

City of Long Prairie City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M., Monday November 6th, 2023
City Council Meeting Held in Person at the Long Prairie Grey Eagle High School Auditorium

The Long Prairie City Council met in person and by phone at Long Prairie Grey Eagle High School, 7:00 pm, on Monday November 6th, 2023, Mayor Jodi Dixon called the meeting to order with the following present by phone or at City Hall: Council members Clint Krueger, Jim Kreemer, David Wright, Lilah Gripne, and City Administrator Ted Gray. Others present Police Chief Ryan Hanson, Officer Trevor Larson, Fire Chief Dan Laumeier, Luan Thomas-Brunkhorst, Joshua Spieker, Jerney Sovich, Bob Byers, Dave Ruda, Toby Polkinghorne, Jen Steinmetz, Darla John, Tamie Barber, Bruce Speer, Becky Meis, Gerald Meis, Sara Meis, Joe Krueger, Dan Bebault, Jody Bebault, Kent Louwagie, Tanja Levin, Marie Baron, Kevin Klimeck, Luraine Klimeck, Skip Duchesneau, Andrew Duchesneau, David Paskach, Linda Rone, Lisa Wright, Nancy Waitkus, Alicia Waitkus, Pat Schultz, Bob Kunz, Enos Swartzentruber, Tammy Cebulla, Barton Rud, Blondie Lemke, Vic Lemke, Crystal Fritzlar, Amanda Hinson, Steve Hinson, Amanda Felderwerd, Bruce Oftedahl, Jen Hanson, Kali Christensen, Officer Roger Lowe, Janet Karnes, Bob Benson, Jessica Barroso, Susan Gaida, Soti Novius, Xavier Perez, Gabriel Perez, Mariana Scott, Marja Krueger.

Council member Kreemer motioned Gripne seconded to approve the consent agenda:

- (a) Approve Agenda for November 6th, 2023.**
- (b) Approve Council Meeting Minutes from October 16th, 2023.**

Motion carried unanimously.

(Public Comment)

Dave Ruda addressed the city council regarding concerns with the 2nd Ave apartments across the street from his home. He expressed the developer was untruthful through the process and construction of these apartments. Dave asked the city to hold the developers to the requirements in the Conditional Use Permits. He asked if and how the process is enforced to correct issues if a Conditional Use Permit is not followed.

Toby Polkinghorne addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Toby is the Manager of Central Bi Products and expressed the need for this apartment development. He referenced the 2nd Ave Apartments and the limited police calls to the apartment which of 50% the units are rented by Long Prairie Packing employees. He felt the property was well managed and the development would be good for Long Prairie.

Luan Thomas Brunkhorst addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Luan expressed her support of the apartments and asked that we not paint an entire group with a broad brush due to poor behavior of a few individuals. She addressed issues that occur in our community and how this housing would provide quality units for residents and employees of Long Prairie Packing.

Tanja Levin addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Tanja stated that she a childcare provider in the neighborhood of this proposed development. She

expressed that people deserve quality housing and jobs. But had concerns about the burden it may cause Todd County Health and Human Services, public safety, and the schools. She mentioned concerns with comments made by a council member, that they did not care about the concerns of the community and would be voting yes at this meeting.

Kevin Klimek addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Kevin referenced a petition that had been provided during the Planning and Zoning meeting on this issue. He expressed concerns related to crime, property value decrease, and additional burdens on the community that this development may cause. He stated it is not about race or the industry, but the safety concerns related to this development location. He asked the city council to deny the proposed conditional use permit.

Pat Schultz addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. He stated it is not about 4-wheelers or crime, but ordinance violations. He stated that the layout is not to scale and drawn incorrectly in the shoreland. It showed incorrect setbacks, and the peak of the roof was too high. He stated that the bedrooms were not accurately represented, based on the conditional use permit application. This development would be breaking nine ordinances if approved in this location. He expressed environmental concerns regarding impervious surfaces and potential flooding downstream. He referenced comments made by the Fire Department about the access point to Highway 71 and the entrance to Coborn's, mentioning that it would be safety concern if there were a fire at these apartments. Along with this he referenced the increased traffic and safety issues this may cause.

Bob Klick addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Bob referenced the need for housing and the discussions regarding through out the last few years at the EDA and HRA communities. This location allowed for easier access to State Highways and County Roads.

Jody Bebault addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Jody referenced concerns with current ordinance violations and the lack of enforcement. She discussed concerns with the odor, loud music and people parking in yards. She stated that there would be many ordinance violations with this apartment.

Steve Hinson addressed the city council about concerns between industrial versus residential. Steve provided references to R-Way trailers and concerns with having an industry next to residential properties. In reference to R-way concerns he asked for a concrete process to enforce ordinances. He closed by asking if the city had considered an incentive to move R-Way to the industrial park.

Crystal Fritzlar addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Crystal referenced her concerns that she expressed back in August about the police calls and issues in relation to the Long Prairie Packing owned apartment in Alexandria, called Viking Village. She referenced ordinance 16.107.(1) she stated the duties of planning and zoning are to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. Crystal asked the council to vote no to this proposed development.

Gabrier Perez addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Gabe came to Long Prairie 8 years ago to work at Long Prairie Packing. He stated employed there for 7 months and referenced the hard work it takes to be employed there. Gabe expressed favor to this apartment as more people are coming to work here and there is nowhere to live. The people coming spend money in town and pay taxes. He stated the community should work together to fix the issues the town is facing.

Darla John addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Darla stated that a lot of her concerns had already been discussed, but asked questions on why it was in this location, were there sidewalks and other snow removal concerns. She asked about logistics and how traffic would flow without additional stoplights. She expressed concerns about the assimilation process and the language barriers. She asked if Long Prairie Packing is bringing these individuals here, what resources are they providing them.

Susan Gaida addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. She shared concerns with the volume of people coming into the area with this development. She referenced the issues accessing Highway 71 with only one stoplight. She asked how residents would travel to and from work. She had concerns about residents being taken advantage of drug issues.

Xaiver Perez addressed the city council regarding the proposed 61-unit apartment development. Xaiver expressed similar points as Gabrier, more people are coming here to work and need to work. He worked at Long Prairie Packing for 6 months, but now owns a business and a home in town. People come here to work hard and to support their families and they need housing.

Robert Benson addressed the City Council regarding concerns with a proposed 4-wheeler ordinance change. He would be opposed to recent discussions about banning ATVs in the community. He stated it would be unfair to those how properly operate these vehicles within city limits. It would also hinder community members who use these vehicles for various projects such as removing snow. He stated the issues could be due to the lack of knowledge of operators on how to handle these vehicles in city limits, but not reason to banning them from being used.

(New Business)

The city council reviewed the proposed conditional use permit for 418 & 434 4th Street SW. The council listened to David Paskach, Vice President of Human Resources for American Foods Group LLC who presented the need for this apartment development. Dave started by providing a history of Long Prairie Packing in the community. The plant was purchased by American Foods Group in 1944 and currently today harvests around 2000 head a day and employees 550 employees. They are the last large beef producer in Minnesota. Long Prairie Packing is one of five plants, with the fifth currently under in Missouri. The Governor of Missouri provided context to the importance of this plant in their state, commenting that it could lead to an estimated billion dollars towards their economy. Dave referred back to the Long Prairie Packing facility and its employees. The need for workers is exceeding the local labor supply, currently there are two jobs available for every working in this manufacturing sector. This is why they are recruiting from the Southern United States and Puerto Rico. With this recruitment, it creates the need for housing. Currently the Viking Village in Alexandria houses Long Prairie Packing staff

for a short-term. Once this term is up, employees cannot locate permanent housing options in Long Prairie, which presents the need for Long Prairie Packing to be involved in creating and constructing housing for their employees. They do not want to be in the housing business, but the market currently does not provide enough housing. The purpose of this apartment is to be long-term housing, not temporary or short-term housing.

Skip Duchesneau from DW Jones INC addressed the council regarding the project and the proposed building to be constructed. Skip reviewed the request providing clarity on the allowance of multi-family housing in this area per city ordinance, they would not be rezoning. This proposed project does require a conditional use permit. Skip referenced the three criteria items that need to be met for the City Council to approve of this conditional use permit.

Criteria #1, conditional uses will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the immediate vicinity. The danger of crime has been supported by the tenant screening that will be conducted by D.W. Jones Management, Inc. and the results at 2nd Ave Apartments. The exhibits were provided showing that D.W. Jones Management, Inc. reviews when vetting lessees, the lease agreement, and house rules. The current zoning is I-2, and the construction of multi-family could be significantly less of an impact to the residential neighbors. Property values did not decrease across the street from 2nd Ave Apartments based on existing Todd County property values.

Criteria #2, the establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding vacant property for uses predominant in the area. The vacant land is all zoned I-2 and that can be developed in the future. The purchase agreement contains a restriction that the Buyer agrees to not contest any industrial production that could in the future occur in this area. This will allow the orderly development of the surrounding vacant property.

Criteria #3, that all building permits must be applied for within nine months of the granting of the Conditional Use Permit. This would be completed if the conditional use permit is approved.

Skip referenced the planning and zoning commissions unanimous decision approving the conditional use permit with following conditions:

1. Full-time Onsite Manager
2. Tot Lot and Patio Area Constructed
3. Fencing around Stormwater Pond
4. 2 Rows of staggered trees along property lines as proposed.
5. Engineered Designs for the Stormwater Pond will be presented for review.
6. School Bus Pad of 8X10 will be constructed with a sidewalk from the apartment to the pad.
7. No parking restrictions along 4th ST SW will be recommended to the City Council for approval.

Skip addressed concerns raised during the public comment regarding property values, proposed plans, apartment numbers, shoreland and floodplain, stormwater pond concept along with the sedimentation and vegetation requirements. Administrator Gray noted that Bolton and Menk had been consulted to evaluate the infrastructure, roads, water, and sewer in this area. They had found no evidence of this development affecting these infrastructure items. Administrator Gray also addressed the Health and Human Services concerns.

