

Fertile City Council Minutes

May 11, 2020

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, May 11, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens, and Council members Linda Widrig, Stanton Wang, and Todd Wise. Also present were City Administrator Lisa Liden, and Public Works Director Kevin Nephew and Twylla Altepeter from the Fertile Journal. Present by telephone were Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting and City Engineer Alex Ranz.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkens at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting began with those present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda was approved as presented on a motion by Council member Wang that was seconded by Council member Widrig and carried.

There were no public comments.

The minutes of the April 13, 2020 meeting were approved on a motion by Council member Wang that was seconded by Council member Widrig and carried.

City Administrator Lisa Liden next gave a brief overview of the financial statements and the out of the ordinary bills paid in April. The Treasurer's Report and Bills were approved on a motion by Council member Widrig that was seconded by Council member Wang. The motion was carried.

City Engineer Alex Ranz, who was present by telephone, began with an update on the water and campground projects. He reported that the work would begin the next day and they would start with the boring at the south end of Blaine Street through the north end of the fairgrounds. Once the boring was complete, they would begin replacing the water and sewer mains on Blaine St. starting with the removal of the asphalt and the curb and gutter on the east side of the street. Once the work on Blaine St. was completed, they would begin work on the RV campground if the permit were approved. Ranz also noted that street access would remain open to the residents on Blaine.

Ranz then gave an update on the financing for the project. In the early conversations with MN Public Facilities (PFA), it sounded like PFA would fund all aspects of the project. Once the plans and cost information were received at PFA, they determined that some of the costs, mostly those associated with the RV campground, were ineligible. MN Rural Water, however, would be able to finance the ineligible costs and more information would be available at the next meeting on that loan.

Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting gave her report to Council. She reported that the month of April began with 39 residents and ended with 39, operating at 89.28% capacity for the month. They had also served 253 home delivered meals. On the balance sheet, Leiting noted that the cash balance was going down due to the incentive pay.

The profit and loss for the month of April showed a combined profit of just over \$28,000 with the nursing home reporting an income of over \$34,000 and the assisted living a loss of over \$6,750. The year to date profit and loss showed a combined profit of over \$21,000 with the nursing home at a profit of over \$98,500 and the assisted living showing a loss of over \$77,000. In reviewing the budget to actual report Leiting noted that the total expenses to date were slightly higher than the budget while the revenues were slightly lower.

Leiting then gave an update on the COVID-19 situation. She noted that they fortunately have no cases yet at Fair Meadow but that cases have been reported at Pioneer, Mahnomen, and the Villa. They had also received some personal protective equipment from the State and included were 100 N95 masks and 300 surgical masks. Leiting then reported on the Payroll Protection Loan that she had recently applied for. The loan would cover 2.5 months of payroll. Once the funds were received, Leiting would reinstate the incentive pay.

Administrator Liden then asked about the amounts that were being paid out under unemployment and if that was due to the COVID situation. Leiting explained that the cases were former employees who had moved into other positions with other employers and those position were likely recently cut due to COVID. Mayor Wilkens then asked about empty rooms at the assisted living and Leiting reported there are three empty units but that someone was moving into one on June 1st.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Director, gave his report to Council. Nephew began by explaining about the calcium chloride matter that was on the agenda. He noted that the City already maintains 105th Ave. SW as part of an annexation agreement when the City annexed the Industrial Park property. Nephew stated that he grades the road and that it would need less grading if calcium chloride were applied. Nephew also said that the gravel portion of Washington Ave. NE should also be done to the intersection of 105th Ave. SW. Discussion was then held on how much the adjoining property owners should pay for the application of the chloride. Administrator Liden noted that for the rest of the streets in town that the residents pay for roughly half the cost.

After further discussion of the matter, Council member Widrig made the motion to approve getting calcium chloride applied to the east end of Washington Ave. SE and around the corner going north to the Jesse Sannes' property line. Property owners along that section of road would be billed for \$100 each. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

Nephew then reviewed the estimates that he had received from Dean Johnson for some road work and the removal of the old well house located at the old skating rink site. The first estimate was for removing some trees and re-sloping the south side of the road going down the hill by the Old Mill Pond. That estimate was for \$2,000 to \$2,500 and Nephew noted that Garfield Township should pay for the work. He intended on attending the Garfield Township meeting after the Council meeting.

The second estimate, for \$1,500 was for the removal of the old well house, the concrete foundation, and hauling the brick and concrete away.

The third estimate was for rebuilding the Old Mill Road which required cutting down the north shoulder and ditch and putting that material on the road center. The estimated cost was \$4,000 to \$5,000. That work would also be discussed with the Garfield Township Board since they are responsible for road work other than regular maintenance.

After discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wise to hire Dean Johnson to remove and haul away the old well house and concrete slab. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried. The other quotes would wait pending a decision by Garfield Township.

The next item Kevin Nephew addressed were three quotes that he had gotten from Agassiz Asphalt. The first quote for \$17,750 was for the highway 32 aprons on Washington, Albert, and Nelson Avenues. The quote would be forwarded to MnDOT since the work was in their road right of way. Since Agassiz was going to be in town doing some other City work, Nephew felt it would save the State some money to have Agassiz do the work and then hopefully those areas would be repaired soon.

The second quote for \$12,750 was for removing the turf and putting down a gravel base and then asphalt on the east side of the fire hall where the new water salesman was going to be installed. Discussion was held on whether concrete would be a better alternative than asphalt since some additional concrete would be required between the sidewalk and fire hall.

After discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wang and seconded by Council member Widrig to seek further bids from Reitrock Paving and some concrete bids and to authorize Administrator Liden to accept the low bid. The motion was carried.

The final bid was for some repair work on Albert Ave. SW in front of Motteberg Accounting and then up the block to the corner along the edge of the street. After further discussion, a motion was made by Council member Wise and seconded by Council member Wang to get another asphalt quote on that area as well and to authorize Administrator Liden to accept the low quote. The motion was carried.

Nephew reported also that the light poles on the north end of the fairgrounds would be removed as part of the RV campground project. A new street light will be put in at the fairgrounds entrance on McKinley Street.

Mayor Wilkens then asked about clearing some trees at the old satellite site by the sports complex so the area could be used for parking for people wishing to access the hiking trails from that location. Nephew said he would look at whether the trees were on City property and get them cleared.

Administrator Liden gave her report to the Council. She reported that she had been working with Eide Bailly on the audit and that it would take longer to complete this year since everything had to be done remotely due to the COVID situation. Liden had also been working with MN Public Facilities and MN Rural Water on securing loan funds for the water and sewer project and the RV campground. She noted also that she had an increased work load because she was working alone in the office.

Mayor Wilkens reported that the Learning Center would hold a Board meeting on Wednesday night.

The Fire Department had nothing to report.

Under the airport, Mayor Wilkens reported that he had talked to Dan Triller, the Airport Engineer and that it was still unknown how much State funding would be available for projects due to the COVID pandemic.

The Personnel Committee had nothing to report.

The next item up on the agenda under old business was City facility closures due to COVID-19. Administrator Liden stated that she would like for the office and City buildings to remain closed to the public since gatherings larger than 10 people were still not allowed under the State Governor's orders. With summer coming up, Liden also inquired about the status of the splash park.

After discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Widrig for City buildings and the splash park to remain closed and for Council to reassess the situation at the June 8th meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

The final item up for consideration was an appointment to fill the Council seat vacated by Reid Jensrud. Mayor Wilkens explained that he had received a letter of interest from Matthew Massmann. The letter of interest was included in the Council packets and was briefly reviewed. Mayor Wilkens noted that Massmann had been involved with County EMS for many years as well as the Winger Fire Department and the Winger Lions Club. Mayor Wilkens ended by stating that Massmann would be a good addition to Council and that he would like to appoint him to the vacant seat.

A motion was made by Council member Wise to accept Matthew Massmann's appointment to the City Council. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and carried. Massmann would be sworn in at the June 8th meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m. on a motion by Council member Wang.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator

