# City Commission Finance Meeting

# Valley City, North Dakota

## Tuesday, November 7, 2023

3:30 PM

**Called to Order**

President Carlsrud called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

**Roll Call**

Members present: President Carlsrud, Commissioner Magnuson, Commissioner Erickson, Commissioner Gulmon.

Other present: City Attorney Martineck, City Administrator Crawford, Finance Director Klein, Administrative Assistant Hintz

Absent: Commissioner Bishop

**Department Reports**

**Sanitation Department**

Sanitation Supervisor Swart stated that we are still having a few issues with the containers. Remember that the handles should face your house. All garbage must be in closed bags in the container and all garbage must fit into your container. The City will not pick up excess garbage. Please also remember that you need 3 feet around each container for the truck to be able to collect the garbage. Residents and Businesses please tie your bags shut to keep the garbage contained. Finally, dump your leaves and clippings out of the bags at the Grass site. Discussion on how garbage pickup will work this winter with snow fall and weather. Containers should be placed in the same locations as they currently are, but not in a snowbank. If snow needs to be plowed in your area, your pickup may be suspended that day and will be picked up on Friday. This is a work in progress this first year.

**Water Department**

Water Superintendent Hesch let us know that water usage is down. A water sample was taken to The Grand Forks Pollution Control Conference and Valley City placed in the top 3 in the state for Best Tasting Water in North Dakota.

**Electric Department**

Electrical Superintendent Senf shared that there were 6 outages since the last month. 5 were squirrels and 1 an underground trouble near Woodland that was replaced. The 3 Phase is ready to go at Valley Plains Implement, we are ahead of that project. Inventory, Christmas Decorations, and continued work on the purple lights are on the project list. Superintendent Senf also shared that they are currently applying for 3 grants to cover the cost of a few projects. One grant is for the replacement of the 69-transmission line from Valley City to the WAPA Sub which is roughly 1.8 miles. This opportunity will replace the old poles and insulators at possibly 100% of the costs covered. The next project would be to replace all the Sodium lights to LED, he estimates that there are about 250 lights left to switch over, this grant will possibly cover at 100%. The final project would be to convert all of Valley City to underground which would be a lengthy time frame so they would propose doing only 2 circuits this year, the grant would possibly pay for 100% of the costs.

**Fire Department**

Fire Chief Magnuson reported there were 17 calls last month. The “Calls for Service” numbers are up from last year. The Fireman’s Dance will be held on November 24th at the Eagles. The band Karma will be playing and all are invited. This will be a freewill donation, no tickets this year. Assistant Fire Chief Lance Coit attended the FEMA training this past week in Baltimore. Very Educational, passed with a 100% and all it cost the City was his meals and parking. Chief Magnuson also gave an update on the ‘Dangerous Buildings” in town. There are 4 projects in play right now. Attorney Martineck is working on the legal aspects. Discussion was had on the process and again it was stated that this is a very long process.

**Police Department**

Police Chief Horner discussed the 3 openings at the Police Department. They have had 5 applicants with one of the applicants completing the back-ground check. The interviews for the remaining should happen later this week. There were a few scheduling conflicts. The Department is looking into updating some electronics and equipment needed that was not in the 2024 budget, they are looking for different revenues or grants as Chief Horner feels this could be an Officer safety issue. The Guys have been working hard. Discussion regarding the number and type of Applicants, as well as the training needed to become an Officer took place. Administrator Crawford thanked Chief Horner for all the extra time he has been putting into the job since taking over.

**Street Department**

Operations Supervisor Klemisch reported that Ben Lokken recently went to Bismarck and passed the Water Treatment to Level 3 Certificate. This is a 5-hour test. Currently Wade Hesch & Sherry Keys are Level 4 and Ben will continue to train & test and the goal would be to gradually integrate him into working at the Water Plant. This is a big deal for Valley City. Currently discharging the lagoon for the winter. The street sweeper was winterized but is now back in service trying to get some of the leaves cleaned up. The Ash Trees that were marked have been taken care of and 2 houses were torn down. Inventory will start next week as well as some winter work. There will be a couple people working in the department over Veteran’s Day to keep things going.

**Administration**

City Administrator Crawford talked about the Resolution for Public Sales. An opportunity came up and items will be sold at a sale that was already set up. The items will be listed, with the larger items having reserves set. There will be a 7% charge from the Auctioneer for sold items. The Auction will take place over a two-week period. This will be an online auction but people will have the ability to go and see the items in person as well. For the larger items, if a reserve was set, we will need to pay the 7% to the Auction Service if an item is not sold. By going with Integrity Auction Service, they will handle all the pictures, descriptions and marketing for the sale. All departments have contributed items to be sold.

Administrator Crawford also brought up discussion on a Charging Station that was installed at Stoudt/Miller. The location was put in the “Line of Sight” for the Department of Transportation Right of Way. This is a new situation and an Ordinance or Resolution will need to be started. This will need to come from the direction of the Commission and we will need to start a permitting or license process. The current station may need to be moved as it is a Zoning Violation. Attorney Martineck will look into this.

Finance Director Klein updated the Commission on the loans for the Tree Removal that was discussed at an earlier meeting. Both the Bank of ND and ND Finance Authority stated that they would not finance a tree removal loan. This is looked at differently than a regular construction project. The USDA does not see anything coming up on this subject either. Administrator Crawford shared her discussions with other Cities on this topic. Finance Director also mentioned that within the bills are final payments for DOT Projects including the 5th Ave NW Project, the East Main Sealcoat Project, and then 6th St NW Reconstruction Project.

**Review monthly bills/reports**

Finance Director Klein reported expenditures in the amount of $2,405,468. for the month.

**New Items**

**RFP for a New Service Center -** CityAdministrator Crawford shared that we are required by Century Code when we build a building this size that we need to have an Architect involved. One step is that we have to have an RFP for architects. The second step is to go with Construction Management At-Risk and hire a firm who works with the architect and with the project and will figure out what it will cost and you are guaranteed that it will not go over that cost. If it comes in under, you do benefit. Commissioner Erickson also explained that the firm would manage the whole project and our team would not need to be there saving the City valuable time and resources. They would take care of the whole project acting as a General Manager which we would need regardless. City Administrator Crawford explained that the City would be required to have a Committee that is already determined by Century Code. This committee would oversee the RFP. If this is the way we want to go, with a CMAR, we can pay someone to do the RFP or set up the Committee but no one on the Committee can be applying to be one of the CMAR. Administrator Crawford & Commissioner Erickson both suggested that we go with the CMAR.

Attorney Martineck let the Commissioners know that the next step would be to do an RFP for an Architect or Engineer. That is required. The CMAR is an alternative to doing your standard bidding process. It is another approach to doing the standard bidding process. Tonight, we would need the Commissioners to approve the RFP for the Architect. The next decision would be whether you approve going with the CMAR process and then appointing a committee. Discussion.

**Update on Viking Trailer Court** – City Administrator Crawford shared an update from David Wick, work has begun and they are making excellent progress.

**Red River Water Supply Project** – President Carlsrud updated on the former McClusky Canal/Garrison Diversion which is now the Red River Water Supply Project. It was built to supply water to the eastern part of the state in a drought situation. Years ago, Valley City nominated for a certain amount of water. We have been part of the study for many years. The time is coming very close to making a decision as to whether we keep our nomination and continue with the annual cost. President Carlsrud will keep us posted as the time gets closer.

**PFP Update** – City Administrator Crawford gave an update on the PFP, now that the CLOMR is complete. An updated map was shared and discussed. The first step is to redesign Phase 4 adding mitigation. With that, they were able to add some mitigation with the Mill Dam and get some of that project paid for. Also, just some updating of the design work and interior flooding concerns. Some of the streets that were set for rehab have now been updated to reconstruction. The re-design of Phase 4 will start now through fall of 2024. The Phase 4 construction will start in the spring of 2025 and continue through 2026.This will be bid in the fall of 2024.

Phase 5 design will start in the Spring of 2024. This will need to go through the State Water Commission for the updated final dollar amount as some of the funds were used for the CLOMR.

Phase 5 construction, which is also phase 6 Design and Construction, was approved through the legislature. this will now need to go through the State Water Commission as well. Currently, discussion is just on projects through 2026 right now. In Phase 5 there are 4 houses left to be bought out. Letters will go out explaining the process and if the owner wants to sell right now, we can look at it.

**Special Assessment Cap for Paving Reconstruction Projects** – Finance Director Klein shared with the Commission that Protest Notices have been mailed for the Reconstruction Project in the NW that will be happening next year. With previous discussions, it was known there was a need to increase that Cap. It was determined to raise that Cap to $150.00 per frontage from the $123.67 previously used. By increasing this, it gets us to just over 25% of the projects being special assessed. The remaining local funds come out of the R&R funds. We wanted to make sure that this increase at least covers the cost of the seal coat to be paid out of R&R Funds. Looking for an OK from the Commissioners to increase the cap to the $150.00 which has not been increased since 2014. This brought up discussion on the Local share as well as the R&R Fee. City Administrator recommends that the Commission approve the increase the cap at $150.00 now and then look into increasing the Cap and R&R in the future. It was decided that a recommendation on the amount to increase the R&R should be brought to the next meeting and a Resolution written. The commissioners agreed to the new $150.00 Cap.

**Digital Signage Update** – Commissioner Magnuson gave an update on the Digital Signage with the requests made at the 10/3/2023 Commission Meeting. The digital sign was removed from the quote and the titles: City Hall and Public Works were added to the bottom of the signs. This brought the costs down considerably and all seemed in favor of the new design. Permitting for the sign will be taken care of by the City. It was also asked if the City could take care of the electrical, City Administrator Crawford will be reaching out to Superintendent Senf on that question. Commissioner Magnuson will move forward on ordering the signs.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 PM.