

## **Fertile City Council Minutes February 13, 2023**

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, February 13, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were Mayor Daniel Wilkens, and Council members Mary Kiefert, Matthew Massmann, Amanda Bosman, and Todd Wise. Also present was City Administrator Lisa Liden, Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting, Faith Kuzma, City Engineer Jeff Ebsch, and Curt Zimmel with Mutchler Bartram Architects.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkens at 6:30 p.m. and began with those present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda was amended to include the disposal of the upright piano under new business. The agenda as amended was approved on a motion by Council member Massmann that was seconded by Council member Bosman and was carried.

Under Public Comments, City resident Faith Kuzma asked to address Council regarding her concerns on 5G cell phones. Kuzma noted that there currently weren't any 5G cell phone towers in this area of the state with the nearest ones located in the Twin Cities. Kuzma stated that the ultimate goal of cell phone providers was to have 5G service available worldwide in the near future and that she was concerned about the potential health effects of 5G. Kuzma then shared information on 5G service and that it was a constant high band energy. She explained that there has been no safety testing on the long term effects of virtually continuous exposure to 5G and that the Federal Communications Commission has no safety standards in place. When Kuzma was done with her presentation, Mayor Wilkens thanked her for sharing her concerns.

The minutes of the January 9, 2023 regular meeting and the January 24, 2023 and February 2, 2023 special meetings were approved as presented on a motion by Council member Kiefert that was seconded by Council member Wise and carried.

City Administrator Lisa Liden gave the Treasurer's Report. Liden went over the out of the ordinary deposits and checks for the month of January. Under the deposits Liden noted the amount received from the fire department and explained that the bulk of that check was for the first payment on the new truck. Under the check listing Liden noted several checks including payments made for the fire department, checks for the recent work in the City shop as well as four checks for bond payments. The balance sheet, profit and loss, and budget to actual reports were also reviewed. Liden noted that the budget to actual report was for the end of December so, ideally, all revenue and expense totals should be close to 100%. The year-end totals were briefly reviewed and explanations made for any large deviations between total actual revenue and expenses and the budget.

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

Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting gave the report for Fair Meadow Nursing Home. The month of January began with 39 residents and ended with 41, operating at 93.62% capacity. They had also served 152 home delivered meals.

The profit and loss for the month of January showed a combined loss of over \$13,000 with the nursing home showing a loss of almost \$4,000 and the assisted living a loss of over \$9,000. The year-to-date profit and loss showed a combined profit of just over \$126,000 with the nursing home showing a profit of over \$155,000 and the assisted living a loss of over \$28,000. For the budget to actual report, both income and expenses were a little below the budgeted level.

Administrator Leiting noted that there would be three payrolls in the month of March and asked about skipping the old debt payment to the City for three months to allow for rebuilding the cash balance after March. After a brief discussion it was decided to wait on that decision depending on how cash flow looked in the next few months.

Council member Massmann asked about the reimbursement check to an employee where part of the total was charged to donation revenue in the amount of \$910.55. Administrator Leiting didn't recall what the check was for but would check into the following day and send an email to City Administrator Liden with the explanation.

There was nothing to report under the airport.

City Engineer Jeff Ebsch gave his report to Council. He had submitted written reports to Council noting that the water projects from the previous year had been resubmitted for potential funding in 2023 if a bonding bill passed the State Legislature. He noted that the watermain replacement project had placed high on the priority list but that the meter replacement project was ranked fairly low. Depending on how much money was designated in the bonding bill, the watermain project looked promising for 2023. This was followed by general discussion on the funding process with Ebsch noting that there was a high likelihood of loan forgiveness on the watermain project given the City's high water debt.

Ebsch also noted the invoice and courtesy discount given for the work that Moore Engineering had done for the city in 2023. The work included preparation for the Project Priority List and Intended Use Plan for the 2022 projects that had been submitted as well as general engineer services, attending Council meetings, and preparing the city's GIS WebMap.

Curt Zimmer with Mutchler Bartram Architects gave his report on the Community Center project to Council. He reminded Council that the plan for heating and cooling included placing four condenser units on the roof to heat and cool the four zones in the building. During the planning phase and a review of the original construction plans for the community center, the structural engineer had informed them that the roof was not constructed strong enough to support all four units going on the roof. When the community center was built in the early 80's construction codes were different and there was nothing in the code to account for snow drifting in locations on the roof.

Zimmel said that the structural engineer would likely be sending the City a letter explaining about the snow drift load causing potential issues on the low roof just west of the high auditorium roof. The structural engineer would likely be recommending that two or three of the trusses in that area be reinforced. He explained further, that to install all four condenser units on the roof would involve reinforcing the main beam that ran east to west at about the center of the building. That work would likely involve taking out the ceiling grid in the hallway and likely part of the north wall in the auditorium to access the beam. Zimmel explained, however, that there was another option for the heating and cooling that would involve less interior work and be much less expensive.

Two of the units could go on the lower part of the roof and a third on the high roof above the auditorium, but to heat and cool the fourth zone would require installing a commercial gas furnace in the current maintenance room and a condenser outside on the grass between the building and sidewalk. For the heating, a less expensive option would be to install two residential furnaces. Two residential condenser units would then be installed just outside the building.

Further discussion was held on the structural work that the roof would require to address the snow drift load and also to strengthen the main beam. Discussion was also held on the commercial furnace versus two residential furnaces. It was determined that Curt Zimmel should get cost estimates on the commercial heating unit and two residential units as well as the necessary condensers. Council also asked for further cost information on the structural work on the roof. Once that information was obtained, a special Council meeting could be held to approve which options to go with.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Director, gave his report next. He said that they were still working on cleanup from the last storm and they were also continuing work on removing snow piles. Nephew reported that there had been three sewer backups the previous week due to a blockage in the manhole located on the corner of Highway 32 and County Highway 1. This was the same manhole where there have been issues in the past with grease blockages. The grease blockages have occurred in the line coming into the manhole from the south. This time, however, the blockage was located in the manhole where the line enters from the east on County Highway 1. The blockage was just a buildup of sludge, toilet paper, and wipes.

Administrator Liden had filed a claim with the League of MN Cities Insurance Trust and the adjuster had already held a phone conference with Liden, Kevin Nephew, and Chris Zimmel. After reviewing the information on the backups, where the blockage had occurred, and the city's records on flushing the sanitary sewers, the adjuster had determined that the City was not liable for any damage caused by the backups. The affected homeowners would have to file claims through their homeowners insurance. Discussion was then briefly held on the issues in the past in that same area. Liden noted that the adjuster had highly recommended that given the issues in that manhole, that the line coming from the south which is subject to large amounts of grease, that the line be flushed out annually going forward.

The next item to address under old business was a change order on the materials for the addition to the shop at the Learning Center. Mayor Wilkens explained that a few changes and additions

had been made to the plans for the shop and as a result, the materials cost had gone up by about \$9,000. A drive through door had been added to the back of the shop so that the ski trail grooming equipment could be driven straight through with no backing up or turning around required. It was decided also that the addition should be built with plans to heat it in the future, so that added some extra cost for materials.

After a brief discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the change order for the additional materials costs for the shop addition. The motion was seconded by Council member Bosman and was carried.

The final item to address was the disposal of the old upright piano in the auditorium. Administrator Liden explained that the piano had been in the auditorium for many years and was never used since a new piano was donated about seven or eight years ago. The last time the upright had been professionally tuned was about ten years prior and at that time the person who had tuned it said that it likely could not be tuned again. The piano was in the way for many of the events held in the auditorium and was just being moved around to keep it out of the way. In addition, there were two or three old square tables that were in pretty bad shape that could also be disposed of.

After a brief discussion, Council member Massmann left the disposal of the piano and the old tables up to the discretion of the City Administrator. The motion was seconded by Council member Bosman and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m. on a motion by Council member Bosman.