

Fertile City Council Minutes March 14, 2016

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, March 14, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Brian Nephew and Council members Dennis Hasler, Linda Widrig, and Reid Jensrud. Also present were Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, City Administrator Lisa Liden, Red River State Bank President Randy Aarestad, Marjorie Broden, and Twylla Altepeter.

Mayor Nephew called the meeting to order and Marjorie Broden was added to the agenda to inquire about a potential splash park.

Mayor Nephew began the meeting by introducing Randy Aarestad to those present. He explained that Aarestad is the new owner of Red River State Bank in town.

Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting then gave her report to the Council. She reported that the month of February began with 38 residents and ended with 40, operating at 76.82% capacity. During the month a total of 154 home-delivered meals were also served. Leiting then reported that the decertification of eight beds was still not official at the State level but that it would become so on April 1st.

Leiting then explained that there was an opening on the Fair Meadow Board and that Marla Swenson was willing to serve as the Secretary on the Fair Meadow Board. A motion was made by Council member Jensrud to appoint Marla Swenson as Secretary of the Fair Meadow Board. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

The next item up for discussion was a potential change in plans for remodeling the current activity room at the nursing home. The original plan was to convert the activity room to Administrative Offices as well as a conference room. Leiting explained that after further discussion and polling the residents, it was learned that most felt it would be better to use that space to expand the current therapy facilities. The change would save approximately \$80,000 in remodeling costs and the only downside would be that the administrative offices would need to remain in an empty room in the assisted living where they were now temporarily located during the remodeling.

This was followed by a discussion on whether any formal steps would need to be taken at the State level to eliminate one apartment from the assisted living. It was determined that it would be okay to continue using one of the empty units in light of the fact that there were currently other empty units available for new residents. It was also determined that formal Council approval would not be required at this point.

Kevin Nephew, Director of Public Works, then gave his report. Nephew reported that they were currently busy with spring clean up and that all the storm drains had opened up. He reported that the water extension work would likely begin the end of May and would take about two weeks to complete. He believed that Tim Olson would be hiring one laborer for the project so it would be unnecessary for the City to hire temporary help for the project.

Nephew then reported that Widseth Smith Nolting had recommended installing an eight inch line for the water main extension rather than the six inch line included on the original plans. The eight inch line would increase the cost of the project by about 65 to 70% but that WSN felt it would be better for future expansion in that area if an eight inch main were installed.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Hasler to change the plan for the St. Joseph's water extension to include an eight inch main rather than a six inch main. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

Mayor Nephew then asked Marjorie Broden to address the Council. Broden explained that she was there with a request by the Early Childhood Initiative. She explained further that ECI works with children from birth to age five and that the group was interested in getting further activities in town that were appropriate for that age group. One such activity that the group was interested in was a splash park. Broden then provided those present with information on two different size splash parks that the group was considering. One was a three unit park on a 20 X 20 slab that would cost \$39,000. The second one was a five unit park on a 30 X 30 slab with a cost of \$55,000. The group was most interested in the larger splash park since it offered a larger play area.

Broden then explained that the quote that had been obtained from SplashPads USA included everything necessary for the park including installation as well as training for staff responsible for maintenance. Also included in the pricing was assisting with grant writing for funding the project as well as assistance with fundraising.

Broden stated that ECI was requesting Council approval to locate the park in JD Mason Park and also for the City to provide free water as well as pay for the electricity. The splash park would also need to be covered by the City's insurance policy. Broden also stated that she had read in the Journal that the Council was considering building new park bathrooms and that ECI would also like the Council to move forward on those plans in the near future so that there were adequate bathroom facilities in the park. This was followed by a discussion on type and design of the bathrooms.

After further discussion of the splash park, Council member Jensrud made the motion to approve ECI moving forward on their plans to locate a splash park in JD Mason Park. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

Mayor Nephew then asked Randy Aarestad to address the Council. Aarestad gave the group some information on his background on economic development in Halstad, MN as well as his work on the Halstad Airport Commission. Aarestad stated that he was interested in working with the City to assist with economic development as well as airport planning.

The minutes of the February 8, 2016 Council meeting were approved on a motion by Council member Hasler that was seconded by Council member Jensrud and carried.

The Treasurer's Report and Bills were approved on a motion by Council member Widrig that was seconded by Council member Jensrud and carried.

Administrator Liden then distributed a memo to Council regarding some concerns that a Council member from Twin Valley had expressed in regard to the natural gas service that was being proposed in Fertile. Mayor Nephew then explained that he had already spoken with this individual and that his concerns were without warrant and was not representative of the Twin Valley Council.

Under new business, the next item up for discussion was a request made by the Polk County Fair Board. Liden explained that the Fair Board had built an announcers booth on the southeast corner of the fairgrounds by the horse arena. The Board currently had enough power in that location for just the lighting around the arena but that additional power was needed for the PA system and for an electric outlet in the booth. The Fair Board had inquired whether they could tap into the power at the City's Garfield Avenue shop since it was close to the arena. The Board would pay for all the installation costs as well as the additional electricity that was used for their events.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Jensrud to let the Fair Board have access to power at the City shop. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

The final item addressed on the agenda was an appointment to the EDA. Administrator Liden explained that there was an opening on the EDA Board due to the fact that Reid Jensrud was now a Council representative on the EDA. She explained further that she had spoken with Karin Braun and that she was interested in serving on the Board.

Karin Braun was appointed to a five-year term on the EDA on a motion by Council member Hasler that was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Brian Nephew, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator