meritt, 200 Washington St E – Resident asked council to put the project on hold. She stated that whether a homeowner sells or keeps their property, they will still end up paying for it. She said that her and her husband both work full-time and they still don't know how they will afford the assessment.

Bohner, 202 Washington St E – Resident asked about the drainage on 3rd St and how that affects her.

Tyler Quale, 200 Sidney St E – Resident asked about drainage and why curb and gutter would be used in conjunction with swales with inlets.

Lee Anderson, 200 3rd St SE – Resident asked questions about drainage and whether or not inlets could be added to existing tile lines.

Mark Morris – Resident asked about the assessment policy, and if it could be changed.

Rick Vollbrecht, 305 2nd St SW – Resident asked how the City Council would be able to make amendments to the 2022 Street Project at this point in time.

Charlene Hildebrandt, 201 Ann St E – Resident asked about the grant money received from the State and how it's being divided up. Doug explained that the money gets allocated to the remaining project after assessments. She also expressed concern over the 2022 Street Project and stated that the dirt that was put down was full of rocks and weeds.

John Chmelik, 300 Division St S – Resident talked about Ann Street being vacated and how that affects him. He said his neighbor is paying almost double his assessment and they have similar work being done to their properties. He is in favor of the project but wants to see it put off another year. He stated he doesn't want the round-a-bout, and said it delays his time to a fire call.

Shelly Wenker, 203 Washington E – Resident told the residents in attendance to be aware that real estate taxes will be higher than they expect them to be after this project.

Diane Pitan, 206 Division St S – Resident stated that there are drainage issues in the alley behind her house, and asked Doug if this project will solve them.

Elizabeth Prescher, 101 & 103 Washington St E – Resident asked city council to delay the project.

Ralph Barney – Resident stated that the city can't have two bonding bills on one street project.

Steph Ryman, 26 Main St E – Resident stated that her sidewalk was torn up six years ago and she doesn't want to see it replaced again. She also asked city council what they are going to pay for.

Motion by Murphy, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to close the Public Hearing and open the regular meeting.

- 4. CITIZENS COMMENTS:** Steve Nordmeier mentioned people were bow hunting off the dam and throwing fish on the sidewalk.
Michels will be replacing the gas main on 2nd St SE.
Resident asked that Council look at seal coating the roads in the future.
-

- 5. CONSENT AGENDA:** Bruce asked Council to pull the Fire Department report for discussion.
Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda with the exemption of the Fire Department report.
Bruce requested permission to sell the old tanker truck.
Motion by Murphy, seconded by Caldwell and carried unanimously to approve the Fire Department selling the old tanker truck.
Bruce explained that the Fire Department hasn't raised the Fire Rates in quite a while. He said that Morristown is lower than the surrounding towns. He requested they be raised to the amounts in the packet. Mark requested that it be on the agenda as an agenda item for the next meeting, in order for it to be approved.
Motion by Murphy, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to approve the Fire Department Report.
-

- 6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
- | | | |
|----------|------------------------|---|
| <i>A</i> | Lot Combination | Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Golombeski and carried unanimously to hold a Public Hearing for Brandon Hachfeld Lot Combination Request, June 3 rd , 7:00pm or soon thereafter. |
| <i>B</i> | Public Works Part-time | Council left the hours each employee will work to Austin's discretion, providing that they don't work over 31 hours per week. |
| <i>C</i> | Clerk Posting Update | Motion by Murphy, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to update the City Clerk posting to a deadline of May 22 nd with a pay rate of \$22.80-\$24-57. |
| <i>D</i> | Lawn Service Quotes | Motion by Gregor, seconded by Caldwell and carried unanimously to hire Filan for Lawn Service. |
-

- 7. NEW BUSINESS:**
- | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|---|
| <i>A</i> | Resolution 2024-22 | No motion was made on Resolution 2024-22 Adopting the Assessment for the 2024 Street Project.
Motion by Murphy, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to adjourn the Assessment Hearing for a later date. |
| <i>B</i> | Resolution 2024-23 | No motion was made on Resolution 2024-23 Accepting the Bid.
Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Golembeski and carried unanimously to authorize SEH to reach out to the low bidder, to see how long they will hold their bid. |
| <i>C</i> | Construction Services | Proposal for Construction Services from SEH was tabled for a later date. |
| <i>D</i> | Plat, The Portage | Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Golembeski and carried unanimously to approve the proposed split up of Parcel Number 20.23.2.25.001 as shown on the preliminary plat and authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to execute the final plat document upon completion by the owner. |
| <i>E</i> | Lot Split | Motion by Golembeski, seconded by Murphy and carried unanimously to approve the lot split for Bethlehem Church with the new parcel having an address of 405 Main St W. |
| <i>F</i> | 4H Flower Planting | Motion by Gregor, seconded by Murphy and carried unanimously to allow 4-H Club to plant flowers at Centennial Park, May 19 th . |
| <i>G</i> | Baseball Field | Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Golembeski and carried unanimously to reimburse Brent Vollbrecht \$2,499 for the foul-line fence posts, with the money to come out of the baseball fund. |
| <i>H</i> | Bathroom Update | Mike O'Rourke explained that they received a lower plumbing bid for the park bathrooms. They are looking to move forward with the project with approval for plumbing and framing.
Motion by Murphy, seconded by Caldwell to accept the plumbing bid from Brandenburg Plumbing of \$9,000 for the park bathrooms. |

		Motion by Gregor, seconded by Golombeski to authorize the framing bids for the bathroom to be approved by the City Administrator, up to \$15,000.
I	Zoning Board	Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Golembeski and carried unanimously to appoint John Schlie & Pamela Petersen to the Zoning Board.
J	Resolution 2024-21	Motion by Golembeski, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to approve Resolution 2024-21 Accepting Resignation.
K	Damage Deposit	Motion by Gregor, seconded by Murphy and carried unanimously to approve a damage deposit for renting the Government Room, set at \$250.
L	Resolution 2024-20	Motion by Golembeski, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to accept the donation from American Legion for Park Bathrooms, Resolution 2024-20.
M	Permit Pay Rate	Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Golombeski and carried unanimously to approve the Zoning Administrator pay rate of \$35 per open, and \$35 per close of a permit.
N	Sewer Charges	Council explained that to fill a swimming pool without paying the sewer charge, you need to have a separate meter for your outside spicket.
O	Resolution 2024-24	Motion by Golombeski, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to accept Resolution 2024-24 Accepting Jerry West Resignation.
P	CC Great Hall Use	Judd asked for permission to use the Great Hall for the 2025 MN Wastewater Operator's Association section meeting on May 7 th , 2025. Motion by Murphy, seconded by Caldwell; further discussion was had about whether or not the City needs to have a motion to hold a City event. Council decided that City events can be held free of charge, as long as they are added to the calendar so everyone knows. Motion by Murphy, seconded by Caldwell to rescind the previous motion made.
Q	Open Burning	Motion by Golombeski, seconded by Murphy to allow open burning May 7 th -June 3 rd , 6pm-12 noon, no permit required.
R	Resolution 2024-25	Motion by Golembeski, seconded by Murphy and carried unanimously to approve Resolution 2024-25 Annual Fire Department Officer Pay.
S	Resolution 2024-24	Appointing Election Judges Removed from Agenda under Additions/Corrections section.
T	Playground Mulch	Motion by Golembeski, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to accept the quote for playground mulch by Rockhard Landscaping.
U	Letter from Resident	Letter was read by resident during the Public Hearing, Proposed Assessment, 2024 Street Project.
V	Purchase Flowers	Council stated that this purchase does not need to go before Council. They approved the City Administrator to approve the purchase of the flowers for the downtown planters in the future.
W	Public Works Full-Time	Motion by Golembeski, seconded by Gregor and carried unanimously to hire Devin Hoy at an hourly payrate of \$23.56, as soon as he is available, for the Public Works Full-time position.

8. CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Hydrant Flushing	Hydrant flushing will be the same day each month as the Council Meeting, weather permitting.
Great Job Austin	Resident commented that Austin Schulz has been doing a great job in his new role as Public Works Full-time.
Cutting Down Tree	John Schlie suggested that Council look into cutting down a tree next to the river. Motion by Murphy, seconded by Caldwell and carried unanimously to have Austin get quotes to cut down the tree by the river.
Assessment Hearing	Kari Roth thanked Council for listening to the residents during the Assessment Hearing. Residents then shared their thoughts on delaying the project. Motion by Caldwell, seconded Gregor by and carried unanimously to call for a Work Session for May 15 th at 7:00 PM to discuss the Assessment Policy and 2024 Street Project.

Bond Issuance Judd stated that the Special Meeting for the Issuance of the Bond, is cancelled due to the lack of motion on Accepting the Bid, and Adopting the Assessment.

9. COUNCIL DISCUSSION & CONCERNS:

Gregor expressed concern with the Kona Ice truck showing up without a permit. Council asked Judd to reach out to the Historical Society and make sure they know that Kona Ice isn't approved.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Caldwell, seconded by Golembeski and carried unanimously to adjourn the May Morristown City Council meeting at 10:26p.m.

11. NEXT MEETING:

Work Session: Wednesday, May 15th, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.

Regular City Council Meeting: Monday, June 3rd, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.