

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH IN THE COUNTY OF CHISAGO AND IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

BUDGET AND LEVY HEARING

December 4, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: The North Branch City Council met in special session and Mayor Lindquist called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL: Councilmembers present were Kathy Blomquist, Theresa Furman, Ronald Lindquist, and Trent Jensen. Councilmember Joyce Borchardt was absent. Staff members present were City Administrator Konrad and Finance Director Hill.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Hill provided an overview of the budget discussions to date and provided an overview of the budgeting and valuation process and how all the pieces work together to determine the ultimate tax bill for each property. Hill reviewed the proposed 2015 budget and levy and provided a historic overview of where the budget and levy has been over the last seven years. The proposed levy for 2015 will increase 5.2% which is equal to the increase in the City's tax capacity.

After the presentation a resident said she was told by the County to come see the City about taxes but now, after the presentation, she has learned that the value was set by the County so she is confused. Konrad explained the role of the County and the City. A resident said that on average taxes went up 18% and they are not able to discuss that here which is frustrating for residents. Konrad explained that the increase is due to an increase in value of the property. Council and staff attempted to explain the impact of value on taxes.

Mr. Helms of 384th Trail addressed the Council and said his property tax statement came in the mail and he almost had a heart attack. He is on a fixed income and according to the line on the bottom his taxes went up 83.8%. Konrad explained the budgeting process. Konrad explained that the increase is being driven by the increase in the property value. Konrad explained that the levy went up 5.2%. Mr. Helms said he wants to protest this increase. Blomquist pointed out that the taxes went up on Mr. Helms' property because he was only paying taxes on the land and now is paying taxes on the full value of the home and the land.

Susan Sjodeen indicated that her taxes went up 477% but she does not understand the unfinished basement being included. Konrad explained the valuation hearing process for the residents in attendance. Blomquist indicated that residents can attend the school board hearing as well but they are going to be laying out their budget. Furman asked if the people that signed the list to speak would like to provide a telephone

number because she would like them called to remind them of the valuation hearing. Mayor Lindquist invited folks to provide their phone number.

Blomquist thanked everyone for coming. Jensen suggested that the group should all go see the Assessor at the same time to get justification for the valuations.

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Furman to adjourn.

ADJOURNED at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridgitte Konrad, City Administrator
jrl/TOSS