

**City of Wadena
Regular City Council Minutes
Tuesday, January 10, 2023**

1. Call to Order

The Wadena City Council held a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 10, 2023. Mayor Deiss called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

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

3. Oath of Office

Mayor Deiss administered the Oath of Office to himself as incumbent Mayor, incumbent council member Mark Lunde and newly elected council member Dan Sartell.

4. Consent Calendar

Notice to Public – All matters listed in the consent calendar are considered routine by the Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless good cause was shown prior to the time the Council votes on the motion to adopt the consent calendar.

A. Claims as Presented for Payment

B. City Administrator's Monthly Financial Report

C. City Council Meeting Minutes

1. December 22, 2022 – Special Meeting

D. Resolution No. 2023-01: Designating the Wadena Pioneer Journal Newspaper as the Official Newspaper

E. Resolution No. 2023-02: Setting the Date and Time for 2023 Regular City Council Meetings

F. Resolution No. 2023-03: Mayor appointing Council Member Wade Miller as Acting Mayor

G. Resolution No. 2023-04: Designating 2023 Official Depositories for City Funds

H. Resolution No. 2023-05: Designating Pederson and Pederson PA as the City's 2023 Criminal and Civil Legal Counsel

I. Resolution No. 2023-06: Designating the Annual City Election Polling Place

J. Action Memo 23-03: Authorize Hiring Maslowski Wellness and Research Center Employees Part-Time Lifeguard Positions

K. Action Memo 23-04: Approve Renewing Massage License

Action Motion: Approve the consent calendar items by unanimous vote.

Moved by: Lunde

Seconded by: Sartell

Roll call vote: Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Sartell

5. Unfinished Business

6. Public Hearings

Resolution 2022-60: Miscellaneous Unpaid Utility and Accounts Receivable Assessments

Mayor George Deiss opened the public hearing at 5:03 p.m. pursuant to notice published in the official newspaper.

No one was present in opposition or support.

Resolution 2022-61: TCHC Utility Extension Project Assessments

Mayor George Deiss opened the public hearing at 5:05 p.m. pursuant to notice published in the official newspaper.

City Engineer Phil Martin:

- Expanded on updated presentation detailing total project cost information to date along with historic 2022 public hearing proposed property assessment information and current updated amounts; and
- Stated on record that anyone wishing to appeal their assessment must provide their appeal individually and not collectively in writing before the close of the city council meeting.

The following individuals provided verbal opposition: Linda Johnson, 306 Fir Ave; Edward Waln, 104 Elm Ave; Tim Flanigan, 820 Ash Ave; Sonya VanOrsdel, 618 Greenwood Ave; Mark and Paul Hockert, 10th St & Greenwood Ave; Mark Fay, 1030 Fir Ave; Tom Marquette, 618 3rd St.

Several individuals provided handwritten appeal statements and handed them to Administrator Kim Schroeder.

After hearing from affected residents both prior to and at the meeting, the council chose to continue with the assessments. In support of hearing oppositions, they also decided to increase the length in payment years from 10 to 15 and number of years eligible to defer for qualified taxpayers from 5 to 10 years.

Action Motion: Close public hearing at 5:48 p.m. by unanimous vote.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Gibbs
Roll Call Vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Sartell		

7. New Business

Item A – Resolution 2022-60: Miscellaneous Unpaid Utility and Accounts Receivable Assessments

No one present from the public.

Action Motion: Adopt Resolution 2022-60: Miscellaneous Unpaid Utility and Accounts Receivable Assessments by unanimous roll call vote.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Sartell
Roll Call Vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Sartell		

Item B – Resolution 2022-61: TCHC Utility Extension Project Assessments

Mayor George Deiss expanded on the average cost of similar projects costing significantly more. City Administrator Kim Schroeder expanded on some language changes with the resolution. Utility Superintendent David Evans spoke of previous discussions held regarding project assessments and efforts made to avoid assessments or to defer all assessments until a property was hooked up, however, the bond counsel advised this was not possible.

Action Motion: Adopt Resolution 2022-61: TCHC Utility Extension Project Assessments passed by majority roll call vote.

