

Fertile City Council Minutes
Special Meeting
June 24, 2013

The Fertile City Council held a special meeting at 6:30 p.m. on June 24, 2013 at the Community Center. Present were Mayor Brian Nephew and Council members Dennis Hasler and Tanner Lehmann. Council members Linda Widrig and Todd Wise were absent.

The first item addressed on the agenda was the ECPN Program for Fair Meadow Nursing Home. Barry Robertson, Fair Meadow Administrator, explained that the program was started in the State of Minnesota two years ago to help government owned nursing homes increase their reimbursement from Federal programs. Robertson stated that the State rates had been frozen or reduced for the last several years and that Fair Meadow was not going to make it unless they could increase their revenue. Participating in the ECPN Program would allow Fair Meadow to be reimbursed for an amount closer to actual expenses from Medicaid. They would also be able to increase the rate that is charged to private pay residents.

The ECPN Program was put on hold in order to adjourn for a Public Hearing that was scheduled for 7:00 p.m. When the regular meeting was adjourned by Mayor Nephew, he then opened the Public Hearing for a variance request made by Keith Christianson.

Christianson was present at the meeting and he explained that he wanted to rebuild a shop on Albert Avenue and would like to use the existing slab. He stated that he didn't know that the shop that had been torn down was located so close to the road right of way, and that he needed to go one or two feet further north for the footings for the new building.

Barb Stewart was present at the Public Hearing as well and expressed that she had no concerns about the new building. Stewart was just wondering if the shop would be used for a repair business and that there would be semis parked along Albert Ave. East. Christianson assured Stewart that he would be doing a limited number of repair work since he was semi-retired.

Council member Hasler then questioned the size of the new building since the building permit said it would be 40' X 60' and the variance request stated 40' X 80'. Christianson confirmed that it was 40' X 80'.

There being no further questions or comments the Public Hearing was adjourned and the Council meeting was reconvened.

There being no objections to the variance requested by Christianson, Council member Lehmann made the motion to approve the variance request. The motion was seconded by Council member Hasler and was carried.

This was followed by a continuation of the discussion on the ECPN Program. Mayor Nephew asked Robertson whether the increased funds would be going into Fair Meadow's general fund and Robertson assured him that they would since they needed those funds for general operating. Robertson went on to explain that they have lost over \$200,000 in the first eight months into their fiscal year. This was followed by further discussion on operating capacity trends and the impact of the Affordability Care Act on nursing home expenses. Robertson also stated that there was a possibility of dropping some more beds in order to lower the State surcharge.

Council member Hasler then made the motion to approve Resolution #6-2-13 Resolution Establishing an ECPN Program. The motion was seconded by Council member Lehmann and was carried.

This was followed by a discussion of the current operating reserves for the nursing home. Robertson explained that the nursing home currently has \$79,000 in their account and that he anticipates that will be depleted in mid-August. Interim Administrator Liden explained to the Council that the nursing home would have to pay 4.5% if Robertson had to sign warrants for operating. The City currently had funds invested in a 4M fund that was only earning .5% interest. Liden felt it would make more sense for the City to loan the funds to the nursing home and charge 2%, so both parties could benefit. Mayor Nephew agreed that it made sense for the City to borrow funds to the nursing home.

The next item on the agenda was the payout of accrued vacation days for former Administrator Frohrip. Liden explained that she had contacted the City attorney for an opinion on whether the payout should include all of the vacation time for 2013 or if those days should be prorated through the end of April. The City attorney stated that since the full year of vacation accrues as of January 1st, that the City should pay the full amount for 2013.

After a brief discussion, Council member Hasler made the motion to pay Frohrip's accrued vacation based on the Personnel Manual. The motion was seconded by Council member Lehmann and was carried.

The hiring of a part-time office position was the next item addressed by the Council. Liden provided the Council with the names of the applicants and information on the qualifications for the position. Liden recommended the hiring of Terry Baumgartner since she had an office background and had worked in billing at Riverview Health. Liden also felt that she had the personality for dealing with the public in a knowledgeable, friendly manner.

Council member Lehmann made a motion to hire Terry Baumgartner as part-time billing clerk for \$12 per hour. The motion was seconded by Council member Hasler and was carried.

The Council then addressed promoting Lisa Liden to fill the open Administrator's position. The meeting was closed at the request of Liden. Council member Hasler distributed a memo to the Council from the Personnel Committee. He stated that he and Council member Widrig had met with Liden to discuss the position and that the memo stated the Personnel Committee's recommendations.

Council member Hasler then made a motion to hire Lisa Liden as the new City Administrator. The motion was seconded by Council member Lehmann and was carried.

The Council then discussed salary and benefits for the Administrative position. Council member Hasler stated that the Personnel Committee recommended granting 10 days paid vacation for the first year along with three personal days.

The discussion then moved on to salary. Liden presented the Council with information that she had obtained regarding Administrative salaries in other similar size communities in Minnesota. Liden also explained the point system that can be used to evaluate various positions with varying duties and responsibilities. There was a brief discussion of tabling the issue of salary until the July Council meeting. Council member Hasler then stated that the Administrator's salary is for the position and not the person. He felt it was reasonable for Liden to request that her salary be at the same level as the previous Administrator.

Council member Hasler then made the motion to grant the new Administrator ten vacation days, three personal days with the salary being at the current Administrative level in the budget. The motion was seconded by Council member Lehmann and was carried.

The final item on the agenda was the job descriptions for the City Administrator and Utility Billing Clerk. Administrator Liden explained that the Administrator's job description was a combination of the previous Administrator description with several of the Deputy Administrator's duties added in. The Utility Billing Clerk description was one that Fosston used and it had been modified somewhat to more accurately fit the City of Fertile.

Upon further discussion, Council member Hasler made the motion to approve the job descriptions as presented for City Administrator and Utility Billing Clerk. The motion was seconded by Council member Lehmann and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Brian Nephew, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator