

CITY OF RUSHFORD VILLAGE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2025
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
43038 State Hwy 30, Rushford Village, Minnesota 55971-5167

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The February 4, 2025 Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Dennis Overland at 7:00 p.m. in the Rushford Village Office. Council Members present: Travis Link, Robert Hart and Rick Ruberg; Planning/Zoning Administrator Jon Pettit, City Attorney Joseph O’Koren and Clerk Mary Miner

Absent: Council Member Mike Ebner, Public Works/Maintenance Supervisor Trenten Chiglo and Treasurer Judy Graham

AGENDA was approved as presented

Motion by Hart, 2nd by Link, Carried.

MINUTES from the January 21, 2025 Annual Council Meeting were approved as presented

Motion by Ruberg, 2nd by Link, Carried.

CITIZENS/OTHERS PRESENT: Kirsten Zoellner-Fillmore County Journal

FINANCIALS: January Expenses \$103,839.26, January Receipts \$11,216.92,
Outstanding Checks as of 1/31/2025 \$113,111.57, Bank Balance as of 1/31/2025 \$405,497.61
Estimated February Receipts \$8,000.00/Estimated February Expenses \$60,000.00
CD’s renewing at current advertised rates

Motion made to approve the Financials as presented

Motion by Hart, 2nd by Ruberg. Carried.

PLANNING / ZONING–Pettit: New Permits /Inquiries/Updates;

New Permits: None written

Permit Status/Projects in Process/Inquiries/Updates:

- Pettit reported there are projects in the works

ROADS/WATER/SEWER:

- **Roads/Utilities Update:** Miner reported Chiglo has been
 - Painting the old merry-go-round
 - Doing ditch cleaning on Trout Spring Lane
 - Chiglo called Arendahl and left a message about the 3-point tree trimming attachment for the tractor

OTHER:

- **Pay Equity Update:**
 - Council reviewed results from Pay Equity report that was submitted January 21, 2025
 - January 22, 2025, CRV was found to be in compliance with Pay Equity requirements
- **Review Employee Guide Updates:**
 - Council reviewed the proposed revisions submitted by Paul Ness
 - Revisions included PTO/ESST language, removal of references to employment and collective bargaining agreements, clarification to Fire and EMS volunteers and court appearances intent, changes to life insurance plan and the addition of health and dental insurance benefit programs
 - Health and Dental coverage is provided to full-time employees only and paid at 100% by CRV for an employee. At this time Miner is the only employee being covered. Chiglo stated at a previous meeting he did not think he would need coverage until he turned 26 years old
 - Family Health and Dental insurance coverage/premium needs to be determined and added to the Employee Guide. At this time no one has need for the family coverage but it needs to be decided what CRV will pay for family health and dental coverage so it can be included in the Employee Guide.
 - Ruberg questioned if an employees’ spouse has health insurance through their employer would the employee have to have the family coverage through CRV? Miner stated in most cases if it is just a husband and wife each takes the insurance offered by their employer but if it is a family they usually go with the employee who has the better family plan for them. If an employee chooses to go with the CRV family health and dental plan CRV must allow that

- Link stated there are places that pay an amount to the employee if they do not use the family coverage their employer offers. Overland stated he did not think this could be done, this could be part of a different policy that is in place
- Hart asked if CRV cost relating to what CRV pays towards the premiums could be changed. O’Koren recommended an annual review to make adjustments as needed, Overland stated this should be looked at during budget talks
- The Personnel Committee, Hart and Ruberg, made a recommendation CRV pay 50% of the health and 50% of the dental premium for family coverage as a starting point

Motion made CRV pay 50% of Health and 50% of Dental family coverage premiums

Motion by Ruberg, 2nd by Link, Carried.

- Miner will get this information to Ness to be added to the Employee Guide
- Council did not have any questions about the other revisions and will wait until the revised Employee Guide is complete before accepting all the proposed revisions
- **SEMLM Annual Meeting Updates:**
 - January 30th Ebner, Ruberg and Miner attended the meeting in Kasson. This meeting was well attended with over 70 people present
 - Proposed idea for EMS funding was to charge every cell phone 69 cents per month. This would raise approximately 50 million dollars per year. Any EMS service that is operating in the red could apply for money, any EMS service that was operating in the black would not be able to apply for money, this was not well received
 - The hope is the water and wastewater classes will start at the Riverland in Austin by the end of this summer
 - They are looking into starting another regional group for Southeast Minnesota so we would be eligible for money available through regional groups only
 - Multiple topics were discussed and cities were asked to rank what they felt the 3 most important 2025 legislative policies for their city would be. CRV ranked 1) LGA 2) EMS funding 3) Bonding for roads, water, sewer, etc.
- **Grass & Subdivision Ordinance Questions-Joe O’Koren:**
 - Miner reported this is a follow up to questions asked during the January 21st meeting. Grass mowing related to grass height, rates being charged, letter/notice to resident. Subdivision was related to a subdivision having to come out onto a hard surface road
 - Subdivision Ordinance #11:
 - O’Koren reported he was not able to find anything in the Fillmore County Ordinances pertaining to a subdivision having to come out onto a hard surface road. He does not feel there would be problem if CRV wanted to change this requirement in their subdivision ordinance.
 - This requirement makes it cost prohibitive in a lot of areas that could be developed, removing this requirement would allow for more areas a subdivision could be built
 - Weeds/Mowing Ordinance #7:
 - O’Koren stated what he found is every city regulates this differently.
 - O’Koren does not see a problem with the fees being increased but CRV has to be careful about the fees being punitive rather than the reasonable cost put into the project (truck, trailer, mower, mobilization, fuel, equipment upkeep, employee time, office time and costs associated with letter, etc.). O’Koren does not recommend increasing the charge each time the same residence is mowed during the year because the fees would become unreasonable and if this is done a cap should be set.
 - O’Koren stated some options to look at would be to reduce the grass height of 8 inches before it has to be mowed to 6 inches, to reduce the time from 10 days from the date of the letter to a shorter time to get the grass mowed, hire a contractor to do the work but cautioned this would put CRV in the middle because CRV would pay the contractor and then bill the resident, make it a penal offense and charge it as a misdemeanor or have a fine as an administrative citation type deal but O’Koren does not think the criminal way would be the best because we do not have a police department
 - Hart stated it would make sense to contact the property owner and have them hire someone to mow their yard. Miner stated multiple people have offered to mow this property and the owner does not contact them
 - O’Koren stated there is also a liability for CRV to mow. Something could happen to the employee or objects in the grass could be hit that could cause a problem

- O’Koren does not feel one notice/letter to the resident sent the first time a property has to be mowed should be the only one sent for the whole summer. O’Koren recommends a notice/letter should be sent each time a property has to be mowed.
- Miner stated it was asked if there could be an hourly charge for the first time it is mowed and an increased hourly charge for each additional time it is mowed. Example: First time mowed \$175.00 per hour, each additional time mowed \$300.00 per hour. O’Koren stated it could be done this way or a fine could be imposed after a certain amount of violations
- Pettit stated at one time CRV hired a contractor for mowing, why not go back to that and have them mow the parks and other property if needed. O’Koren stated that puts CRV in the position to have to pay the contractor and then have to recoup the cost from the property owner later
- After discussion Council decided to revise the Weeds/Mowing Ordinance #7 to reduce the length of grass before it has to be mowed from 8 inches to 6 inches, notice for compliance from date of notice/letter to get it mowed reduced from 10 days to 7 days, fees will be man and machine charge increased from \$100.00 to \$175.00 per hour.

Motion made to have O’Koren revise Ordinance #7 to include grass height 6 inches, notice compliance 7 days, \$175.00 per Hour **Motion** by Hart, 2nd by Ruberg. Carried.

- After revisions are made a public hearing will be held
- The property owner who has been a habitual offender will be contacted by phone to make them aware of the changes to Ordinance #7 and a letter will be sent by O’Koren Law Office to document they had been contacted by phone
- O’Koren will try to have a draft at the February 18th meeting

OTHER UPDATES / MEETINGS:

- February 17, 2025, Monday-CRV office closed-President’s Day
- February 24-25, 2025, Monday & Tuesday-CRV Audit with Bill Sherry
- February 25, 2025-MMUA Safety Meeting 1:00 pm @ CRV Hall
- March 2-3, 2025, Sunday to Monday-Chiglo Vacation-Back Monday afternoon if needed
- March 6, 2025, Thursday-RP Valley Chamber Annual Meeting @ 4:00 pm-Rushford Legion back room (Overland stated anyone wanting to go let Miner know)
- March 18-21, 2025, Tuesday thru Friday-Miner at Clerk Conference-Brooklyn Center

Next Meetings: Council: February 18, 2025 and March 4, 2025 @ 7:00 pm at CRV Hall Office

Zoning: February 18, 2025 @ 5:30 pm at CRV Hall Office

Motion made to Adjourn Regular Council Meeting at 7:38 pm by Ruberg, 2nd by Link. Carried