The Stanhope City Council met in Regular Session Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at The Stanhope Community Building starting at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Kelly Wirtz called the meeting to order with Council Members: Jill Haman, Mindy Hetland, and Doug Sogard present. Council member Beau Jensen was absent.

Members of the public present: Peggy Phipps, Tom Gannon, Gary Green, Kael Stupp, Tom Stupp, Keith Bockoven, Erma Bockoven, Paul Hetland, Polly Hayes, Roger Hayes, Jill Sneed, Gary Baker, Jackie Baker, Leslie Dally Liz Busing, Cheyenne Sigler, Brandi Dilley, Jason Loots, Shanda Foust-Staples and Public Works Tim Dalley along with Horrell Environmental Services, John Horrell. Also present was Troy DeJoode with the Iowa Utilities Commision.

***APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA*:** Haman made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

* Approval of the agenda for August 13, 2024
* Approval of July 9, 2024 City Council minutes
* Approval of financial reports for period of 7/1/2024 – 7/30/2024

Hetland seconded the motion. Roll call 3-0. Motion carried.

***PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, REQUESTS:***

Roger Hayes spoke about Watermelon Day 2025. The Lions Club is leaning on not doing Watermelon Day for next year. There are many factors including the DOT not allowing the City to shut down the highway for the parade.The Lions will make this determination at a later date.

***GENERAL AGENDA***

* **RESOLUTION:** Haman made the motion for authorizing Resolution 2024-2025-10 and approving a Loan Agreement, providing for the private placement and issuance of a $600,000 Taxable General Obligation Corporate Purpose Note, Series 2024 and providing for the levy of taxes to pay the same. Hetland seconded the motion. Roll call: 3-0, motion carried.
* **APPROVE COUNCILMAN RESIGNATION AND SET DATE FOR OPEN COUNCIL SEAT:** Sogard made the motion to accept Council Member Shauna Zankers resignation and to set August 23, 2024, by 4:00 PM, as deadline for applications for seat to be filled. Sogard also set August 27, 2024 as a special meeting date. Meeting will be held at 4:00 PM at the Stanhope Community Center, to fill the seat. Seconded by Haman. All in favor, motion carried.
* **CIT UPDATE:** Jason Loots with C I T was present to give an update on Stanhope’s sewer lines. The main contract we are in right now costs $3000.00 per year. This covers cleaning sewer lines. Jason suggested Stanhope start contracting cleaning, mapping, inspection and scanning our sewer lines. Stanhopes sewer lines are in dire need and this is the only way to find out what is going on. Estimated cost $12,000.00 per year. Council is considering, but tabled for now.
* **NUISANCE PROPERTIES:** Chief Turpin was on vacation at the time of our meeting, but left an update on nuisance properties. Chief Turpin has been in contact with our city attorney and will proceed with infractions when he returns.
* **WATER PLANT/LIFT STATION/LAGOON UPDATE:** John Horrell gave an update on the water plant and lift station. The Softener System in the Water Plant is 45 years old and shows its age. Meters and gauges are not working properly. Rough estimate will be $35,000.00 to repair, but is considerably cheaper than new. They are doing the best they can and will continue to work on getting it more efficient. They know about the salty taste in your water and it is being worked on. The Lift Staion is also not working properly. Tim has been working on it, but still needs dire repairs. The alarms on the lift station are not working and John says this is a priority fix. Lagoon news: there is to much water going into the lagoon. John believes Stanhope must have a problem somewhere because this should not happen. John suggested getting the scanning and mapping from CIT to see if sanitary sewer and storm sewer are connected together somwhere to cause this problem. John and Tim were thanked for a job well done.
* **FIRE DEPARTMENT**: Fire Chief, Brad Anderson, was absent from the meeting and will give update next month.
* **IOWA UTILITIES COMMISION:** Troy DeJoode, with Iowa Utilities Commision, expressed his concern with the status of Stanhope’s finances. He let us know they are here to help and to set goals for the City. Certain goals talked about: Correcting inaccurate billing that has been going on for at least a decade, shut off notices need to be kept current and worry about getting current bills paid on time. He recommended cutting costs thoroughly and to stop co-mingling money effective immediately. Raising rates is imminent for the city of Stanhope to continue doing business properly. The utility committee will evaluate and come up with a reasonable rate increase. The GO Bond in progress is just the first step, of many, to help get us back on track.
* **EMPLOYEE PAYROLL:** Going back to once a month payroll was discussed. Members were asked to visit with employees to see how it will affect them. To be determined later.
* **PLAYGROUND:** Haman talked about the playground retrieved fromSouth Hamilton CSD. Council needs to determine just where we want to put it. Some places discussed were next to fire station and tearing down bingo stand in park and putting there. Haman also asked do we keep the old or sell it? If we keep the old, do we just extend out from it? It was expressed we need funds for this. Asking for donations would be the quickest way to raise around $4000.00 to put the new playground in. Playground needs to get put in before those that took it down forget how it goes back up.
* **TREES:** Numerous trees are in power lines around town. Tanner Jensen, from Stratford, will be going around town trimming trees in electrical lines.
* **CLERK TRAINING:** Up to 8 hours was approved and motioned by Sogard to have Lynda Wunder from Duncombe come to Stanhope and train the City Clerk on a few items. Seconded by Hetland. All in favor. Motion carried.
* **MIDAS/CITY ORDINANCES:** Update on MIDAS who is working on our ordinances was given by Mayor Wirtz. By the end of September we should have a full book. We need something to start with and we will work from there at correcting things the way they should be.
* **UPDATE ON DAKOTA STATE TESTING:** Testing came back from Dakota State showed our office computer system is out dated and vulnerable and this could pose a security threat. They suggested a couple of fixes that will help with the issues.
* ***ADJOURNMENT***: Haman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Hetland seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Vickie Anderson Kelly Wirtz, Mayor