

Fertile City Council Minutes December 9, 2013

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, December 9, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Brian Nephew and Council members Linda Widrig, Dennis Hasler and Tanner Lehmann.

The meeting began with Barry Robertson reporting on Fair Meadow Nursing Home. The month of November began and ended with 44 residents, operating at 88.4% capacity. In addition they served 154 home delivered meals and provided 19 days of adult day care.

Robertson also presented the Council with the audit report for the year ended September 30, 2013. He asked that the Council review it for any questions they may have that could be addressed at the January meeting. He reported that two members of the Fair Meadow Board were due to retire at the end of the year and that he would have names of new nominees to fill those positions at the January meeting.

Council member Widrig then inquired about Fertile residents who were in the Assisted Living in Erskine and whether it would be possible for them to come home to the new Fair Meadow Assisted Living. Robertson replied that for those who were in the memory unit in Erskine, Fair Meadow would not be able to accommodate since they weren't set up for a memory unit.

Council member Widrig then questioned whether or not the Nursing Home had a Veteran's Administration contract. Robertson replied that he had inquired about that for many years, but that the government wasn't awarding any more of those contracts at this time. He also explained that Fair Meadow had a VA contract years ago and that it was rarely used. Nursing Home costs were also higher under the VA contract since the home has to pay for doctor visits as well as other items.

Kevin Nephew, Director of Public Works, then gave his report which focused on snow removal policies and issues. One of the issues discussed was the problem with private contractors piling snow in the downtown area. Nephew stated that this is a persistent problem and that the City usually hauls these piles away at various times during the winter when time allows.

Mayor Nephew then commented that our residents are very fortunate since Fertile is one of very few cities that remove the plowed in snow from the ends of driveways. Council member Hasler went on to state that the City needs to have the snowplowing policies put in the Journal so that everyone understands why and how the City does things regarding snow removal. Administrator Lisa Liden stated that she would furnish a copy of the snow removal policies to the Journal.

Council member Lehmann then inquired about the sander and whether that was working okay. Kevin Nephew explained that they were not yet using it since the current sand and salt was a 50/50 mix and was rock hard.

Nephew finished by reporting that the pumps for the lift station had arrived and that they would be installed in the spring. He also reported that the metal had arrived for the new shop roof but that he didn't have a timeline for when Craig Gorder would be starting on the replacement.

Libby Eid was absent, so there was no report on volunteer activities at the Learning Center. In her absence Administrator Liden did report that the ski trails had been groomed and were now ready for cross country skiing.

After a review of the minutes of the November 12, 2013 minutes Council member Hasler made the motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Council member Lehmann and was carried.

The Treasurer's Report and Bills were then reviewed. Administrator Liden briefly went over the out of the ordinary disbursements and after a couple of questions regarding the report, Council member Widrig made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Hasler and was carried.

As Leah Burke had arrived at the meeting, Mayor Nephew made a formal presentation of the Certificate of Recognition that the Council had approved at November's meeting. Burke had been chosen as the 9th District representative for the VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards.

The budget for 2014 was then discussed. Administrator Liden reported that just a few changes had been made to the preliminary budget that the Council had approved in September. The revenue amounts for water and sewer had been increased to reflect the rate increase that had been approved at the November meeting and the only other change was in the salary and payroll expense accounts.

Council member Hasler then reported that the Personnel Committee had met with Kevin Nephew to discuss his salary increase. Based on what they learned in that meeting and looking at salary amounts for other cities in the area the Personnel Committee recommended raising Nephew's and Liden's salary increases to 5% rather than the 3.5% that was included in the preliminary budget. Hasler stated that Fertile is in the middle salary range for City Administrator and Public Works Director when compared to other cities and that the Council needed to look at gradually getting those salaries increased to a more comparative level.

After further discussion of the budget and the levy amount that had been approved at the September meeting, Council member Hasler made the motion to approve Resolution #12-1-13 Certificate of Final Tax Levy establishing the 2014 levy at \$192,000. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

Council member Hasler then made the motion to approve the final budget for 2014 as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Lehmann and was carried.

The final item on the agenda, tobacco licenses for 2014, was then addressed. Administrator Liden reported that she anticipated that the five current license holders would be reapplying for licenses for 2014. Those establishments were JT's Station, Northside Express, The Other Place, Al & Laura's Foods and Oliver's Bar and Grill. Council member Lehmann made the motion to approve the licenses for those five establishments. The motion was seconded by Council member Hasler and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Brian Nephew, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator