

**NOTUS CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
Regular Session: **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2020**

**1. Meeting Called to Order**

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm by Mayor, David Porterfield.

**2. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken with the following results: Council President, Bonnie Emly, Councilmen Nathan Wells and Steven Ahlborn, all present. Mayor, David Porterfield, City Clerk, Loretta Vollmer and City Attorney, Todd Lakey also present.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Public Concerns, Comments**

Randal Taylor of 348 Elgin signed in to speak about possible rate increases. He is against any increases due to the current issues concerning COVID and People not having the money. Also, the City just spent money on a property purchase, people are not going to understand why the rates are going up.

**5. Consent Agenda, ACTION ITEMS**

**5.1 Disbursement List**

Wells motioned to pay the disbursement list as presented for 9-8-20. Emly seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Wells; yes, Emly; yes, Ahlborn; yes. Motion carried.

**5.2 Council Meeting Minutes**

Emly motioned to approve the Council meeting minutes of 8-17-20 and the Comp plan workshop minutes of 8-24-20. Wells seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Emly; yes, Wells; yes, Ahlborn; yes. Motion carried.

**5.3 Committee Meeting Minutes: Library**

Ahlborn motioned to accept the Library Board meeting minutes of June 10, 2020 into record. Wells seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Ahlborn; yes, Wells; yes, Emly; yes. Motion carried.

**6. Business Items**

**6.1 Secondary Engineering Contract with Ackerman/Estvold Approval, ACTION ITEM**

City Attorney, Todd Lakey stated in section 14, the term date year needed to be changed from September 30, 2020 to 2021. Wells motioned to approve the contract with Ackerman/Estvold with the date change. Ahlborn seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Wells; yes, Ahlborn; yes, Emly; yes. Motion carried.

**6.2 20618 Hwy 20/26 Resident Request -Relief of water meter reinstallation fee, ACTION ITEM**

**\*\*Mayor stated that since the resident is not yet present, this will be held until he arrives\*\***

**\*\*returned after item 6.4\*\***

Mayor stated that the resident, Thomas Miller's water meter has been re-installed. He is asking for a reduction in the meter reinstallation fee of \$2,000.

City Clerk, Loretta Vollmer gave Council a timeline background of the property so they could make an informed decision. A water connection was made in December of 1995 and a sewer connection in Feb of 1996. In 2000 owner requested the meter be pulled. After that he was no longer billed for water or sewer, although he continued using the sewer. Not sure why. The current fee schedule indicates it is \$2,000 for meter re-install if after 6 months or longer. Wells commented that the resident is not in the City but is seeking annexation. Also, that the re-install clause was enacted before, Council was pretty lenient with the fees charged. Since he is his neighbor, he will abstain from voting on this item. The resident, Thomas Miller stated he is seeking annexation and is currently

using and paying for city services. Emly commented on a past meeting where the council set the fee to \$400 for a similar situation. Ahlborn motioned to reinstall meter for \$400.00. Emly seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Ahlborn; yes, Emly; yes, Wells; abstain. Motion carried.

### **6.3 City Auditor, Zwygart John, & Associates Contract approval, ACTION ITEM**

Wells motioned to approve the City Auditor contract for \$6,600. Emly seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Wells; yes, Emly; yes, Ahlborn; yes. Motion carried.

### **6.4 Utility Rate Increases. ACTION ITEM**

Mayor stated that during budget time an increase was discussed of 3% increase in water base rate (to \$31.67) and 4.1% for sewer base rate (to \$50.60) USDA requires our sewer base rate to be at \$54.35 by May 2021. Water and sewer charges fund the system maintenance and repairs. Wells commented that just because of inflation we need to be able to pay the bills and when costs increase, we must pass that on. Ahlborn asked about increased costs. Mayor stated repairs to the elevated tower tank have started at a cost of \$14,000. The safety improvements are estimated around \$10,000. It still needs cleaning, inside repairs and painted. We need to install new variable frequency drive booster pumps that will be very expensive. The 20-year-old pumps require more maintenance. Water treatment costs continue to rise along with required lab testing fees. We just fixed two water system leaks, each about \$5,000. Discussion.

Mayor stated to be fair to the community, we could hold an informal public comment period and make the final decision at the Oct 5 Council meeting. Ahlborn motioned to raise the water rate by 3% and sewer rate by 4.1%, preliminary approval contingent on the informal public comment until the Oct 5<sup>th</sup> meeting when the final decision will be reached. Wells seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Ahlborn; yes, Wells; yes, Emly; yes. Motion carried.

***\*\*return to 6.2 item, resident has arrived\*\****

### **6.5 Approval of Notus School District Utility Rate Agreement, ACTION ITEM**

Wells motioned to give preliminary approval on the proposed rate increases with final action being taken at the Oct 5<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Emly seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Wells; yes, Emly; yes, Ahlborn; yes. Motion carried.

### **6.6 Use and Development of 394 1<sup>st</sup> St., Discussion**

Mayor commented that clean up of the lot is taking place. Wells commented that we need to show slow improvements, taking our time to decide what to do with it. Ahlborn commented that we need to level the area and rock it to be able to use for parking or events. If we can utilize the buildings for different uses, great. Mayor stated that church volunteers have offered their help. He also stated that the smaller building is in bad shape and may be a hazard. Council agrees that it may have to be torn down.

### **6.7 Denver Ave Dust Abatement, ACTION ITEM**

Resident complaints about dust on Denver have increased. A bid estimate from the only dust abatement professionals in the area is \$1,073.20 for a calcium chloride treatment or \$858.60 for an earth bind stabilizer. The stabilizer has the ability to build up after subsequent applications and can reduce the need of frequency. Ahlborn motioned approve the dust abatement of 600 to 700 ft, at the discretion of the City, to help the residents affected by the dust. Wells seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Ahlborn; yes, Wells; yes, Emly; yes. Motion carried.

### **6.8 Cost of Living Employee Wage Increase, ACTION ITEM**

Wells motioned to approve a 1.5% cost of living raise for all employees. Emly seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Wells; yes, Emly; yes, Ahlborn; yes. Motion carried.

### **6.9 Notus Road Rebuild Project Discussion and ACTION ITEM**

Mayor reported that we have the preliminary study done for Notus Road, 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. They all have drainage problems. We can apply for up to 2 million in grants for funding. The estimated construction costs for Notus Road from the highway to the fire station is 2.5 million. The improvements would include storm drains, resurface the roadway, sidewalks with curb and gutter on the east side of the street. Mayor would like to seek the public input between November and January. Resident, Randal Taylor commented that the 1<sup>st</sup> block of 1<sup>st</sup> street

where the post office is, is the most visited area of town that people see. That area would be a good area to show improvement on. Mayor will continue seeking funding options for these improvements.

**6.10 Rise Broad Band/Sky Beam Contract Update**

Mayor commented that he had told them to respond by September 13 to the contract changes of the monthly fee to \$329.00 per month. If they do not respond, then he will send them another letter on Oct 1<sup>st</sup> asking for the \$329.00 monthly fee.

**7. Mayor & Council Comment**

Mayor responded to council question that rise broadband has 14 pieces of equipment on the tower.

**8. Adjournment**

Ahlborn motioned to adjourn at 9:45 pm. Wells seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted by Loretta Vollmer \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by David Porterfield, Mayor \_\_\_\_\_