

Fertile City Council Minutes September 12, 2016

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, September 12, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Brian Nephew and Council members Linda Widrig, Dennis Hasler, Todd Wise, and Reid Jensrud. Also present were Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, City Administrator Lisa Liden, Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting, Craig Engelstad, Gary Kiefert, and Lavonne Sannes from the Fertile Journal.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nephew and there were no additions to the agenda.

Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting then gave her report to the Council. She reported that they began the month of August with 40 residents and ended with 39, operating at 90.39% capacity. The home had also served a total of 247 home delivered meals. Leiting also reported that the nursing home was full as was the assisted living.

Angie Leiting then inquired whether or not she should proceed with phase two of the renovation project at the nursing home. When asked about progress on Phase One, Leiting explained that they were continuing work on Phase One and the work should be done by the end of the year. She stated she would like to start on the planning stages of Phase Two while EAPC was still present at the site working. Since Phase Two couldn't be started until the first part of 2017 the matter was tabled.

Director of Public Works, Kevin Nephew, then gave his report to the Council. Nephew reported that he wants to put in a steel ceiling and new LED lights in the shop on Blaine Street as well as a new furnace. He had a couple of quotes on the furnace but still needed to get quotes on the ceiling and lights. He reported also that Downs was looking into retrofitting the furnace in the Garfield Avenue shop. The furnace was quite old and there was some question as to whether or not new orifices could be found to transition from propane to natural gas. As for the changeover to natural gas in the treatment plant, all that would be involved would be switching out the orifices for about \$100 each. Lisa Liden also explained that the budget category for shop building maintenance had been increase to \$7,500 to accommodate the anticipated work in the shop. If that wasn't enough, there was enough room in the budget to increase that category even more if necessary.

Kevin Nephew then reported that the street sweeper had gone in for repairs and that when it was being hauled back after the repairs were done there had been a little accident. Apparently the door had opened and was torn off, breaking the door and windshield in the process. It was brought back to Sanitation Products in Fargo to repair the damage. The damage would be paid for by Sanitation Products. Nephew explained further that the repairs needed on the street sweeper were more extensive than initially thought. While they had it taken apart, several worn parts were replaced.

Council member Jensrud then reported that he had put the City of Fertile on a waiting list to purchase a plow truck from the MN Dept. of Transportation. The State frequently changes out this equipment and municipalities are eligible to purchase them from the State for a reasonable

cost. The trucks are usually available in both single and tandem axle and they come equipped with a front plow, underbelly plow and wing. They are also equipped with sanders and brine tanks. Jensrud explained further that the City wasn't committed to buying one when it became available and that he just wanted to get us on the list. This was followed by a discussion on snow plows.

The next agenda item that was addressed was the electric upgrade proposal for the Learning Center. Craig Engelstad and Gary Keifert were present to give information on the proposed project. Engelstad explained that Wild Rice would be putting the electric service underground to a pedestal. The overhead service was really getting worn and if the lines were kept overhead that the City would need to do a lot of tree trimming. The underground line would solve those problems, but once the line was in and the pedestal installed, electric service would need to be dug in to go back to the Learning Center and also to the shop. Engelstad provided quotes from Downs and Nowacki on getting those services restored. In addition to that work, the Learning Center Board would like some additional work done. A quote was provided for bringing electric service to a box with 50 amp, 30 amp and two 220 outlets in the deck area as well as a yard light by the deck. The Board would also like a yard light on the east end of the Learning Center.

In conversations with Brian Downs, Craig Engelstad also asked for Brian to provide a quote on installing a second electric box at the north end of the small clearing between the driveway and shop. That area was big enough to accommodate campers and the new underground line to the shop would be going through the clearing anyway, so the only added cost was the box. In addition to the electric work Downs also suggested putting in water line in the trench that was being dug for the electric so that water could be made available at the deck, in the clearing and also at the shop. The total cost of all the work was just under \$5,000.

After discussion of the benefits of the camper hook-ups, Council member Hasler made the motion to proceed on the work that was being requested by the AELC. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

Council member Jensrud then gave the fire department report. It was reported that the department went out on four fire calls during the month of August and that some of the newer members of the department would be taking Firefighter 1 & 2 classes starting this winter. At last month's training the department timed getting on scene and pumping water out of a drop tank. It was discovered that one of the drop tanks needs replacing. Finally, the department was awarded a DNR grant to get new gear for grass fires. The grant is a matching one in the amount of \$2,300.

Council member Widrig then inquired about the location of the sirens in town since one resident had complained that she had not heard the tornado siren when it went off in August. Council member Jensrud and Mayor Nephew explained where all the sirens were located in town.

The Personnel Committee reported that they had completed reviewing the new Personnel Manual and that they would like Council to take time to review it so it could be approved at the October meeting. Administrator Liden pointed out that she had noted one omission after printing the manuals so she distributed a substitute page for page 23 with the addition in red.

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

The Treasurer's Report and Bills was then presented by Lisa Liden. She went over the bills that had been paid in August as well as a couple of line items in the budget to actual report noting that the issue with the high amount shown under Payroll Expenses the previous month had been fixed. When vacation and sick time was set up to track through Quickbooks, those pay categories had been keyed to run through payroll expenses in error. Liden corrected the problem by creating a compensated absences expense account to track that expense.

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

The next item on the agenda was the passage of Ordinance #2016-01. After a brief review of the discussion of the matter at last month's meeting, Council member Hasler made the motion to approve Ordinance #2016-01 – A Ordinance Opting Out of the Requirements of MN Statutes, Section 462-3593. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

Another amendment of the City Code was the next item on the agenda. Administrator Liden explained that vehicle traffic on the trails at the Learning Center continued to be a problem and that recently a bow hunter had emailed her several photos of vehicles that he had gotten with his trail cameras. Liden explained further that she had researched the current City Code to see what the enforcement options were for this, she discovered that motor vehicle traffic on the trails was not even addressed in the current Code.

After researching Codes of other cities online as well as the MN Rules pertaining to State Parks and Trails, she opted to draft an entire new chapter for the city code that would address motor vehicles on Nature Center trails as well as other areas of trail use that should be covered. She had spoken with the City Attorney and he agreed that the MN Rules would be a good basis for the addition to the City Code and that he would assist with drafting the penalty and enforcement language that would be added to the end of the chapter. Liden explained that Council would have to call for a Public Hearing to be held at the October meeting so the new chapter could be adopted by ordinance.

This was followed by a discussion of vehicle issues not only on the trails but also on the City streets. Council member Hasler expressed his concern over four-wheelers and golf carts going down Washington at high speeds as well as those vehicles being driven by people too young to safely and legally operate them.

After further discussion of other trail concerns, a motion was made by Council member Wise to call for a Public Hearing on October 10, 2016 on Ordinance #2016-02 to add Chapter 75 to the City Code to address trail use at the Learning Center. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

The budget for 2017 and the levy were the next items up for discussion. Administrator Liden explained that only two changes had been made to the budget since it had been submitted at the

August meeting. The levy had been increased by 2% to \$202,000 to allow some flexibility in planning for projects next summer which included some work at the maintenance shop as well as building new park bathrooms. The budget category for Public Works, Building Maintenance had also been increased to \$7,500 to allow for replacing the furnace, a new ceiling as well as new lighting. Quotes had been obtained on the furnace, but not the other two items. Once those quotes were obtained, it was quite likely that there would be an additional increase in that expense category.

After a brief discussion, Council member Hasler made the motion to approve Resolution #9-1-16 City Clerks Certificate of Proposed Tax Levy. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

The meeting ended with further discussion on Fair Meadow Nursing Home and whether to proceed on phase two of the renovation project. Also discussed was financial accountability for the nursing home and the responsibilities of the Fair Meadow Advisory Board. Council discussed holding a special meeting later in the month to determine the level of financial reporting that was needed from Fair Meadow to the Council on a regular basis.

After discussion of the matter, Council member Jensrud made the motion to revisit proceeding on phase two of the renovation project on May 1st. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Brian Nephew, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator