

Fertile City Council Minutes October 12, 2015

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, October 12, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Brian Nephew and Council members Linda Widrig, Dennis Hasler, Reid Jensrud, and Todd Wise. Also present were Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, City Administrator Lisa Liden, Mike Strodman of MN Rural Water and Twylla Altepeter.

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

Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting gave her report to the Council. She reported that the month of September began with 40 residents and ended with 41 and operated at 82.9% capacity for the month. They had also served 193 home delivered meals and provided three days of adult day care.

Leiting also reported that the renovation project to the nursing home would begin on Monday of the following week. She reported also that the auditors would also be starting their annual audit next week.

Mike Strodman from MN Rural Water then reported on the amendment to the Wellhead Protection Plan. He began by explaining that this process had begun in 2013 and that Part 1 of the plan had been approved by the MN Department of Health in July of 2014. In Part 1, the area of the Drinking Water Safety Management Area had changed dramatically from the original plan. The City's drinking water vulnerability status had also been lowered to moderately vulnerable. This change in the DWSMA and the lowered status were due to better technology in testing water chemistry as well as Kevin Nephew's work in pinpointing area wells.

Based on the new information the boundaries of the DWSMA were changed and a plan was developed to protect the City's source of its drinking water. As part of the plan, Strodman had worked with City staff to compile a list of potential contaminants which included fuel tanks, wells and spill locations.

Strodman then referred to the management strategies which were given to the Council in an Executive Summary of the Plan. He explained that these strategies gave a way to manage potential contaminants and that the table included target dates as a timeline so that City staff worked on the plan on an ongoing basis throughout the five years of the plan.

Strodman then explained that once the plan had been reviewed at the Public Hearing that it would be submitted to the Dept. of Health who had up to 90 days to review and approve. Once approved, an implementation meeting would be held to review the first three years of strategies.

This was followed by a discussion of potential grant funding to cover some of the costs of the new water line to St. Joseph's new church. Since the new church was located in the City's DWSMA and a new well could potentially introduce contaminants into the system, Strodman explained that the Dept. of Health could provide a grant of up to \$10,000 to extend City water to

that location. The next grant cycle would open on March 1, 2016 and, since the grants are awarded first come, first served, Strodtman explained that the paperwork would be completed well ahead of time so the application would be at the Dept. of Health on March 1 at the front of the line.

After further discussion of the Plan, Council member Hasler made the motion to submit Part 2 of the Wellhead Protection Plan to the Dept. of Health. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

Kevin Nephew then reported on Public Works. He reported that they were busy getting ready for winter. Mayor Nephew then inquired about storage availability at the Garfield Avenue shop for storage of building supplies for the nursing home renovation project. Kevin Nephew reported that he had been able to clear out half a stall for storage.

Next Nephew reported on the TDS building project. Downs and Nowacki would be doing the plumbing and had submitted the plans to the State for approval. The approval process could take from four to six weeks. City staff would install the water line from the main to the curb stop and then TDS would be responsible for the line from the curb stop to the building. The same time frame for State approval of plans would also apply to the City water extension to St. Joseph's. Since those plans had just been submitted to the State a week earlier, the extension project would have to wait until spring.

Nephew then reported that the yard waste dump site was all set up and that people had been using it already.

Council member Jensrud then reported on the fire hydrant pressure tests that the fire department had performed. Jensrud and Nephew then discussed certain hydrants and issues with them leaking as well as hydrants with low pressure. Also discussed were the hydrants in the Industrial Park not being turned on. This was followed by a discussion on possible solutions to the low pressure hydrants and the associated costs to remedy the situation.

The consent agenda which included the minutes of the September 14th meeting and approval of liquor licenses for 2016 was approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Widrig. The motion was carried.

A Public Hearing was then held for issuing a Conditional Use Permit for Kristin Erickson to make and sell lefse out of her home. Administrator Liden explained that a conditional use permit would be required since a business of that nature was not an approved activity in a residential area. Ms. Erickson was at the meeting and explained that she would have to get her kitchen certified by the Department of Agriculture under their cottage kitchen license. In order to get this license the City would have to sign off that it was a permitted activity under City Code.

After further discussion, Council member Hasler made the motion to approve a Conditional Use Permit for Kristin Erickson to make and sell lefse out of her home. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

Council member Widrig then made a request for the Personnel Committee. She explained that she was still bothered about employees' vacation time being awarded on January 1 rather than having it accrue through the year. She explained that she had reviewed vacation time for the current year and that if vacation was currently accrued monthly that one employee was technically 20 hours in the red in July.

This was followed by a long discussion on vacation accrual as well as how time off is not currently recorded in the Quickbooks payroll. It was determined that the Personnel Committee would meet with Administrator Liden to discuss possible changes to be made starting January 1st.

The Treasurer's Report and Bills were then reviewed. Administrator Liden briefly went over the receipts and disbursements for the month of September as well as the profit and loss reports. A motion was made by Council member Widrig to approve the Treasurer's Report and Bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

Administrator Liden reported that the Highway 32 north sewer extension plans were still on hold since a signature was still needed on one of the easements necessary for the project.

The next item up for discussion was the classification of two tax forfeited properties in Fertile. Liden explained that the properties had been certified as non-conservation by the County and that the City had to approve that classification before they could be sold at auction.

Council member Hasler made the motion to approve the County's classification of the two properties as non-conservation. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

Under Law Enforcement, Council member Jensrud reported that he had been asked by a daycare owner on Main Avenue East whether or not the City could put up signage for children at play or possibly lower the speed limit in that area. He explained that Main Ave. E. was a problem as far as cars speeding. The issue was discussed but no motion was made since the matter of signage needs to be explored further.

Also under Law Enforcement, Council member Jensrud brought up another suggestion or question that had been raised regarding the City mounting cameras on street lights. In light of the recent vandalism at Al & Laura's Wine and Spirits Jensrud had been approached by a couple of people wondering whether it would help to catch these perpetrators if there were cameras to record who was in the area at the time. Council member Wise responded that camera footage would have very little to no evidentiary value and that camera systems would be very costly. This was followed by a brief discussion of the matter and no action was taken.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Brian Nephew, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator