

**CITY OF MILACA
SPECIAL MEETING
COUNCIL MINUTES**

June 6, 2022

Call to Order Roll Call

Mayor Pedersen called the special meeting of the Milaca City Council to order at 6:30 p.m.

Upon roll call, the following council members were present: Mayor Pedersen; Councilors: Dave Dillan, Norris Johnson, and Lindsee Larsen. Councilors Absent

Staff Present: City Manager Tammy Pfaff, City Attorney Damien Toven, Assistant City Clerk Deloris Katke, City Treasurer Jessica Humphreys, Administrative Communication Specialist Mary Mickelsen, Public Works Supervisor Gary Kirkeby, Public Works/Events Mark Wubben, and Police Chief Quinn Rasmussen.

Others Present: Union Times Jeff Hage, Cindy Biederman, Myron Mollet, Pauline Mollet, Shannon Milender, Marshall Lind, Andy Nelson, Dean Angemeier, Chris Ehlen, Jim Gerads, and Roxie Gerads.

Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Pedersen called for a motion to approve the agenda. Motion by Johnson and seconded by Larsen. Motion carried unanimously upon roll call of all council members.

New Business

Declaring a Vacancy of a Council Position – Mayor Pedersen asked if this has been done. It was explained that a resolution was passed at the May council meeting.

Mayoral Decision – Mayor Pedersen announced he would not run for mayor in November.

Milaca Area Chamber of Commerce – Shannon gave the council an update on the parade and transient merchants.

Special Event and Transient Merchant Application Approval – Approve Kiddie parade on June 14 and approve transient merchant for Jody Stay-Pizza Barn, Sara Strandberg-Firehouse BBQ, Uncle Gerry's Treats, and Addie's Ice Cream Treats. Mayor Pedersen called for a motion for approval. Motion by Dillan and seconded by Larsen. Motion carried unanimously upon roll call of all council members. Mayor Pedersen asked that the transient merchant ordinance be placed on the next council agenda.

Rec Fest Committee Update – Mayor Pedersen stated the procedures that were given to the committee was outrageous. City Treasurer Jessica Humphreys explained the need for the procedures to the council and committee volunteers. The volunteers were vocal in showing that they did not agree with the procedures and asked that it be simplified. The volunteers will meet with Jessica to discuss the procedures in detail.

Transient Merchant Application Approval – Lynn Anderson-Hunters Grill. Mayor Pedersen called for a motion for approval. Motion by Dillan and seconded by Larsen. Motion carried unanimously upon roll call of all council members.

Closed meeting pursuant to Minnesota Statute Sections 13D.05 Subd 2(b) and 13.43 Subd 2(4)

Mayor Pedersen announced that he would allow the meeting be open to the public as he was the subject of the city employee complaint letter that was sent to the City Attorney and the City Council. The City Attorney cautioned the mayor not to reveal names. The City Attorney then proceeded to summarize the city staff complaints filed against the mayor in creating a hostile workplace.

He stated at the January council meeting a number of city staff signed a petition requesting the mayor resign, and if he did not resign that he could not be placed on any committees, commissions, or boards. The signed petition from the staff was given to council members Johnson, Dillan, Larsen, and C. Pedersen, and then given to the attorney and the mayor. The city staff petition requested the city council to restrict the mayor from communicating with city staff and that the mayor has created a hostile work environment for multiple employees, has acted inappropriate at council meetings, and in private actions that were hostile and aggressive towards staff.

Toven continued that council held a closed meeting to address the matter, and it was closed to protect the city staff that signed the petition. Toven referred to the whistleblower law. Toven stated the council met in a closed meeting to put in place an agreement between the mayor and city council to restrict the mayor. The agreement, signed by the mayor and city council, has restrictions that the mayor would only communicate with staff by email and no in-person meetings with staff unless another council member was present. Also, that if the mayor has any concerns regarding the agenda for the next scheduled council meeting that those issues or concerns be brought to staff prior to the agenda going out and not having them placed on the agenda at the council meeting. Toven went on to state that the mayor had agreed to being removed from the personnel and budget committees, and that the mayor and one employee attend a mediation session with the League of Minnesota Cities in the hopes to begin a positive communication with the employee. Toven stated the agreement was signed by the mayor and he agreed to the stipulations of the agreement.

Since that time of the mayor signing the agreement, the city staff has brought forth numerous violations of the agreement, with one of those being that he wants to be reappointed to the parks commission and tourism board. City staff raised concerns and frustration citing that the mayor is still on boards and committees and he continues to make negative comments about multiple city staff. City staff continued with the complaint that the mayor continues to call city staff instead of following the signed agreement mode of communication via email. Mayor Pedersen believes he is in compliance with the agreement, stating he could call regarding Rec Fest, and continued to state that he called Deloris to get the agenda, claiming the email went to his spam. The mayor added that he did call public works and the police department on non-city issues. The council put in place that the mayor would not be placed on any boards, committees or commissions for the remainder of his term.

The mayor then read the confidential letter that was placed in his personnel file, wherein he disagreed with the council agreement he had signed. Toven stated that the agreement that was signed by the mayor and city council is not addressing the concerns and needs of the city staff. Council member Johnson stated the intent was for the mayor to not be on any boards or commissions. Johnson suggested the council remove the mayor from any boards, committees, or commissions. Johnson made a motion to remove the mayor from all boards, committees and commissions. Motion failed due to lack of a second. The matter will be addressed at the June Regular City Council Meeting. Mayor commented that he wanted on the agenda to change the city from a Plan B city to a Plan A City.

Adjourn

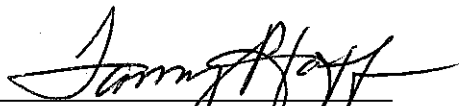
With no other business presented before the council, Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Larsen seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously upon roll call of all council members.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.



Dave Dillan, Acting Mayor

ATTEST:



City Manager Tammy Pfaff