

**RUGBY CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024 – 7:00 PM**  
**ARMORY COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Mayor LaRocque called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Council members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken by Mayor LaRocque.

Council Members present: Lotvedt, Nelson, Gannarelli, Larson, Brossart and Zachmeier.

Absent were Kraft and Schneibel.

Also, present were Mayor LaRocque, Attorney Murray, Chief Bommersbach, Public Works Director Munyer and Auditor Stewart.

The council considered the agenda. There was an amendment to move Resignation of Attorney Murray to before the police report and add below that the appointment of City Attorney. There was a motion by Lotvedt to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Larson, all voting yes, motion carried.

The council considered the May 6, 2024, regular council minutes. There was a motion by Brossart to approve the May 6, 2024, regular council minutes as presented. Second by Zachmeier, all voting yes, motion carried.

The council considered the resignation of Attorney Murray. There was a motion by Lotvedt to approve the resignation of Attorney Murray. Second by Brossart, all voting yes, motion carried.

LaRocque recommended an appointment of Rachael Mickelson-Hendrickson as City Attorney. There was a motion by Zachmeier to approve the appointment of Rachael Mickelson-Hendrickson as City Attorney. Second by Gannarelli, all voting yes, motion carried.

LaRocque explained that Mickelson-Hendrickson agreed to a \$750 monthly salary for the first 10 hours of work and \$100 per hour for each additional hour, billed separately. She would also be paid mileage for each trip to Rugby. There was a motion by Nelson to approve the \$750 monthly salary for the first 10 hours of work and \$100 per hour for each additional hour as well as mileage. Second by Brossart, roll call vote, all voting yes motion carried.

Rachael Mickelson-Hendrickson was sworn in by LaRocque as the City Attorney.

Mickelson-Hendrickson took her seat at the council table.

Chief Bommersbach presented the April 2024 police report. He explained the department had 106 calls for service, 35 citations, 3 arrests, 3 vehicle accidents and 19 medical assistance calls in the month of April. Nelson informed Bommersbach that the state would be inspecting the trailer parks next week. There was a motion by Larson to approve the April 2024 Police Department report. Second by Nelson, all voting yes, motion carried.

Laurie Odden, CVB Executive Director, addressed the council regarding the upcoming filming of My Town. She is working on finding options to repair the monument.

Zachary Broadwell, JDA Executive Director, explained that Community Matters LLC has provided written notice of their intent to terminate their contract with the JDA effective June 9, 2024. Broadwell shared things he learned at the EDND Conference in Grand Forks held at the beginning of May. He updated the council on the current projects that the JDA is working on. He informed the council of the current budget and potential future amendments that may need to be made. There was a motion by Lotvedt to approve the JDA minutes and financials as presented. Second by Zachmeier, all voting yes, motion carried.

Tim Bartsch, Park Board representative and Dr. Michael McNeff, RPS Superintendent addressed the council regarding a potential softball complex. McNeff explained that a group of people had approached him inquiring about creating a softball complex in the current area of the practice football field. He explained that he had reached out to an architect, which he has worked with in the past, to develop a plan. McNeff explained that school district funds are not planned to be utilized.

Bartsch expressed his concern with the condition of the city diamonds and the need for funds to construct softball diamonds on the school grounds. Bartsch suggested that the city diamond's current fences be removed and utilized at the school to construct diamonds and conserve money on fencing. Bartsch explained that the architect estimated two softball diamonds would cost over \$1,000,000.

Lotvedt explained how the current school baseball field was created.

They discussed the ownership of the current school property, should the softball fields be constructed on the school district land. They also discussed the different regulations for softball and youth fields. LaRocque does not believe the fences at the city fields will be taken down to move them over to the proposed new softball fields. LaRocque explained that the youth recreation program, men's softball, and CVB/Chamber July tournament would still need the city diamonds. Odden explained that one of the concerns, should all the diamonds be moved to the school property, is that the diamonds would not be large enough for men's softball. She explained that they utilized three diamonds for their tournament. She also had concerns about being on school property for men's softball with alcoholic drinks and tobacco. LaRocque explained that if the current school property was transferred to a different owner, the optics of alcoholic drinks and tobacco that close to the school would not be ideal. Gannarelli also expressed his concern with alcoholic drinks and tobacco that close to the school. He also questioned the geothermal heating system maintenance, which is underground on this property.

LaRocque is willing to see if the JDA Board of Directors would help find revenue for the softball diamonds. He explained that he is opposed to moving the city diamonds at this point.

Bartsch would like to have one field complete by next season.

Zachmeier questioned how alcoholic consumption next to school grounds would work. She referenced a year ago when the city discussed liquor advertising in proximity to a school.

Gannarelli expressed his concerns with parking in the area around the school. He referenced current parking issues with track meets. Should the entire area on the south side of the school football field no longer be available for parking, additional parking issues may develop.

Bartsch explained that he is not concerned about the old men's softball program. He is concerned about the girls' softball program and youth programs. LaRocque explained that the school softball field is not a city problem.

McNeff wants to ensure that if the softball field is built that it is put in the correct spot before it is constructed. He wants to look at a 20-year plan for the facilities and future updates or buildings. The council looked at a rough drawing of where the proposed softball fields would be on the school grounds.

There was a motion by Nelson to work with the school, park district and others to come up with a plan to complete the project. Second by Larson, all voting yes, motion carried.

#### Portfolio Holder Reports

Buildings: Portfolio Holder Lotvedt explained that the kitchen project is on hold. Larson explained that the swimming pool chlorine system will be installed tomorrow. Bartsch will start installing the lights at the pool tomorrow.

Finance: Portfolio Holder Nelson had nothing to report.

Ordinance: Portfolio Holder Zachmeier distributed a draft of the student representative to the council for future development. LaRocque explained that he wants a Junior or Senior appointed to the council to gain perspective from the younger generation. He explained that the appointee would not have a vote but would be asked how they would vote if they could. He hopes this will generate interest in the government. He does not want any school reports to the council but a student perspective on local government. They discussed potential requirements to participate. Zachmeier will continue to work on this for a future ordinance consideration.

Personnel: Portfolio Holder Gannarelli explained that the library roof has a leak behind the elevator. They are working on getting someone to look at it.

Public Safety: no report.

Public Works: Portfolio Holder Larson explained that citywide clean-up is in process. They are filling in potholes and working on spraying weeds, etc. They are still looking for a water plant employee.

Recreation: Portfolio Holder Brossart explained that the recreation director is working on staffing and they are looking at Vertical Raised fundraising to help support the recreation program. He

explained that lifeguard training will be occurring next week and the pool will open the first week of June.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

The council considered an estimate from Traill Painting Co to paint the main floor of the water treatment plant for \$9,400. Larson recommended completing this in the winter months. LaRocque explained that this is maintenance and does not require a council vote. Munyer explained that the company is currently doing the upstairs floor.

The council received correspondence from the Sharon Munyer family and Helen Haman family for sympathy plants.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2024, at 7:00p.m.

There being no further business to transact or come before the council at this time, Larson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second by Gannarelli, all voting yes, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:46pm.

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Frank LaRocque, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Stewart, City Auditor

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Approved