Skip discussed who would be housed in the apartment. The apartment is likely to be filled with by current employees who both live in Long Prairie and in Alexandria the Viking Village. This could open additional housing in Long Prairie. The building will be managed the same as the 2nd Ave Apartments. The design is also very similar to those apartments. The development is not meant to be a dormitory and is to be high quality housing. Council member Wright questioned if Viking Village would remain in use? Skip addressed this and stated that it would for the foreseeable future.

The council discussed various issues related to the playground, patio, foot traffic, and school bus traffic in this area. Council member Krueger addressed the issue regarding two children who fell out of windows at the 2nd Ave Apartments. Skip expressed his concern with these incidents and stated that in both occurrences the fall protection mechanisms were bypassed.

Council member Krueger asked about the ordinance violations that Pat Schultz had mentioned during the public comment section. Council member Krueger invited Pat to the podium to share those ordinances. Pat provided the following ordinance violations: 15.206.2, 16.303.8, 15.201.2, 16.202.(1 & 3), 11.101. (1 & 2), and 11.103.7. Pat also provided ordinances in 16.3923, 16.3925, and 16.3927 in the shoreland ordinance. The City's attorney Joe Kreuger addressed these ordinances and provided clarification to the city council on the concerns. It was determined that these referenced ordinances would not hinder a decision on this conditional use permit request.

Council member Wright asked about light issues from the building. Skip explained the lighting and design for outside lights, along with the parking lot being located on the Southside of the building away from residential homes.

After additional discussion Administrator Gray asked if the council felt the criteria presented would allow for the conditional use permit to be approved.

Council member Kreemer motioned and Wright seconded to approve the conditional user permit for 418 and 434 4th ST SW to construct a 61-unit apartment building with the following conditions: Full-time Onsite Manager, Tot Lot and Patio Area Constructed , Fencing around Stormwater Pond, 2 Rows of staggered trees along property lines as proposed, Engineered Designs for the Stormwater Pond will be presented for review, School Bus Pad of 8X10 will be constructed with a sidewalk from the apartment to the pad, No parking restrictions along 4th ST SW. Roll Call Vote: Yes: Gripne, Kreemer, Kruger, Wright, Dixon. No: 0. Motion carried unanimously.

The City Council allowed a 10-minute break before continuing the new business items.

Council member Gripne motioned Kreemer seconded to Pay Application #15 for CSAH 56 & CSAH 38 Improvement Project in the amount of \$344,050.15 to C&L Excavating INC. Motion carried unanimously.

Council member Gripne motioned Wright seconded to approve Bruan Intertec Invoice in the amount of \$7,636.50. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Gray presented a proposal from David Drown Associates for review and update of Job Classification and Compensation Services. The proposal was broken into four options for the council's choosing. Through discussion the council felt this was needed project but would take the project step by step following the four presented options.

Council member Gripne motioned Dixon seconded to the Proposal from David Drown Associates for review and update of Job Classification and Compensation Services. Motion carried unanimously.

The city council discussed the resignation letter received from Lateshia Harden.

Mayor Dixon motioned Wright seconded to table the acceptance of the resignation letter for Lateshia Harden. Motion carried unanimously.

(Old Business)

The City Council reviewed a request from Jamie Flan to purchase 390 9th ST NE. Presented was a map of the location of the request. The council asked if Jamie could come to present his intentions with this proposal.

Council member Kreemer motioned Gripne seconded to the table the decision on the sale of 390 9th ST NE and ask the Jamie Flan to come to the next meeting to discuss his intentions with this property. Motion carried unanimously.

(Council Reports)

Public Works: Council member Clint Krueger presented the council with the Public Works report with Chad Bosl. Water and Wastewater Rounds are being completed correctly and timely. The Public Works department is continuing to prepare for winter.

EDA: Council member Wright presented to the council the EDA report. The Manufacturers Breakfast was held, and the guest was EnterpriseCP.

Public Safety: Council member Wright presented the public safety reports. The Fire Department participated in the Trunk or Treat. Firefighter Nick Miller has completed firefighter one and two trainings. The department will be hosting, with the Long Prairie Lions the Polar Plunge, dates will be coming. For the Police Department, Justing Gothier has completed his probationary period. Officer Larson represented the department at the Trunk or Treat. The department handled 276 calls over the last two weeks.

Liquor Store: Council member Kreemer presented on the liquor store. The liquor is still working to obtain a second quote to replace the compressor system.

Road Project: Kent Louwagie from Bolton and Menk presented on the road project. The project is nearing completion. We are still working through the paving concerns on County 38 and the associated city streets.

Administrator Gray, with Fire Chief Laumeyer addressed the upcoming policy changes regarding safe and sick time.

There being no further business, motioned by Kreemer seconded by Gripne to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Ted Gray, City Administrator

Jodi Dixon, Mayor