

REGULAR MEETING – HOUGHTON CITY COUNCIL  
MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2010 – 5:30 p.m.  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY CENTER

PRESENT: Mayor Robert Backon, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Megowen, Councilors Rachel Lankton, Craig Kurtz, Gernot Joachim, and Lee Hauswirth.

Also present for the City: City Manager Scott MacInnes, Clerk-Treasurer Kurt Kuure, Director of Public Works Mark Zenner, and Police Chief John Donnelly.

ABSENT: Councilor Eric Peterson.

ALSO PRESENT: Representatives of the Daily Mining Gazette, WMPL, and WKQS.

REGULAR MEETING: Mayor Backon called to order a Regular Meeting of the Houghton City Council and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Hauswirth to approve the minutes of the December 28, 2009, Regular Meeting as written.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA: City Manager MacInnes added under Reports – Item D – Grants, and under New Business – Item D – Equipment Grant.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS COUNCIL: No one addressed the Council.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

REPORTS: Director of Public Works Mark Zenner reported that the entrance mat for the City Center is installed. Now that the tile has been removed from the outside and inside of the entrance, the area is no longer slippery during the winter

months. The new lime green sander truck is in. Crews are still picking up Christmas Trees. They are also widening streets on the east side of town. On College Avenue they replaced the light by State Farm with an LED light. Mr. Zenner asked the Council members to look at this light and let him know what they think.

Police Chief John Donnelly reported that the department had 10 misdemeanor arrests, 13 civil infractions, and policed 14 accidents. The new patrol car is about 90 percent ready. The department received a grant from the Michigan State Police to provide extra patrol during the holidays to look for people driving under the influence. The officers stopped and checked many cars and did not find any drivers who were under the influence. Chief Donnelly reported that the department has been restructured. Nick Roberts was promoted to lieutenant and will work Monday – Friday on day shift. Daron Kari and Scott Monette were promoted to Sergeants. They will supervise night and afternoon shifts.

The West Houghton Rink has been up and running since December. It was the first outdoor rink ready and was open during the Christmas holiday with many young people skating on it. There are two rinks: one for hockey, and one for skating.

Mayor Backon reported that Chief Donnelly was considerate in taking a woman to an important appointment after she was involved in an automobile accident in Houghton that damaged her car so she could not drive herself.

Mark Zenner reported that the Second Annual Jibba Jabba will take place this Saturday. Public works will haul hundreds of tons of snow to Huron Street for the event. Huron Street will be closed as well as a portion of Lakeshore Drive and traffic will be rerouted around it. There will be vendors set up in the parking lot across from the Suomi Restaurant for the event.

Mayor Pro Tem Megowen reported that the downtown business owners are working on an Easter Egg Hunt for the Saturday before Easter. The cardboard luge run will be held on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

City Manager MacInnes reported that there are a lot of grants available at this time. He is putting together a large water and sewer grant/loan package. The interest rate is now down to 2.3%. There are grants available for transportation so plans are being developed for a new transit garage. He is also looking for the road project on Montezuma. The bike committee is looking at a bike trail up to College Avenue.

There is a new downtown program being run by MEDC. Mr. MacInnes is looking into what will be offered through this.

NEW BUSINESS: A discussion was held about putting the audit services out for bids. Mr. MacInnes explained that the City of Houghton audit is very complicated and the present auditor knows our system well.

A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Hauswirth to approve the Accounts Payable for January 1-11, 2010.

The Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Lankton, Hauswirth, Joachim, Backon, Megowen, Kurtz

No: None

Motion carried.

John Midkiff and Marvin Heinonen of the U.S. Census provided the Council with information packets regarding the 2010 Census. They will be hiring workers for the temporary jobs very soon. He is hoping that they will have a lot of people apply for the positions. They are also looking for some office space to rent. Mr. Midkiff asked for help from the administration to let them know of any new development so that they can make sure everyone is counted.

A motion was made by Lankton and seconded by Hauswirth to adopt revised **Resolution 2009-1289**.

The Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Lankton, Hauswirth, Joachim, Backon, Megowen, Kurtz

No: None

Motion carried.

City Manager MacInnes reported that Rural Development has money available for equipment purchases with 40% grants. Mr. MacInnes would like to replace the mini pumper. The total cost is \$49,000. The City share is \$29,400 with a Rural Development grant of \$19,600.

The other grant is for a 12,000-pound compact excavator. The total cost is \$49,000. The City share is \$29,400 with a Rural Development grant of \$19,600.

A motion was made by Hauswirth and seconded by Kurtz to authorize the Mayor to sign a grant application with Rural Development for a mini pumper with a total cost of \$49,000 and a Rural Development grant of \$19,600. The City's share of \$29,400 will come from the equipment fund with a loan from the general fund.

The Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Hauswirth, Kurtz, Megowen, Backon, Lankton, Joachim, Hauswirth

No: None

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Megowen and seconded by Hauswirth to authorize the Mayor to sign a grant application with Rural Development for a compact excavator with a total cost of \$49,000 and a Rural Development grant of \$19,600. The City's share of \$29,400 will come from the equipment fund with a loan from the general fund.

The Clerk polled the Council:

Yes: Megowen, Hauswirth, Joachim, Lankton, Backon, Kurtz

No: None

Motion carried.

Public hearings will be held on Monday, January 25, 2010 regarding these proposed grant applications.

Councilor Hauswirth asked if the intersections could be cleaned up as the banks are getting quite high.

Mayor Pro Tem Megowen said the fire victims thanked the Police Chief and his department for all of their help. The victims were amazed at how much help they received from the department. Chief Donnelly said the Pigs-n-Heat fund is used for fire victims. Wal-Mart provided \$300 gift cards for the victims and Kirkish Furniture helped with furniture. The Manager stated there is a lot of public support for fire victims in our community.

Councilor Kurtz brought everyone's attention to the newest issue of MML Magazine that features City Manager Scott MacInnes on the cover along with an article written by him.

A motion to adjourn was made by Lankton.

Yes: All

No: None

Motion carried.  
Adjourned 6:25 p.m.

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Kurt Kuure  
City Clerk