

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF CROSSLAKE  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2023  
9:00 A.M. – CITY HALL

The Council for the City of Crosslake held a Special Meeting on Friday, December 29, 2023. The following Council Members were present: Mayor Dave Nevin, Aaron Herzog, Marcia Seibert-Volz, and Jackson Purfeerst. Sandy Farder participated via Zoom. Also in attendance were City Administrator Mike Lyonais, City Clerk Char Nelson, Park Director TJ Graumann, Fire Chief Chip Lohmiller, Police Chief Jake Maier, Zoning Administrator Pete Gansen, Public Works Director Pat Wehner, and Zoning Coordinator Cheryl Stuckmayer. There were four people in the audience.

1. Dave Nevin called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.
2. Patrick Wehner reported that the candidate, who was offered the position of Heavy Equipment/Sewer Operator, asked for 68 hours of vacation time rather than 40. This would be half the amount of vacation time he would get if he stayed employed at the County. Aaron Herzog stated that this is an acceptable practice and was in favor of it. MOTION 12SP3-01-23 WAS MADE BY AARON HERZOG AND SECONDED BY SANDY FARDER TO OFFER HEAVY EQUIPMENT / OPERATOR CANDIDATE 68 HOURS OF VACATION RATHER THAN 40 HOURS OF VACATION TO BE USED AFTER PROBATION. ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED 3-1 WITH SEIBERT-VOLZ OPPOSED.

Jackson Purfeerst arrived at 9:05.

3. Police Chief Jake Maier reported that he has received 4 applications for police officer position in 8 months. In our Region V, which consists of 14 counties, 22 police departments have openings. Chief Maier has interviewed two of the four applicants. The first applicant that was offered a position chose to stay in the cities due to higher wages. This second applicant has three years of experience and lives in the area. There will be minimal training required. MOTION 12SP3-02-23 WAS MADE BY AARON HERZOG AND SECONDED BY JACKSON PURFEERST TO HIRE POLICE OFFICER APPLICANT AT STEP 6 (\$31.47/HOUR) OF THE TEAMSTERS LOCAL 346 UNION CONTRACT AND TO DISCUSS INCREASING CURRENT POLICE OFFICER WAGES TO MATCH AT THE REGULAR MEETING ON JANUARY 8, 2024. ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES.
4. Sandy Farder stated that Chip Lohmiller is already working full time hours as fire chief and suggested that the Council consider a salary of \$84,000 plus full benefits. Aaron Herzog agreed that he is a fulltime employee but thinks the salary range in this area is closer to \$88,000 to \$108,000. Mr. Herzog recognized that Chip Lohmiller has been on the department for 27 years and stated that he would consider a salary of \$94,000. Jackson Purfeerst stated that he would not be in favor of paying more than \$70,000 and is not in favor of having a fulltime fire chief. Marcia Seibert-Volz agreed with Purfeerst. Dave Nevin stated that he has been undecided but is in favor of Short-Term Rental regulations. The Fire Chief will regulate this ordinance and

the fees will offset the wages. Mr. Nevin stated that he is in favor of a salary of \$84,000. MOTION 12SP3-03-23 WAS MADE BY SANDY FARDER AND SECONDED BY AARON HERZOG TO OFFER FULL-TIME FIRE CHIEF SALARY OF \$84,000 PLUS BENEFITS STARTING JANUARY 2024. ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED 3-2 WITH PURFEERST AND SEIBERT-VOLZ OPPOSED.

5. Jackson Purfeerst stated that he was not happy with the report from Michelle Soldo because it is not accurate, she did not include information that he provided, and he thought the results would be public information. Aaron Herzog stated that nothing he said was included in the report, that the report included blatant lies, was tainted and had no value. Sandy Farder stated that her comments were not included in the report either.

Marcia Seibert-Volz left the meeting at 9:50 A.M.

Char Nelson stated that she received a redacted copy of the report and pages of the report were blacked out. Ms. Nelson asked how staff was supposed to understand and work through differences with Council if they can't read what the problems are.

Jackson Purfeerst stated that the report blamed everything on Char Nelson and Mike Lyonais.

Cheryl Stuckmayer stated that Michelle Soldo crushed staff's hopes of having improved relationship with Council. Ms. Stuckmayer stated that staff wasn't asked what the problems were, they were interrogated and the report was very one sided.

Pat Netko stated that if the City paid for the report, everyone that was interviewed should see it. Sandy Farder agreed. Aaron Herzog stated that the report was a hit job.

Patty Norgaard stated that she was surprised to hear about the poor results and that people's feelings should not be hurt when trying to build relationship between staff and Council. Ms. Norgaard also asked Council what it would cost to replace Chip Lohmiller and cautioned them that every area city is competing for the same employees.

Dave Nevin stated that they shouldn't squash the report.

MOTION 12SP3-04-23 WAS MADE BY JACKSON PURFEERST AND SECONDED BY AARON HERZOG TO DIRECT CITY ATTORNEY TO RELEASE UNREDACTED VERSION OF MICHELLE SOLDO REPORT TO ALL STAFF THAT WERE INVOLVED IN ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT. ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES. Dave Nevin stated that he would contact Susan Hanson to get this done.

6. Jackson Purfeerst stated he would contact the League of MN Cities after the holidays to discuss training opportunities.
7. Aaron Herzog stated that he would like the Council to sit together to discuss their results of City Administrator's evaluation before it is presented, noting that the last evaluation was a

disaster. Dave Nevin stated that the Council will not have unified opinions. Jackson Purfeerst stated that he would be okay with giving Mike Lyonais an evaluation as long as it is not based on the Soldo report.

Mike Lyonais reported that he and his staff have completed evaluations for all of their staff. Sandy Farder stated she would like to see them.

It was the consensus of the Council to interview attorneys on January 4 and set date for city administrator evaluation at January 8 meeting.

8. There being no further business at 10:07 A.M., MOTION 12SP3-05-23 WAS MADE BY DAVE NEVIN AND SECONDED BY JACKSON PURFEERST TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,



Charlene Nelson  
City Clerk