

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NELIGH, NEBRASKA
January 14, 2025

The regular meeting of City Council of the City of Neligh was held at the City Council Chambers on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. Present were Council Members Stephanie Lundgren, Ted Hughes, and Tyler Pedersen. Absent were Mayor Joe Hartz and Council Member Leonard Miller. Also in attendance were City Attorney James McNally, Economic Development Director Lauren Sheridan-Simonsen, City Supt. Dan Donaldson, Police Chief Logan Lawson, City Clerk Danielle Klabenes, News Reporter Carrie Pitzer, and Lucy Donaldson. Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Antelope County News on January 8, 2025. Notice of this meeting was given to the Mayor and all members of the Council and a copy of their acknowledgment of receipt of notice and the agenda is attached to the minutes. The availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Council of this meeting. All proceedings thereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public. Council President Hughes presided over the meeting and noted that a copy of the Open Meetings Law, located on the east wall of the City Council Chambers was available to the public. City Clerk Klabenes recorded the minutes. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council member Lundgren moved to approve the December 10th regular minutes as presented. Seconded by Pedersen. *Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Hughes, and Lundgren.* Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

TREASURER REPORT

Clerk Klabenes reported the December Treasurer's report showed water revenues included the bond anticipation notes of \$500,000 received in December. She reported the Park Foundation expenses included concrete for the mini park in Russell Park which was reimbursed by the swinging bridge funds. She reported monthly emails from the Nebraska Department of Revenue stating eight towns in Nebraska had started a new or increased city sales tax indicating cities are looking for ways to increase local revenue to provide services without property tax. *Pedersen moved to approve the December treasurer's report as presented.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Pedersen, and Hughes. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Hughes reported on the new statute providing for public comments. City Clerk Klabenes explained that if comments were not about an agenda item, the City Council could not take any action on it and would have to have the matter added to the agenda at a future meeting. No public comments were heard, and no action was taken.

PARKING ON THE CITY RIGHT OF WAY

City Supt. Donaldson reported he had received two complaints on parking in the side yard of the property owner's property, and the neighbor filing the complaint declined to attend the meeting. He reported on four pictures with vehicles parked on the side or front yard of the property between the house and sidewalk. He reported the city ordinances did not contain regulations for parking in the front yard between the home and sidewalk instead of the city right of way. Lucy Donaldson reported one neighbor had used a vehicle to remove plants and landscaping in the yard before parking between the home and sidewalk. Discussion was held that parking was allowed in the city right of way where rock or concrete driveways were made, but the expense of accessing utilities in the right of way was at the owner's expense if the driveway would need to be opened. Discussion was held that unless parking can be connected to a nuisance that the issue could not be put into an ordinance. Discussion was held for talking to the property owners and waiting for the full council to be present

before implementing a change. No action was taken, and the matter was tabled.

TOWER LEASE AND TIER SCHEDULE OF FEES

Clerk Klabenos reported on the tier fee schedule for tower leases was set in 2015 and with a current renewal may want to review the fees set. She reported tier one was set to match the current fee of an existing telecommunication lease with tier two and tier three increased by 10%. Discussion was held for consideration of a three-year or five-year term and consideration of an increasing fee each year of the three or five-year term. It was the consensus to bring each lease renewal into a three-year term when the renewal came into effect. *Pedersen moved to set the tower lease schedule of fees at Tier 1 to \$600 per month, Tier 2 to \$220 per month and Tier 3 to \$550 per month, and Tier 4 at \$1.00 per year with leases to be renewed on a three-year term and revisit the schedule of fees in three years.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Pedersen, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

NEXTLINK RENEWAL AGREEMENT

Following the approval of tower lease fees and a 3-year term, a discussion was held about revising the NextLink tower lease renewal to include the new fee of \$600 per month and changing the agreement dates to a three-year term to run from January 14, 2025, thru February 2028. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the renewal of the NextLink agreement with terms of \$600 per month from January 14, 2025, through February 29, 2028.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Hughes, and Pedersen. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried. Motion carried.

AMH AMBULANCE RENEWAL AGREEMENT

Clerk Klabenos reported Supt. Donaldson had visited Diane Brugger of AMH for the renewal of the ambulance agreement. She reported Donaldson and Brugger proposed a 3-year agreement with a 3% increase each year of the agreement as consideration for cost-of-living increases. *City Council member Lundgren moved to approve the renewal of the AMH Ambulance agreement at \$618 per month from March 1, 2025, to March 1, 2026, with a 3% increase each year on March 1 through the agreement date of February 28, 2028.* Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Lundgren, and Hughes. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried. Motion carried.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS REPORT

Economic Development Director Lauren Sheridan-Simonsen reported the new Welcome to Neligh signs were installed earlier that day. She reported the Bike Walk Nebraska had paid the tuition for her to attend a conference at the Trail Tourism & Placemaking as part of the Cowboy Trail Coalition celebrating the 30th Anniversary. She reported the 6-plex apartment had installed new windows and the interior was undergoing remodeling. She reported that the City Supt. and ED Director had met with a developer who was interested in building new homes and infilling existing lots. She reported Five Rule Rural Planning would present the Redevelopment plan in March. She reported two new Chamber of Commerce members were Grammy's Kitchen and Overland Rehab. The ED Director also recognized and thanked the approximately twenty volunteers serving on four boards for Neligh Economic Development. *Council member Pedersen moved to approve the Economic Development Director report as presented.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Pedersen, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

The Director reported on an interim contract with the Chamber of Commerce to cover the ED Director's salary until an assistant director is hired when a new contract is presented based on the wage of the assistant director. The temporary contract included \$25 per hour payable quarterly and if hours exceeded six hundred hours, an additional \$25 per hour. *Lundgren moved to approve the interim contract with the Chamber of Commerce at \$25 per hour.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Pedersen, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

The Director reported the LB840 Loan Committee recommendation of a \$24,000 loan for a 15-year term at 3.75% fixed interest for Beloved Boutique. She reported the city would take a second lien position to the Center

for Rural Affairs for a total project cost of \$60,000. She reported the current online and pop-up retail store was transitioning to the brick-and-mortar location formerly occupied by Rural Route One Boutique and will feature a Christian boutique in apparel, accessories, hand-made rosaries, and gifts. She also reported the ED Board recommendation for a digital façade grant of \$1,000 for a new point of sale system and an exterior façade grant of \$1,000 for new business signage and an Attraction Startup and Transitioning electric incentive. *Pedersen moved to approve the LB840 loan recommendation to Beloved Boutique of \$24,000 loan with a 15-year term at 3.75% interest, and approved the ED Board recommendation for a digital façade \$1,000 grant for a new point of sale system, an exterior façade \$1,000 grant for new signage, and an electric utility discount of 10% the first year and 5% the second year.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Hughes, and Pedersen. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

POLICE REPORT

Chief of Police Logan Lawson reported a quieter December month but still resulted in some significant calls for a protection order violation leading to an arrest, a traffic stop leading to a drug possession, a domestic assault arrest and assisting the Antelope County Sheriff's Office investigation for a missing person. He reported that as holiday travelers and colder weather increase, the roadside assistance and welfare checks increased as well. He reported training on a night shoot partnered with the Atkinson Police Department and the Antelope County Sheriff's Office and the 2024 education requirements and firearms qualifications were all successfully completed. *Lundgren moved to approve the December numeric and written police reports as presented.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Pedersen, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

CITY SUPT. REPORT

City Supt. Donaldson reported the Street Dept. had already treated and pre-treated streets with a couple of snowfalls already. He reported one employee would be out for a period for back surgery. He reported Rutjens Construction was setting up the lift station at the east end of town while pumping about sixty feet of water out to set the standards and drill three wells. He reported the crew was halfway done at the time of the meeting and was planning to pour concrete and set barriers yet that week. He reported the Parks dept. had assembled the second pavilion in the city shop for the mini park in Russell Park. He reported the Park Board recommended new fees for the camping, Riverside Pavilion and Penn Park Scout cabin and a new schedule would be presented at next month's meeting. He reported the sewer plant was running smoothly, and Boyd's Electric was repairing the VFD that was rebuilt. He reported the sewer plant had processed over thirty-nine million gallons of water, and the wells had pumped over seventy-five million gallons of water for 2024. He reported the permit from the state to allow the north well liner to be installed had arrived and Sargent Irrigation could now proceed with the project before the increased need to pump water arose. He reported with holidays, vacations, and sick days of employees, that it took the whole city team to cover the solid waste duties. He reported that while he was very busy at the compactor, the free wrapping paper disposal on December 26th was a big help in not contaminating the cardboard. He was awaiting notice on a trailer of cardboard following the load inspection. On the Electric side, he reported the generation plan was running short runs every day and the team was receiving good communication on notices again. He reported the new meter readers were still having issues in getting up and running and Neligh was the first town going through the new readers as a pilot installation. *Lundgren moved to approve the City Supt. report as presented.* Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Hughes, and Lundgren. Opposed: None. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

The Supt. reported the Park Board recommended advertising for seasonal employees after February 1st. *Pedersen moved to approve the Park Board recommendation to advertise for park and pool employees after February 1st.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Lundgren, and Pedersen. Opposed: None. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

NEW MOON THEATER REPORT

Theater Liaison Lundgren reported the theater had received a grant for operating funds of \$25,000 from

the Sherwood Foundation and the grant writer was working on the Brownfields grant. She reported Phase 3 would open in January and the grant writer was working on part of Phase 3. She reported the 125-page report from TetraTech through the Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy detailed the work needing to be done for mold remediation and asbestos. She reported the Brownfields grant would take care of the demolition and served as a 100% matching grant for other grants. She reported a spring grant application through Sherwood would also become available. She reported the architect's first drawing did not include a stage and other revisions included ADA changes to the steepness of the hallways in the theater as well as an area for ADA in the back of the theater. She reported the theater members had visited colleges for feedback on stage dimensions and performances. *Pedersen moved to approve the New Moon Theater report as presented.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Lundgren, and Pedersen. Opposed: None. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Lundgren moved to approve Pay Application #3 to Rutjens Construction for \$182,375.32 for water projects #1 and #2C. Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Hughes, and Lundgren. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

Lundgren moved to approve the current claims as presented, except the Blackstrap invoices. Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Hughes, Lundgren, and Pedersen. Opposed: None. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

Lundgren moved to approve the Blackstrap invoices totaling \$1,375.75 for weigh tickets and de-icer. Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen and Lundgren. Abstain: Hughes. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

CUSTODIAN HIRE

Lundgren moved to approve the hire of Jennifer Donaldson for Custodian of City Hall, ED office and the Library at \$20 per hour following pre-employment testing. Seconded by Pedersen. Roll call votes in favor were Lundgren, Hughes, and Pedersen. Opposed: none. Absent: Miller. Motion carried.

There being no further business to conduct, *Pedersen moved to adjourn.* Seconded by Lundgren. Roll call votes in favor were Pedersen, Hughes, and Lundgren. Opposed: None. Absent: Miller. Thereupon Council President Hughes declared the meeting adjourned. Time 8:22 P.M.

City of Neligh

Ted Hughes, Council President

ATTEST

Danielle Klabenes, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, City Clerk of the City of Neligh, Nebraska, hereby certify that on January 14, 2025; that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such agenda items were sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior

to said meeting; that at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available for public inspection at least twenty-four hours before the meeting; that the said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body; that all news media requesting notification concerning meetings of said body were provided advance notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting; and that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available and accessible to members of the public, posted during such meeting in the room in which such meeting was held.

(SEAL)

City Clerk