Official Minutes of the Ceylon City Council

August 8, 2023

Ceylon, Minnesota

The Ceylon City Council held their regular meeting on Tuesday August 8, 2023. Members present Mayor John Gibeau, Councilmembers Lon Oelke, Wayne Walter, Judith Perkins & Jody Scott. The meeting was called to order at 6pm by Mayor Gibeau. Also in attendance were Toni Ahl, Angie Connell, Chris Griffin, Joshua Schuetz of CEDA, Sharon Rosen of the Sentinel Newspaper & Representative Bjorn Olson.

Council heard from Joshua Schuetz from Martin County EDA. He informed Council of the services he can provide for the city from economic development to grant writing. He is willing to work with individuals wanting to start a business or one that is struggling. Joshua spoke of housing issues and told Council the steps and plans involved in working toward a grant for that. Councilmen Walter asked about demolition or rehab grants. Joshua was willing to look into that. Joshua stated it could be beneficial for the city to have an EDA fund of their own. Council thanked him for coming to the meeting.

Council heard from Representative Bjorn Olson that spoke of state grants for demolition of these delipidated houses in Ceylon. He said he is currently working a fund for cities that are tax stressed. He also said that in 2024 cities will see some small city assistance from transportation taxation. He said he is here for us and is willing to work for us. He stressed letting him know in advanced about any upcoming projects that he could be of assistance in getting the state to fund. Water projects are the easiest funding to get. Jim Plumhoff asked Bjorn to help the city with finalizing the Hwy 263 project.

“Public Comment” Chris Griffin stated that Helping Hands of Ceylon was awarded their first grant and will be updating the park restrooms. She brought up another topic involving Mayor Gibeau’s use of social media. Mayor Gibeau said he will use social media as he sees fit. Mayor Gibeau stated he has made numerous phone calls and written letters to help with the situation. The mayor said he will be having a meeting with the State Attorney General over this matter. He suggested other people make calls.

It was moved by Walter and seconded by Oelke to approve the July 11, 2023 minutes. Motion carried. It was motioned by Oelke and seconded by Perkins to approve the July Financial Report and the August bills. Motion carried.

It was motioned by Perkins and seconded by Oelke to approve the bid from Pearson Bros., Inc by Resolution 2023-3. The Council unanimously voted to accept the bid in the amount of $34,216.00 to seal coat roads. Motion carried.

Council discussed the bank CD that will mature on August 14, 2023. It was motioned by Perkins and seconded by Walter to invest the CD with the best 6- month rate. Motion carried

Council discussed the Hwy 263 project and the offer from MN Dot and the numerous things left undone throughout the city. Councilwomen Perkins will set up a meeting with all involved parties before moving forward.

Council discussed the payment of trees to the cemetery association. Councilmen Walter stated he did not like the way the bill was presented to the Council. Walter felt that bill was presented to the council as payment for the tree removal but was for the headstone repair because the tree bill had already been paid. Mayor Gibeau said he didn’t like the way the Cemetery Association handled it either as he wasn’t at that meeting. He would have never expected the city to pay for this bill without knowledge of it. Councilmen Walter felt the bill was backdoored to the Council. Mayor Gibeau asked Council to budget some funds for future repairs. Councilmen Walter said maybe the Cemetery Association shouldn’t pay the board members in gift cards. Councilwomen Perkins stated that this does not seem right. Councilmen Oelke asked The Mayor how he would feel if the fire association gave out gift cards and he wasn’t aware it. Mayor Gibeau said how do you think I would feel, but the Cemetery Association is not a government entity. Oelke stated it is the city’s money funding the cemetery. He told council that Joyce said this is how we get compensated and it has gone on forever. Oelke asked The Mayor if received a gift card and he said yes. He said Joyce said this was how the compensation worked. Councilwomen Perkins said the meeting was getting a little out of hand. Mayor Gibeau said he didn’t know it was wrong to accept a card and still didn’t know if it is technically illegal. Mayor Gibeau said maybe someone should accuse Joyce Schultz of doing what she was doing. Mayor said the people around the table have now impugned Joyce Shultz of doing something illegal without knowing if was illegal. Councilwomen Perkins said she doesn’t feel the council had impugned Joyce. Councilwomen Scott asked if they were huge gift cards which the mayor responded a hundred dollars. Scott said that was just a drop in the bucket. Mayor Gibeau said if it turns out this is wrong, he would return the money.

Mayor said it was just a hundred dollars, give me a break. Councilmen Oelke said then don’t come to the city asking for money. Mayor Gibeau said if the city does not budget funds to the cemetery, it will go defund. Councilmen Walter said maybe the association should try to budget for future needs with the money the city already pays. Gibeau said there are a lot of expenses with tree removal etc. and not enough to repair the stones. Councilmen Walter said that they should have been taking care of this years ago. Mayor Gibeau said he has only been on the board for two years and doesn’t know why he is taking the brunt of all this. Mayor Gibeau said he wasn’t expecting the city to pay this first repair bill for the stones but in the future.

Council reviewed the 2024 budget. No questions were posed.

Jim Plumhoff reported on the lift station pump, the MN DOT project that has yet seen completion. Rep. Bjorn Olson said he will look into the issues. Councilwomen Perkins will schedule an appointment with all parties involved.

Councilmen Oelke asked about repairing the sign that was vandalized. Clerk is working with the insurance company. Oelke asked about the properties that have not been cleaned up yet. Mayor Gibeau will call Deputy Cole and asked if tickets have been cited yet and if they haven’t been he will make sure they are.

It was motioned by Walter and seconded by Oelke to adjourn. Carried. 7:34pm Next regular scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday September 12, 2023 at 6pm in the council room.

Mary M Muller

Clerk Treasurer