

**City of Wadena
Regular City Council Minutes
Tuesday, November 14, 2023**

1. Call to Order

The Wadena City Council held a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 14, 2023. Mayor Deiss called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Comprising a quorum of the City Council, the following members were present: George Deiss, Mark Lunde, Wade Miller, Jessie Gibbs, and Dan Sartell.

3. Consent Calendar

- A. Claims as Presented for Payment
- B. City Administrator's Monthly Financial Report
- C. City Council Meeting Minutes:
 - 1. October 10, 2023, Regular Meeting
 - 2. October 23, 2023, Special Meeting

Action Motion: Unanimously approved the consent calendar items.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Gibbs
Roll call vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Miller, Sartell		

4. Public Hearing

Item A – Proposed Project on Behalf of the National Healthcare, Research and Education Finance Corporation and the Issuance of Revenue Bonds under the Minnesota Municipal Industrial Development Act, MN Statutes, Sections 469.152 through 469.165

The hearing opened at 5:01 p.m. No public was present in opposition or support.

The request of the city is for a conduit bond; a revenue bond issued by the city for the benefit of the private entity. The city does not pay debt service on, or any other costs related to the transaction. Additionally, the bonds have no effect on the city's credit rating and does not count against statutory limitations on borrowing.

Astera Health CFO Kim Aagard stated the project will be approx. \$24,000,000, size is 15,700 square feet, estimated construction timeline is 12 -15-months and will create 15-20 new jobs.

The city attorney is involved with document review for accuracy.

Action Motion: Unanimously approved closing the public hearing at 5:08 p.m.

Moved by:	Miller	Seconded by:	Lunde
Vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Miller, Sartell		

5. New Business

Item A – Resolution 2023-36: Astera Preliminary Conduit Bond Issuing Authority

Action Motion: Approved Resolution 2023-36, Astera Preliminary Conduit Bond Issuing Authority.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Deiss
Roll call vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Miller		
Abstain:	Sartell		

Item B – Resolution 2023-37: Municipal Consent for MnDOT Trunk Highway 10 Project Layout

Council member Sartell acknowledged gratitude for MnDOT’s recent responsiveness to many concerns from property owners. He still feels the city should dedicate more time to answer and accommodate continued concerns before approving municipal consent motioning to table for 60 days, it died for a lack of a second.

Council member Lunde understood holding off for a short time again for the interest of the concerned parties and motioned to table until the December 12, 2023, regular meeting with Sartell seconding and Deiss, Gibbs, and Miller opposed. Motion did not pass.

Administrator Schroeder informed the council of conversations had with MnDOT project manager Eric Schiller. The resolution was amended since the last meeting to remove the word “final,” as that seemed to be triggering prior meeting concerns that the design is final. Schiller provided that the design is final to the extent that MnDOT can move forward with the next level of project planning, specifically the current [MnDOT] 30% design dated August 2, 2023, to allow the independent appraisers to continue making contacts and work out necessary negotiations. MnDOT is aware of continued concerns, examples of Mason Brothers’ entrance, Flanigan Trucking, and Hide and Fur. Schroeder went on to share that state legislation will be involved in another bonding bill year. The city needs to commit and provide municipal consent to a design or state representatives could withdraw the now estimated \$47,000,000 in funding and transfer to a project ready entity.

Mayor Deiss then allowed members of the public to speak, those heard were Duke Harrison, Tom Paper, and Brian Hagen all expressing similar concerns shared at past meetings.

Council member Lunde expressed his sympathy for the continued concerns yet acknowledged that the highway needs to be accomplished.

Council member Gibbs stated he understands the “how can this work for me” idealisms, yet knows reality is that some [property owners] will be accommodated and yet takes away from others, that not everyone can be satisfied. Further stating that the resolution has already been tabled to this meeting.

Council member Miller stated MnDOT could executively deem this project as a safety measure with the commissioner forcing the city to move forward with a design plan chosen by MnDOT instead of allowing the city and property owners the opportunity to be involved.

Utility Superintendent Evans noted that design and consent approval is essential for infrastructure planning and purchases. The longer this gets tabled, the timeline to order and receive product and equipment diminishes to coincide with the project.

Several members of the council noted the plan and design needs to move forward in order to meet MnDOT timelines.

Action Motion: Table Resolution 2023-37, Municipal Consent for MnDOT Trunk Highway 10 Project Layout for 60 days.

Moved by:	Sartell	Seconded by:	None
Roll call vote:	Died for lack of a second		

Action Motion: Table Resolution 2023-37, Municipal Consent for MnDOT Trunk Highway 10 Project Layout until the December 12, 2023, regular meeting.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Sartell
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Roll call vote:	Lunde, Sartell
Opposed:	Deiss, Gibbs, Miller

Action Motion: Approve Resolution 2023-37, Municipal Consent for MnDOT Trunk Highway 10 Project Layout.

Moved by:	Miller	Seconded by:	Gibbs
Roll call vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Miller		
Opposed:	Lunde, Sartell		

Item C – Action 23-91: Agricultural Land Leases, Non-Tillable Acres

Public Works Director Kovar states the hay payment is used to feed the buffalo at Sunnybrook Park. The negotiated payment works well for both parties.

Action Motion: Unanimously approved a 3-year lease with Folkestad Farms for crop years 2024-2026, 40 acres of the New Airport property at a rate of 1/5th shares of hay and 50 acres on the Old Airport property at the rate of 1/5th shares of hay.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Miller
Roll call vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Miller, Sartell		

6. Meeting Open to the Public at 5:45 pm

Duke Harrison of Mason Brothers noted new utility statements have been produced without the previous graphing data. He's requesting to receive previous reports and data. Utilities Supervisor Evans will work with Harrison to get the information he's looking for.

7. Department Reports

Item A – Public Works Department – Dan Kovar

- The Tapley Park equipment has arrived. Due to weather and timing, it won't be installed until April 2024.

Item B – Utilities Department - Superintendent David Evans

- Crew is replacing a residential water service at the intersection of Colfax and 2nd Street. Due to weather, asphalt is not available so concrete will be placed.
- ZEF Energy continues to reach out to install a fast-charging EV station at the parking lot at old PB lot. Price has increased and ZEF is looking for \$35,000 from the city to install plus ongoing ownership costs. Todd-Wadena tentatively committed to \$10,000 not included in the \$35,000. Utilities Superintendent Evans doesn't see enough payback to support the request. The fast-charging agreement also places the city as the owner with maintenance, insurance, and leasing obligations. Originally the city's only obligation was to provide power. Average usage data on the current charging station is (4) charges per month. Evans asked if the council wants him to continue pursuing the idea and bring to the November 27 special meeting. Consensus was no.

Item C - Wadena Development Authority and Planning & Zoning – Dean Uselman

WDA

- Not present.

P & Z

- Not present.

Item D - Police Department – Naomi Plautz

- Winter parking ordinance is in effect. Unpaid fines will be sent to collections instead of the court system. Collections will be the same company the liquor store uses.
- The Chamber is putting on a Christmas parade and PD will work with them on it.

Item E - Fire Department – Cody Yglesias

- Not present.

Item F - Wadena Liquor Store – Tim Booth

- Repair to the damaged building is complete. The new shelving created more space.
- Sales continue to look good. An estimated 8,000 customers came to the store for the month.
- Council member Lunde brought up the idea of a new store again, stating Covid postponed the original momentum. He would like to begin looking into it again and expand ideas.

Item G - Maslowski Wellness and Research Center – Lisa Anderson

- Nothing to report.

Item H - Whitetail Run Golf Course – Kevin Ross

- Not present.

Item I - City Administrator – Kim Schroeder

- Updated that the wage study is nearing completion. Union negotiations have not proceeded until study is complete and available.
- Attorney Pederson delivered the council's October Greenwood project assessment appeal direction to the opposing counsel. The appellant's attorney returned another counterproposal. There were not large significant changes; Pederson and Administrator Schroeder sent a counterproposal that will hopefully be accepted and brought to a future meeting.
- Updated that city staff has not received communication regarding Lysa Fawver's September nuisance property cleanup issue and has yet to be resolved.
- Updated that Wally Gedde's October sidewalk parking issue has been resolved.

Item J – Council Reports

Dan Sartell: Will be on the Astera cancer center addition board.

Wade Miller: Nothing to report.

Mark Lunde: The airport hangars are fully rented. The main hangar tenant is satisfied with the building and lease. Lunde is happy there's more traffic generated.

Jessie Gibbs: Nothing to report.

Item K – Mayor's Report – George Deiss

- The Workforce Center is opening with business giving updates and success stories on how it's helped them.
- Relayed Wadena was recently noted in a magazine as one of Minnesota's "best run cities under 10,000."

8. Upcoming Meetings

- November 27, 2023, Enterprise and Streets Dept Budget Review, 3:00 pm
- December 12, 2023, Regular City Council Meeting
- December 12, 2023, Truth in Taxation Hearing, 6:00 pm

9. Adjournment

Action Motion: Unanimously adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Moved by:	Gibbs	Seconded by:	Miller
Vote :	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Miller, Sartell		

Kim Schroeder, City Administrator

George Deiss, Mayor