

Minutes

Kennedy City Council Meeting
August 8, 2011

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Truedson called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Kennedy City Office. Council Members present included Paul Larson, Kevin Hanson, Duane Peterson and Mary Ryden. Also present were Mary Cooney, Greg Mitziga, Mark Holman and Neil Doty.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recited.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: D. Peterson made a motion to approve the July 2011 minutes. K. Hanson seconded. Motion carried.

PUBLIC FORUM: Mark Holman was present to request a building permit. Jon Langen also requested a permit previously in the week. K. Hanson made a motion to approve building permits for Holman and Langen. M. Ryden seconded. Motion carried. Neil Doty was present to discuss prospective tenants for the Go-Green Center. He came by after learning of the status of the project from M. Cooney, and also from B. Younggren of the Kittson County EDA. The Kittson County EDA hired Doty for a period of two years to help with economic development throughout the county. Doty had been told during those two years that the Go-Green project was going well. It wasn't until he heard the contrary from Cooney and Younggren that he came to make his services available to Kennedy and the Go-Green project. He suggested M. Cooney attend, on behalf of the City of Kennedy, a "Community Venture Network Session" in St. Paul on August 12, 2011. P. Larson made a motion that M. Cooney attends the "Community Venture Network Session." M. Ryden seconded. Motion carried.

CLERK'S REPORT: A copy of a letter requested by, and provided to, the VFW was reviewed. The letter's subject was the July 16 rental of the Go-Green Cafeteria by B. Fields. Fields is suing the VFW. No further discussion on this topic took place. Should Kennedy participate in the 9th Highway 75 Annual Market Day on September 10, 2011? P. Larson made a motion that Kennedy participate in the Market Day Event, and approve the \$25 registration fee. M. Ryden seconded. Motion carried. Clerk indicated, per correspondence dated August 2, 2011, the MN Dept. of Transportation plans to update the population numbers on the City Name Signs along the highways, using "population plaques" that they will attach to the existing city signs. Per their correspondence, "...there is no cost to the City for obtaining and applying the updated plaques." P. Larson made a motion to accept the Clerk's Report as presented. M. Ryden seconded. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: City's Financial Reports were presented. It was restated that the Baseball Fund increased by \$2,345.35 during the month of June, with \$545 for registration and uniforms and \$1,800 in donations for coaching fees. However, the City is still short \$700 for the 2011 summer rec program. T. Truedson stated he still believes some funds are forthcoming from the Kennedy Jaycees and Kenny Urbaniak. P. Larson indicated he would like to donate as well. No money will be transferred from the Baseball Fund at this time, as we will hold Keller's check until all required money has been received. The automatic fill and pre-pay propane programs were discussed. As we still have prepay from last year, currently have a very tight budget, and don't know how much propane will be needed this winter with regards to the school, no motion was made to buy prepay at the cost of \$1.95/gallon at this time. However, city staff was directed to fill the shop and old office tanks at this time at the \$1.79/gallon 2011 August rate. M. Ryden made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. K. Hanson seconded. Motion carried.

MAINTENANCE REPORT: City Maintenance Request sheet was presented. T. Truedson did speak with Wikstroms about providing/paying for street cleaning services as a part of leaving the city "as they found it", however they didn't seem interested. P. Larson indicated he would try speaking to Wikstroms again. Summer mowing has gone very well. T. Truedson commented that it makes a lot of sense to use B. Hultgren, at \$8.00/hour to do as much mowing as possible, rather than have G. Mitziga mow at his higher hourly rate. B. Hultgren's salary will come in right around \$2,500. Using the \$1,600 from the insurance payment, an additional \$900 will have to be located to supplement payment for his summer employment. Using part of the money from the sale of the city pick-up is a possibility. Celebrate Kennedy went well. City looked good. Clean-up wasn't too bad. Michelle Balstad is having issues with the driveway she is attempting to put in at the back of her property. G. Mitziga is going to see what he can do to help solve the problem or guide her to a resolution, in order to prevent continued washout of the adjoining alley. A number of roads/alleys in the city need some patching and filling of potholes. Work on these issues will start now that Wikstrom is done. Street sweeping will be schedule shortly. P. Larson made motion to accept the Maintenance Report as presented. D. Peterson seconded. Motion carried.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: There was one false alarm during the month. It occurred on Saturday night, July 16, during Celebrate Kennedy. The alarm originated at the Kittson Memorial Nursing Home. **P. Larson made a motion to accept the Fire Dept. Report as presented. K. Hanson seconded. Motion carried.**

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT: There continues to be warranty issues with the turbine. G. Mitziga spoke to NextGen via telephone four days in a row, August 1-August 4. They were unable to determine why the turbine stopped again, after just a few days of operation. G. Mitziga was told NextGen could no longer afford to send people to Kennedy, and Kennedy must get their own maintenance. However, the council and staff continue to maintain the opinion that this is a warranty issue, as the oil/fluid is being lost without an explanation or solution provided by NextGen. M. Cooney indicated she received a phone call from a turbine owner in Williams. He also purchased his turbine from NextGen and has had nothing but trouble. He asked if his attorney could speak to our attorney. City Attorney J. Hane's phone number was provided to him. A group of individuals have decided to take on washing walls in the school, in an attempt to provide mold abatement. They did not speak to the council or any of the council members prior to doing so, but the council's general response was positive. Federal EDA hasn't responded in writing to the city's (J. Hane reviewed) e-mail correspondence about the status of the project and how to proceed. However, during two phone calls, Mohammed Saeed has indicated that all options for success should be explored; that all money should be collected from the original grant; and that closing down the project will result in having to repay the grant money. M. Cooney was directed to continue movement towards the resolution of this issue. Insurance agent D. Sjostrand has been working with M. Cooney on identifying ways to reduce the school's large insurance premium. He suggested we remove property insurance on the building and the turbine and go with liability insurance only. The projected savings would be around \$4,000/year. M. Cooney will review the insurance requirements with the state and Ottetail with regards to the turbine and report back to the council. The council directed Cooney to continue with public notification on the subject of the Go-Green project, via the Kennedy Klips included in the water bills, and, also to proceed with preparation for the vote at the end of the month, as has been planned. Cooney will review the vote process with City Attorney J. Hane and County Auditor Gustafson along the way. **M. Ryden made a motion to accept the School Committee Report as presented. D. Peterson seconded. Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Mitziga continues to put out poison and to address the rodents and pest issue around the city. Action has been taken, with respect to City Attorney Hane's "Protocol for Abatement of Hazardous Buildings for the City of Kennedy." Per item #3, G. Mitziga has developed a list of building to be considered for condemnation, as defined in M.S.A. § 463.15, Subd. 3. M. Cooney was directed to proceed with step 2, identifying four inspectors to participate in the inspections, establish a date for the inspections and develop an inspection checklist. Mosquito spraying was discussed and K. Hanson and P. Larson will spray, should it be required again.

NEW BUSINESS: The city now has over \$3,000 in delinquent water bills, of which half is long-term and appears to be collectable only through legal means. The other half is delinquent active customers, of which none are senior citizens on fixed incomes. As the city must pay for all water used on a monthly basis, and given the city's current adverse financial situation, continuing the current water bill payment policy doesn't seem fiscally sound for the city. **M. Ryden made a motion to change the water bill payment grace period from 60 days to 15 days. K. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.** All delinquent water bills must be paid in-full by September 30, and then moving forward, the new water bill payment policy will take effect. The public will be notified of the changed water bill payment policy in the August Kennedy Klips, therefore giving over thirty days to make arrangements elsewhere for financing, should that be necessary. The notice for accepting sealed bids on the 1997 Fold Pickup was reviewed and Cooney was directed to place ad in the Kittson County Enterprise.

PAY BILLS: **K. Hanson made motion to pay the bills as presented. D. Peterson seconded. Motion carried.**

SEPTEMBER MEETING DATE: The September meeting will be held on Monday, 9/12/2011, at 7 PM in the City Office.

There being no further business brought forward for the council's attention, **the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM by motion of M. Ryden, seconded by D. Peterson. Motion carried.**

Signed September 12, 2011
Mary Cooney, Clerk (Attest)

Signed September 12, 2011
Todd Truedson, Mayor