City of Taylor, North Dakota

Opera House/Zoom

September 22, 2020 at 6:36 pm.

The Special City Council Meeting regarding tree trimming was requested by Travis Christensen and Melissa Gjermundson.  This meeting was recorded via zoom. A copy of the audio can be obtained by contacting Auditor Lisa Aune.

The Special City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Emory Vaagen.

Council Members present: Travis Christensen, Daryl Jurgens, Coree Hofland (Via Zoom) and Melissa Gjermundson.

Visitors; Reid Vaagen (Via Zoom)

Emory Vaagen requested that Melissa Gjermundson talk with him (Vaagen) before talking with a contractor that the City has hired. It was clarified by M. Gjermundson a policy like that Mayor Vaagen requested would have to apply to all City Council Members. No motion was entertained.

M. Gjermundson stated her concerns regarding the 2 trees that have been cut down at the Tennis/Basketball Courts. She clarified she spoke with  PMT Tree Service and asked who gave authorization for the trees that were cut down. M. Gjermundson stated that both PMT Tree Service and Kenny Christianson said that Kenny Christianson had given authorization due to trees having rot. M. Gjermundson stated she told PMT Tree Trimming and Kenny Christianson that K. Christianson did not have the authority to request trees to be cut down because it is the City Council not the Park Board that will be paying PMT and PMT needed clearer direction from the City Council. Mayor Vaagen stated City Maintenance~~,~~ Reid Vaagen, and He gave authorization to PMT Tree Trimming to cut those trees. Reid Vaagen clarified he did not authorize PMT to cut 2 trees.

Mayor Vaagen asked M. Gjermundson if a letter should be sent to M.Gjermundson’s house regarding the front yard tree that is within the right of way. M. Gjermundson clarified that if the Mayor requested a letter to be sent for her house, a letter would need to be sent to all property owners that have trees within the right of way which is 33’ from the center of the roadway inward to the front property on homeowners. No motion was entertained.

T. Christensen stated previous discussions on tree trimming by the City Council was to have the overhanging tree limbs that were in the roadway trimmed due to MGM request but it has gone beyond the initial intention and at the last meeting the City was not cutting any more trees unless it was to help Daryl Jurgens with snow removal.  Daryl Jurgens stated PMT Tree Trimming will do more work in Taylor but is requesting specific trees that need to be trimmed or cut to be marked. M. Gjermundson stated City Council is not in agreement regarding right of ways in alleyways and as a business owner PMT Tree Trimming should protect himself. Mayor Vaagen stated the Council is in agreement. M. Gjermundson stated that the board is not in agreement as the Council has discussed a 15’ ROW, there is a plat showing a~~t~~ 20’ ROW, and Mayor Vaagen is under the impression the City can cut into the setback of 7’ on each side of the ROW. M. Gjermundson clarifies that the City Council never agreed on the ROW’s at the last meeting and that Mayor Vaagen then tabled the discussion of tree trimming and decided he would walk with Daryl Jurgens to review the areas that cause snow removal issues. Mayor Vaagen stated tree trimming was agreed and voted on before M. Gjermundson was voted onto the City Council. M. Gjermundson stated she reviewed minutes for the last several years to seek clarification as to what was voted on; however, there was never a motion made just discussion on tree trimming. Mayor Vaagen stated M. Gjermundson has been on the Council for 3 months and has called 2 special meetings. He asked how much this has cost the city. M. Gjermundson stated she called the 2nd meeting along with T. Christensen. Auditor Lisa Aune clarified that Mayor Vaagen, himself, called the 1st special meeting regarding tree trimming.

T. Christensen asked what areas are needed to help snow removal/ storage. Discussion was had regarding areas. Daryl Jurgens stated he piles the snow up in the post office park and had a few alleyways that needed to be trimmed. M. Gjermundson asked how much it will cost the City of

Taylor to remove potential trees and shrubbery at the post office park. She stated the City has already spent $13,000 and the City has not seen a current invoice of the two trees that were cut down due to rot. Mayor Vaagen stated the City of Taylor has 1.3M or 1.2M in the bank account. M. Gjermundson stated the City needs to manage that money and the City should know exactly what will be spent before hiring a contractor. Mayor Vaagen stated there needs to be more help in how the City is run as he does not have time. M. Gjermundson stated she is willing to learn how the city operates. T. Christensen clarified he is available to help.

City Council walked around Taylor to address which trees needed to be trimmed. C. Hofland disconnected from the meeting. Reid Vaagen called onto Auditor Lisa Aune’s phone to continue to be part of the meeting.

The Council came to a conclusion to trim a couple more trees that are essential for snow removal/ snow storage. Consensus of the Board was to remove the lilac bush behind the Opera House for snow storage, trim two low hanging branches at the park on the corner of Elm and Main Street for snow storage and trim the trees in the allies of Block 36 and Block 31 for snow removal.

Travis Christensen moved to adjourn at 7:44pm, seconded by Melissa Gjermundson. MC

Emory Vaagen, Mayor Lisa Aune, Auditor