Moved by:	Gibbs	Seconded by:	Lunde
Roll Call Vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde		
Opposed	Sartell		

Item C – Resolution No. 2023-07: Adopting 2023 City of Wadena Part-Time Wage Scale

Action Motion: Adopt Resolution 2023-07: Adopting 2023 City of Wadena Part-Time Wage Scale by unanimous roll call vote.

Moved by:	Sartell	Seconded by:	Lunde
Roll Call Vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Sartell		

Item D – Action Memorandum 23-02: Approve 2022 Write-Offs

At the time of the meeting the amount to write off totaled \$3,597.43.

City Administrator Kim Schroeder spoke of starting a different practice to reduce the write-offs. Most of the current unpaid balances are from rental units. Schroeder questioned alternative methods by certifying unpaid utility balances to property taxes or changing rental units to list the owner of the property on the account and follow notification requirements to be able to special assess their property taxes. Council members suggested using a collection agency or capture through the MN Revenue Recapture program. It was expressed not to use property owner and rental method. Revenue Recapture program was not recommended.

Utility Superintendent David Evans stated the amount is less than 1% of overall utility budgets combined. It was decided to submit to collections any time feasible and write-off the balances when uncollectable.

Action Motion: Approve 2022 write-offs by unanimous vote.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Sartell
Roll Call Vote:	Deiss, Gibbs, Lunde, Sartell		

8. Meeting Open to the Public at 6:40 pm

Resident Joe Miller:

- Expressed the city should have provided more communication to the public on the library local sales tax. Stating he voted no, however, would have voted yes had he understood the effect on city taxpayers better.

9. Department Reports

Item A – Public Works Department – Dan Kovar

- Shared appreciation of support from residents during the TCHC utility improvement assessment process. A lot of hours were put in by staff and city council. It's a tough decision.
- Reported the new seasonal winter parking restriction ordinance is successfully working. The employees estimate an approximate 75% reduction in street parking which allows the crew to complete their duties more effective and efficiently.

Item B – Utilities Department - Superintendent David Evans

- Provided appreciation for the TCHC utility improvement project. Stating it's a significant infrastructure change that stages infrastructure to last 50-100 years.
- City engineering firm Bolton & Menk is working on utility maps for ongoing projects.
- Reported a water main break was detected on 1st Street SW. The city's responsible for repair. It's not severe enough to undertake during the winter months. Will monitor until it thaws.

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

- WDA – The monthly meeting is Thursday. The Folkestad East addition is still being worked on with a tax abatement public hearing scheduled in the next month or two.
- P&Z –Quiet this time of year, nothing new to report.

Item D – Police Department – Naomi Plautz

- Two FEMA summer storm projects are submitted and nearing completion for expense reimbursements.
- Wadena County Sheriff's office completed alcohol and tobacco compliance checks. Two businesses received a violation.

Item E – Fire Department – Cody Yglesias

Cody Yglesias was absent.

Item F – Wadena Liquor Store - Tim Booth

Tim Booth was absent.

Item G – Maslowski Wellness and Research Center – Lisa Anderson

Lisa Anderson was absent. A written report was provided in the packet.

Item H – Whitetail Run Golf Course – Kevin Ross

Kevin Ross was absent.

Item I – City Administrator – Kim Schroeder

A business meeting with Ag Reliant, Polman Transfer, MnDOT design representatives, Council Member Dan Sartell, Administrator Kim Schroeder, and Utility Director Dave Evans was completed to discuss truck traffic needs. Meeting went very well. MnDOT also informed the council member and staff that a round-a-bout was approved at CSAH92 and TH10 along with pitching a round-a-bout concept on the East side of TH10. The concept is to answer feedback from the community to reduce speeds. It's also suspected the round-a-bout on the west is to assist with emergency vehicle access instead of a J-turn style. An updated TH10 map will be available at city hall in a couple weeks.

Schroeder's employment review was completed. Received a meets and occasionally exceeds expectations.

Item J – Council Reports

Dan Sartell had nothing to report.

Mark Lunde had nothing to report.

Jessie Gibbs thanked city workers for the hard work on all the projects and everything they do.

Item K – Mayor's Report – George Deiss

George Deiss had nothing to report.

Adjournment

Action Motion: Adjourn at 6:59 p.m. by unanimous vote

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

Kim Schroeder, City Administrator

George Deiss, Mayor