

Meeting Minutes of the Plankinton City Council

Equalization Meeting

The Plankinton City Council met in a special meeting on March 17th, 2025 as a Board of Equalization.

Members present included Mayor Carl and Council Members Magdalena Popek-Hurst, Jim Nielsen, Terry Schuldt, and DeEtte Bohr and representing the Plankinton Board of Education was Rodney Faulhaber.

Interim Finance Officer Cindy Geiman and Electrical Superintendent Chance Boyd were among the city employees present.

The visitor was Gayle Van Genderen.

Mayor Bode called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Nielsen would like to add wells after Electrical Rates. Superintendent Chance Boyd wondered if the council would entertain moving shutoffs up under wells.

Schuldt motioned to approve the amended agenda, and Popek-Hurst seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion was carried.

EQUALIZATION MEETING- AS REQUIRED BY SDCL 10-11-13.

As of 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 13th, 2025 no one has shown up to fill out the equalization dispute form or appeared at the March 17th meeting.

Rodney Faulhaber directed the council to move on with the meeting. If someone shows up, we can address them at that time.

Rodney Faulhaber left the meeting at 7:09 p.m. with no action taken as an Equalization Board.

BILLS TO PAY

Nielsen made a motion to approve the bills to pay, and Popek-Hurst seconded it. All voted aye, and the motion carried.

A&B BUSINESS – EQUIPMENT LEASING- \$306.34; A&B BUSINESS IT- IT CONTRACT- \$495.96; AFLAC- VOL. INSURANCE- \$181.55; A-OX WELDING- SERVICE CHARGE FROM JAN- \$12.50; AURORA REG OF DEEDS- CEMETERY PLOTS- \$90.00; BARRY GEIMAN- LUNCH REIMBURSEMENT- \$10.83; BELL BANK- SKID LOADER PAYMENT- \$867.73; BORDER STATES- ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES- \$510.35; CENTRAL ELECTRIC- WHEELING FEES AND RAMP LIGHTING- \$ 2979.71; CORE & MAIN- ANNUAL CONTRACT- \$1931.25; DAKOTA SUPPLY GROUP-ISLAND POWER OUTLET/CURB BOX- \$395.62; DEMCO- LIBRARY SUPPLIES- \$347.23; DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY- POWER PURCHASE- \$22507.58;

EAST RIVER ELECTRIC- \$9575.28; FARMERS AND MERCHANTS- PAYROLL FEE #6-\$7.45; GOLDEN WEST-UTILITIES-\$497.32; GUARDIAN- LIFE INSURANCE-\$757.87; HEARLAND COMSUMERS- POWER PURCHASE- \$72856.38; L&L SANITATION- GARBAGE SERVICES- \$60.00; MC & R POOLS- POOL SCHOOL- BARRY-\$375.00; MCLEODS- ELECTION SUPPLIES- \$132.34; MITCHELL IRON AND SUPPLIES- SERVICE CHARGE FROM JANUARY-\$10.52; OVERWEG AUTO- COOLANT TANK & OIL FILTER- \$160.67; PIONEER DESIGNS- DECALS- \$559.70; PLANKINTON AMBULANCE- DONATION- \$5000.00; ROADSIDE- FUEL- \$465.82; RON'S MARKET- WATER- \$5.29; SCHOENFISH- ELECTRICAL ANALYLIS- \$200.00; SD DEPARTEMENT OF TRANSPORTATION- FUEL PURCHASE- \$976.36; ELECTRICAL COMMISSION- FIRE DEPARTMENT PERMIT- \$320.00; SD 811- MESSAGE FEES- \$ 3.15; STEVE'S WELDING- ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES- \$325.50; TITAN MACHINERY- PARTS-\$96.90; TREVOR BOYD- METER DEPOSIT RETURN- \$92.75; VERIZON WIRELESS- TOWER/SURFACE/HS-\$127.18; VESTIS- RUG CONTRACT- \$37.41.

APPROVAL MINUTES

Nielsen moved to approve the minutes of the March 3rd, 2025 meeting. Popek-Hurst seconded the motion. All voted aye, and the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

OLD BUSINESS

ELECTRICAL RATES

Electrical Superintendent Chance Boyd presented a resolution to raise the electrical rates to the council and provided a spreadsheet illustrating the differences in the rate schedule.

Superintendent Boyd stated. "We will have approximately \$26,400 in extra power purchase cost for 2025 from WAPA and East River.

Currently, we will have approximately \$12,901.16 in extra power purchase costs for 2026 from WAPA.

The total WAPA increase is \$27,308.58 for '25/26, and an estimated increase of \$12,000 from East River this year will be calculated at \$39,308.58 over 2 years. We won't know about an increase next year from East River until around October. Heartland is usually in the summer, and Central Electric is around fall when they let us know whether there will be an increase. We have not received an increase from either one of them since I have been here, but that does not mean there won't be."

A 4% increase in April would be approximately \$30,297.26 with a contingency of \$3,897.26 for the rest of the year.

A 5% increase in April would be approximately \$37,871.58 with a contingency of \$11,471.58 for the rest of the year.

A 4% increase in May would be approximately—\$ 27,131.30 with a contingency of \$731.30.

A 5% increase in May would be approx. \$32,714.44 with a contingency of \$6314.44.”

Gayle Van Genderen said that once signed, the resolution won't go into effect until 20 days after the publish date.

“Blair Metzger of DG&R Engineering, who is performing the rate study, suggested a 7% increase in July to cover our received increases. The sooner this is done, the lower the increase would need to be this year. Supt. Chance talked to him quite a bit before he left for vacation, and he said if we can get a 5% in sooner than later, the better off we will be.”

Increased rates were discussed, and the council decided to revisit it at the April 7th meeting.

WELLS

Nielsen wants to know if the city maintenance department has had a chance to check out the well by the city shop? Due to charter rules, the VFW cannot buy a pump. Nielsen stated, “We need to have at least one well tested.” He would like to have it done by the next meeting, which is on April 7th, and have a VFW member, an independent person, a fire department representative, and a council member present to observe the output. Superintendent Boyd told the council that it is a three-phase well, and we only have a single-phase service, not even to the building. We have a 3-phase generator, but it is the wrong voltage. He would not know what it would do to the well using the incorrect voltage.

The VFW is concerned that not having a backup water supply will affect the jailhouse pond, and if it is not high enough, the Game Fish and Parks will not stock it with fish. On the fire department side, they can fill their trucks instead of using potable water to fill the trucks.

With the recommendation of Mayor Bode is to find someone knowledgeable regarding wells to give us advice on what we should do.

ELECTRICAL SHUTOFFS

Councilperson Bohr discussed revising some of the ordinances regarding collecting utility bills and fees associated with disconnection and reconnection.

On section §50.15 DELINQUENT UTILITY BILLS. She recommends taking out Part B of that ordinance (Commercial Accounts) and changing Part A (Residential Accounts) with the new language of if a "customer" fails to pay.

She also wants to add that if full payment is not received by 9:00 AM on the seventh day of the following month, service shall be disconnected. She wants to go into detail briefly by saying that if the seventh day falls on a Friday, holiday, or weekend, it will be the next regular business day.

§50.16 FEES REGARDING DISCONNECTION AND RECONNECTION

It was proposed by council person Popek-Hurst that the disconnect and reconnect fee be changed to \$25.00 disconnect and 25.00 reconnect instead of \$20.00 each.

It was discussed that the after-hours fee should be set to \$100.00 instead of \$50.00. At 3:00 PM is the cut-off time.

§53.35 NON-PAYMENT OF BILLINGS

Councilperson Bohr asked about this ordinance and wanted to know if the council wants to include “current billing” and if other charges have been paid for before the utilities are turned back on? Again, the \$20.00 charge was changed to \$25.00.

The next item is the Delinquent notice Cindy prints on the 21st. “To restore service after a disconnection for nonpayment, all past due charges, current charges, along with any fees and a deposit (if not already on the account) must be paid in full.” Councilperson Bohr will look deeper into the deposit part of that statement.

“Services requiring restoration after “3:00 pm” (instead of 4:00 pm) on holidays and weekends will require an additional \$100.00 after-business hours reconnection fee.”

FINANCE OFFICER

ADVERTISEMENT

We had two applications turned in. Popek-Hurst made a motion to put the advertisement in the statewide ad for \$150.00 for 25 words per week for two weeks. Bohr seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion passed.

TOWING CONTRACT

Keith Overweg of Overweg Auto Glass & Fuel, LLC returned the towing services contract for vehicles in violation of City ordinance, indicating \$110.00 for vehicle towing and \$70.00 per day storage. Discussing the wording of the contract and the word “motor” vehicles ensued. The Interim Finance Officer was directed to contact City Atty. Taylor to see if the ordinance could be amended to include campers and boats.

CITY CLEAN-UP DAY

Popek-Hurst reports that she has not received any call regarding the senior pick-up day. However, she will start handing out flyers tomorrow and hopes to get calls. Nielsen brought up using the City’s loader for heavier items since the VFW will not have as many pickups as they thought they would have. Cindy was directed to find out about the city’s liability insurance to see if the council is covered.

LIFEGUARDS, TICKET TAKERS, HANDYPERSON

It was noted that the handyman’s wage was increased last year from \$12.50 to \$14.50. Popek-Hurst motioned to increase the handyman's wage from \$14.50 to \$15.00, seconded by Bohr. All voted aye, and the motion passed. Gayle will include an ad for the handyman in the SD Mail this week.

Popek-Hurst has interviews set up for March 20th for two ticket takers and one new lifeguard. By the end of April, she hopes to have seven lifeguards and two ticket-takers at best.

URBAN FORESTRY GRANT

Jody Hauge, Aurora County Conservation District Office Manager, emailed that the trees must be purchased by Thursday to get them here in time. Popek-Hurst motioned to get the 15 trees for under \$1000 for May planting. Seconded by Schuldt. All voted, Aye. Motion carried. Popek-Hurst is still deciding on a date for the May planting, either May 2 or May 9th. Since the state grant is still frozen, Popek-Hurst is looking for ideas on how to raise money to cover the expenses. One idea brought to her attention is to encourage people to donate to dedicate a tree, along with a map in the office to show where the tree is located.

NUISANCE PROPERTIES

The council was notified that another nuisance property needs attention. This property contains three campers, none of which the council believes are licensed. Cindy was tasked with contacting Atty. Taylor and preparing the letter so the individual could respond by April 7, 2025. This allows the individual to attend the council meeting to present their case or have the campers removed by that date.

NEW BUSINESS

APPOINT ELECTION BOARD

Municipal Election Board officials will be Joan Swanson, Precinct Supt., Cathy Albrecht and Bonnie Johnson, Precinct Deputies. The issue they need to address is payment for the services provided. In the past, they received \$10.00 to \$12.00 per hour, but recently, they have raised it to \$150.00 for the whole day. The Interim Finance Officer mentioned that there is money set aside in the budget for elections, and that is where the funding would come from. Nielsen motioned to hire the superintendent of elections and her deputies at \$150.00 a day. Popek-Hurst seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion carried.

CONTRACT LAW BUDGET AMENDMENT

States Atty. Rachel Mairose has corrected the contract of law to reflect what the City agreed to with the county commissioners last year. We agreed to Plankinton having 781 people at \$100 per person. The contract should have stated \$78,100. So, if you do the math, it should have been \$39,050 every six months. However, we budgeted \$38,050. Popek-Hurst made a motion to approve the addendum. Nielsen seconded the motion. All voted aye, and the motion passed.

TIME REPORT IN GWORKS INSTEAD OF PAPER

We have been trying to use Gworks for recording time instead of paper. However, Supt. Darin made a valid point that we should continue using paper because, in an emergency where FEMA might be involved, we must document time almost to the minute. Without the paper time sheets, we could have lost a significant amount of money due to the flood. Gworks lacks a proper section for entering

daily activities. The council agreed to continue the paperwork and clocking in and out using the Gworks program.

PLANKINTON AMBULANCE

Nielsen motioned to approve the city's donation to the Plankinton Ambulance for \$5,000.00. Schuldt seconded the motion. All voted, Aye. Motion carried.

Bohr covered in the Finance office for a half a day and said it was nice to be back in the building.

Popek-Hurst would like to get H&W Contracting and SPN Engineering back so that they can clearly explain what's next in the sewer replacement project and which roads will be done.

Nielsen likes the progress of everything; it is slow, but it is still progress. Give a shout-out to the Vietnam Vets on March 29th, 2025.

Schuldt likes the nuisance properties taken care of. We are not just kicking the can around anymore.

Mayor Bode Adjourned the Meeting at 8:50 p.m.