

Minutes
City Council
Thursday March 5, 2020
6:30 P.M.

Mayor Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm with the following members Present: Mayor Carlson, Councilor Kunshier, Vicky Ethen, Shawn Sullivan, and Councilor Knowles.

Also, present: City Administrator Angela Grafstrom, Police Chief Eric Baumgart, Lt Kevin Stahl, Ross Benzen, Superintendent Dan Eklund, Liquor Store Manager Jacque Nordby, Tyson Hajicek of Moore Engineering, Laura Martin and Scott McKinney of the Braham Journal, and Karen Knowles

Public Hearing on Wastewater Facility Plan:

Mayor Carlson opened the public hearing on the wastewater facility plan at 6:32 pm.

Tyson Hajicek of Moore Engineering said they are pursuing clean water revolving fund money with a facility plan. The plan details the existing conditions and options for treatment alternatives and locations. The plan looks at a combination of rehab and replacement, especially in the collection system. The city does this to be ranked. Based on priority it gives the city an opportunity to vie for funds and we are then on the list. Clean Water communicates with Rural Development which gives us more options and the opportunity to move forward in phases. Sullivan asked about the maintenance. Hajicek said a fee can be added to put into a wastewater fund and build a reserve and also look at an asset plan. Hajicek concluded by stating next the city will review the water side in May. Rankings come out at the end of May, beginning of June and it is good to be ready.

Motion by Councilor Ethen to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously. Public hearing closed at 6:45.

Mayor Carlson called the regular city council meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Councilor Sullivan moved to approve the minutes of 2-4-20 and 2-26-20 as written. Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Councilor Knowles to approve the 3-5-20 agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously.

Payment of Bills and Payroll

Council reviewed the bills totaling \$317,301.42 which includes check #40667 to #40771, #2e-4e, 31996e - 31998e electronic transfers and payroll transfers 501471e and 501539e in the amount of \$42,567.73.

Motion made by Councilor Kunshier to approve the payment of the bills and payroll as presented. Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously.

Engineering Report

A working session and public hearing have already been held for the Wastewater Facility Plan.

Councilor Ethen moved to approve Resolution 10-20 adopting the Wastewater Facility Plan as presented by Moore Engineering. Motion seconded by Councilor Sullivan and carried unanimously.

Police Report

Crime Free Housing Program:

Kevin Stahl gave a presentation on a Crime Free Housing Program. He explained the program had started in Arizona but has been adopted nationwide. The program provides education and a partnership between law enforcement. Often management calls law enforcement with civil issues and this program give Property Management the needed tools to handle issues themselves. If adopted, the city would require a license for rental units. It would not be required if the owner lives in the unit or rents to relatives. In Braham we have a situation where the police have been called out multiple times to a house that has a marijuana grow in the basement and the tenant still lives there. As it is now, the city cannot reduce crime if we cannot move the players out of town. Most places who implement this program see around a 65% reduction in crime. Initially some property owners are hesitant about participating, but after it is in place, they are happy they have it as property values improve and they are able to rent the units for more money to better quality, longer term tenants. At this time, Stahl and Grafstrom would like to proceed with a public meeting/hearing. They will meet with property owners to discuss and work on an ordinance draft. Council asked for more details. Stahl will provide Grafstrom with a PDF file to send to council.

Motion made by Councilor Ethen to approve moving forward with a public meeting and/or hearing on the Crime Free Housing Program. Motion seconded by Councilor Carlson and carried unanimously.

Change of Officer Status:

Chief Baumgart requested a change of status for Keith Justen from Reserve to Part-time as he has passed all the requirement to be a peace officer.

Motion made by Councilor Ethen to approve moving Officer Keith Justin from the reserves to part-time peace officer. Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

Isanti County Emergency Notification System:

Ross Benzen, County dispatch updated the council on the new Emergency Notification System in Isanti County called Everbridge. He presented some of the options available with the program. You must live in Isanti County to sign up, but they can also tie it to events, like Pie Day, so non-residents attending the event could sign up for notifications during the event. Benzen left handouts for the public and asked that the city put it on their Facebook page and website to let people know about the new platform which will allow the county to more quickly and easily disseminate information. The old Code Red platform was more cumbersome. The new platform, Everbridge is web based and allows for more features. Weather will come automatically if you sign up. Everbridge is available right now for people to sign up. Grafstrom added the city will also note Everbridge information on the utility bills.

Utility Report

Hiring a 4th Person in the Utility Dept:

Mayor Carlson, Grafstrom and Eklund suggested hiring a 4th person in the utility department to reduce the overtime, which will almost fully cover the salary. Eklund says the department has enough work to keep four people busy in the utility dept. with the plan of hiring someone who has water and wastewater certification or can become certified.

Motion made by Councilor Sullivan to approve proceeding with the hiring of a 4th person in the utility department. Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

City Hall Furnace:

The current unit is 25 years old and the heating and cooling in the building is uncomfortably uneven. Eklund checked with the electric and gas companies on rebates. Eklund reported the city would be eligible for a \$400.00 rebate from Centerpoint Energy and a \$168.00 rebate from East Central Energy. Eklund had tried to get a second quote from Johnson Brothers. They said they would be in to look, but never showed up or submitted a quote.

Mayor Carlson asked about the water heater in City Hall. Eklund stated it had been replaced about 3 or 4 years ago.

Motion made by Councilor Ethen to approve accepting the bid from Dale's Heating and Appliance in the amount of \$12,280.00 to replace the heating and cooling in city hall. Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

New Lawnmower:

The utility department is looking at purchasing a lawnmower instead of leasing. This is a situation like we had with the side by side. We currently lease a lawnmower for \$3500/year without a bagger. We could purchase a John Deere with bagger and 3-year warranty for \$15494.67 or an Xmart with a bagger and a 5-year warranty for 16488.00. The price of either machine is equal to about 4 1/2 years of rental so we will come out ahead if we purchase and keep it for 5 to 8 years. Plus, we would be able to resell at that point and recoup a little more. Eklund recommends the Xmart with the longer warranty.

Motion made by Councilor Sullivan to approve purchase of the Xmart lawnmower with a 5-year warranty for \$16,488.00 from Crawford's. Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

The Snowblower

The snowblower had some issues this year and was out of service. Total parts to repair are around \$40,000 and labor is around \$2109. The snowblower is over 20 years old. Eklund priced 2 new on the state bid for around \$85-90,000. So, he is wondering do we repair a 20 year old unit at half the cost of the new one and hope we get a few more years out of it, or do we look at purchasing a new one later this year or early next year? Council discussed and felt at that price it would be wiser to purchase a new one which would last us longer into the future instead of trying to repair the old one which may not last another season.

Motion made by Councilor Knowles to approve purchase of a new snowblower for around \$85,000 to \$90,000. Motion seconded by Councilor Sullivan and carried unanimously.

Liquor Store

Sarah Golly has now resigned so council needs to accept her resignation.

Councilor Sullivan moved to accept the resignation of Sarah Golly as of 2-29-20. Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

5 individuals were interviewed for the liquor store by Manager Nordby and Administrator Grafstrom: Dwayne Scofield, Randy Rimer, Greg Mason, Debra Barrett and Jessica Murphy. Nordby is recommending the city hire Dwayne Scofield full-time at \$12.13/hour and Jessica Murphy, Debra Barrett and Greg Mason part-time at \$11.77/hour. Nordby

wants to pay Scofield slightly more because of his knowledge and understanding of liquor store operations and display set-up.

Councilor Ethen moved to approve the hire of Dwayne Scofield at 12.13/hour and Jessica Murphy, Debra Barrett and Greg Mason at \$11.77/hour. Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

Old Business

Potential Condemnation

Court was held regarding the condemnation of the property at 310 Central Drive W on February 26. Inspector Lind wrote a memo regarding the findings to the council explaining Mr. Laurent was late for the court time but he did show up. At that point, the judge asked the City and Mr. Laurent to meet and try to come to an agreement about the property. After discussion, it was recommended to the court, that Mr. Laurent would have 60 days to secure the property by fixing the windows and doors and to fix the foundation and have the foundation backfilled at that time. Mr. Laurent would be able to work on the home after that but must be finished with everything by October.

The court asked Mr. Laurent if he was agreeable to these terms and if he was. he waived his right to be able to bring his case back to the court. Mr. Laurent agreed to the conditions. So the court issued a judgement for the City, stating that if the immediate dangers on the property have not been resolved in 60 days, the City can remedy the hazards by fixing up the property or having the property removed.

The City will be receiving a copy of the judgement once it is signed by the judge.

New Business

Permits

The council reviewed a gambling permit for the Allina Associated Foundation and a premises permit for Braham Area Committee for kids.

Councilor Sullivan moved to adopt Resolution 20-06 approval of State Gambling Permit for Allina Associated Foundation to host an event with gambling on 5/1/2020. Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

Councilor Ethen moved to adopt Resolution 20-07 approval of Premises Permit for Braham Area Committee for Kids to conduct pull tabs at Raven Properties dba Rysdam Pizza Pub. Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

Procurement Policy

Resolution 20-08, Procurement Policy, was recommended by the auditors and is required if we ever pursue any federal funds. This is a good policy to have and helps to clarify when we need council action and when we need formal bids for purchases.

Councilor Kunshier moved to adopt Resolution 20-08 Establishing a Procurement Policy. Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously.

EFT Policy

Resolution 20-09 EFT Policy was also recommended by the auditors and clarifies how we will handle electronic transfers in and out of our accounts.

Councilor Knowles moved to adopt Resolution 20-09 Establishing a Policy on wire/automated bank payments/electronic funds transfer. Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

Employees Donating Time

An employee recently requested they be allowed to donate time to an employee whose family member was dying. Staff has said they were able to donate time in the past. The city attorney said the city does not have a policy at this time and does not recommend doing this without one. The immediate need for this policy has passed. The attorney wrote the policy I have given you for review. It would allow time to be donated if the employee was sick and needed the time off, but it would not be allowed to be donated for the person to be off with family members. In addition, we need to consider how much time can be donated, at what rate, and how long they need to be employed. I think, if the policy is approved the hours are transferred 1 hour to 1 hour and not adjusted by the rate of pay. What this means, is that if someone making 10.00 transferred to someone making 5.00 (not a real pay scale, just a simple example) the person making 5.00 would still get 1 hour and not 2. This may take some time to sort, so I only listed this as a review item. No action taken. Council discussion was to let employees decide how much time they want to give and if they run out that is their own issue. They were undecided on whether it should be for the employee who is sick only or what family members could be considered. All agreed it would be transferred 1 hour to 1 hour not dependent on the employee's rate of pay. They will review and address at the next meeting.

MOU with the City of Cambridge

Our Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Cambridge on the Admin Fine Officer expires this month (March) so we need to renew for the next 3 years. Nothing in the agreement has changed, so I would suggest we just renew it.

Councilor Ethen moved to renew the Memo of Understanding between the City of Braham and the City of Cambridge for an Administrative Hearing Officer. Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

There being no further business for the Council on March 5, 2020, Councilor Sullivan moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm.

Angela Grafstrom
City Administrator