

## **Fertile City Council Minutes January 11, 2016**

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, January 11, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Brian Nephew and Council members Dennis Hasler, Todd Wise, Linda Widrig, and Reid Jensrud. Also present were Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, City Administrator Lisa Liden, Travis Jensrud, Brian Grunhovd, Dave Blomseth, Jake Swiers, and Twylla Altepeter.

Mayor Nephew called the meeting to order and two items were added to the agenda. These items were the Fire Dept. Relief Bylaws and Resolution #1-2-16 that had to do with a fire department CD that was going to be purchased from Red River State Bank.

Fair Meadow Administrator, Angie Leiting was the first to report to the Council. She reported that the month of December began and ended with 39 residents and had operated at 72.83% capacity. Leiting reported that the beds that had been decertified a few months ago had not yet officially been decertified at the State level so that was contributing to the low occupancy percentage. The home had also served 152 home delivered meals. She ended by reporting that the audit had not yet been completed by Eide Bailly.

Kevin Nephew, Director of Public Works, then gave his report. He began by stating that there was little to report this month and that all the equipment was working okay. They had also been a little busier in recent days with moving snow. Mayor Nephew then inquired about the communication between the water tower and treatment plant and if that was still working properly. Kevin Nephew replied that it was now working fine and that the problem had been a plugged line to the pressure switch.

Nephew reported also that the skating rink had been pretty busy and that the ice was pretty good so far this year.

Council member Jensrud then had a few questions relating to snow removal. He commented that there was four feet of snow left at the edges of some streets in town and he wanted to know how many passes are made with the grader on different streets. Nephew replied that he already makes extra passes on four of the wider streets and three passes on a couple of others and that to his knowledge all of the streets were cleared for the most part from curb to curb. He explained that when we do get a significant amount of snow that the piles get a little higher and that can affect clearing all the way to the curb. Nephew also stated that sometimes they have to go around cars that are parked along the street and that will result in snow not being cleared all the way to the curb.

When asked about what time the streets get plowed, Nephew replied that they usually start at 4 a.m. and begin by clearing all the snow on the streets one block off of Mill Street. This was followed by a brief discussion of possibly starting calendar parking with no parking on each side of the street on alternating days.

Council member Jensrud then asked about the clearing of the ends of driveways. He had gotten some complaints that snow was being pulled out of the driveways and deposited in front of mail boxes or that the ends were not being done at all. Kevin Nephew commented that sometimes the snow was put in areas that didn't really make sense but that they were working on correcting that. He said that any

complaints should be directed to the Maintenance Department so adjustments could be made. Mayor Nephew then reminded those present that the City of Fertile is one of very few cities that offer that service to residents and that the maintenance staff does the best it can in regard to clearing driveways.

Mayor Nephew then jumped ahead to old business on the agenda since Jake Swiers and Dave Blomseth from Community Co-op were in attendance to give a presentation on the natural gas service that would be coming to town in the spring. Jake Swiers began by going over a printed Powerpoint presentation that had been distributed to the Council. He explained that Community Co-op had been approached by Greater MN Gas about a year ago to begin a partnership to supply natural gas to Twin Valley, Mahanomen and now Beltrami and Fertile. GMNG will bring the gas lines to just outside of town and Community Co-op would be handling the service lines within City limits.

Swiers then went on to explain some general information about the service coming to town. First of all, he stressed that no one would be required to hook up to the service and that it was totally voluntary. The hook up cost would be \$275 and of that amount, \$200 would be given back to the customer as a credit on their account. There would be a monthly meter fee of \$10 and gas would be billed out as the metered use would indicate. The price for the gas is set on an annual basis and is set by a committee which would include one person from each community that they serve. Dave Blomseth then explained further that the meter fee would be \$20 for commercial businesses and \$100 for industrial users and that the fee covers maintenance of the meter.

This was followed by a question and answer session with Council members asking questions regarding pricing, safety features of the gas lines, where the lines would be run in town and how long the special installation pricing of \$275 would last. Blomseth explained that there would be a couple of community meetings held in a couple of months and that people could begin signing up for the service at these meetings. Customers would also have to fill out a credit application when they sign up and that Community Co-op also worked with fuel assistance programs. This was followed by a general discussion on how to notify the public of when these meetings would be held.

Also briefly discussed was the arbitration clause that the City wanted to change in the franchise agreement. Blomseth stated that the Co-op would like to retain that clause since the Co-op would be investing a great deal of money on the infrastructure for the service and that they would prefer arbitration over litigation when the franchise agreement was up for renewal.

The next items on the agenda had to do with the fire department. Travis Jensrud and Brian Grunhove were present at the meeting to ask for Council approval on the updated bylaws for the Fire Relief Association. The bylaws had last been updated in 2004 and just needed a few changes to be in compliance with State Statute. Also discussed was the bank resolution for the purchase of another CD that needed to be signed by members of the department in addition to the Mayor and City Administrator. Just like the previous two CD's that had been purchased, it would state on the CD that one of either the Mayor or Administrator and three Fire Department officers would need to sign to redeem the CD.

After a brief discussion on the updated bylaws, Council member Wise made the motion to approve the updated bylaws for the Fire Relief Association. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

A motion was then made by Council member Wise to approve Resolution #1-2-16 Government Banking Resolution. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

Council member Jensrud then gave his monthly report on Fire Department activities. Jensrud reported that the department had two calls for the month of December. One was for a car accident south of town and another was for a grill fire. The total number of calls for 2015 was 29. He noted that the regional meeting would be held at the fire hall in the spring so they were currently doing some painting and organizing and a new door would be installed for the radio room. He also invited Council members and the Administrator to the annual meeting which would be held at 6 p.m. on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

Council member Jensrud then had a few concerns that he wanted to be addressed in regard to the skating rink. He said the building was a little run-down on the inside and that more lights were needed. The sweeper had also quit working and needed to be replaced. This was followed by a brief discussion of the skating rink.

The minutes of the December 14, 2015 meeting were then approved on a motion by Council member Wise that was seconded by Council member Hasler and carried.

The Treasurer's Report was then presented by Administrator Liden. After a review of the Bills for the month of December and the financial reports, a motion was made by Council member Widrig to approve the report as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

The Resolution of Annual Appointments was the next item on the agenda. Mayor Nephew went through the various designations and then appointed Council member Hasler as Vice Mayor, Council member Widrig as Nursing Home Liaison and Council members Wise and Jensrud to the EDA Board. As for the Emergency Management Team, Mayor Nephew appointed himself, Vice-Mayor Hasler, the Fire Chief and First Assistant. Those appointed to the Airport Commission and those appointed were Tom Rongen, Mayor Nephew, Stuart Christian, Roger Raaen, and Kyle Tucker. Mayor Nephew commented that he would see if Tanner Lehmann would still like to serve as an alternate.

The final agenda item that was addressed was the liability insurance coverage for the year. Administrator Liden explained that the Council had to determine the coverage each year by deciding whether or not the City would waive the statutory limits on liability. Liden explained that in previous years the Council had decided to not waive the statutory limits.

After a brief discussion, Council member Jensrud made the motion to accept the coverage without waiving the statutory liability limits. The motion was seconded by Council member Hasler and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Brian Nephew, Mayor

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Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator