

Fertile City Council Minutes April 10, 2017

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, April 10, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens and Council members Linda Widrig, Stanton Wang, Reid Jensrud, and Todd Wise. Also present were Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, City Administrator Lisa Liden, Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting, and Twylla Altepeter from the Fertile Journal. Other visitors were Dani Nelson, Sara Iverson, Lynae Sather, Marla Swenson, Lionel Sandness, Luther and Marilyn Halstensgard, Amber Olson, Peggy Erickson, Kelsey Braun, John Swanson, Dr. Bruce Ring, Elisabeth Ring, Eric Bergeson, and April Swenby.

The agenda was approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

There were no public comments.

The next item up on the agenda was the approval of the minutes which included the minutes for the regular March 13th meeting, the minutes for the March 27th Special Meeting, and the minutes for the April 5th Park Project Committee meeting. A motion was made by Council member Jensrud to approve the minutes as presented and the motion was seconded by Council member Widrig. Mayor Wilkens then asked that the March 27th minutes be amended to include the names of the Airport Commission members and that the motion to publish draft Council minutes be amended to state that they would be published on the website within two weeks.

Council member Wise made the motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

The Treasurer's Report and Bills were then presented by City Administrator Lisa Liden. A brief overview of the bills and receipts for the month of March were given including the out of the ordinary bills for the month. Liden also explained a couple of new cash accounts that had been created on the balance sheet to show the amounts in the City checking and EDA accounts that Fair Meadow has paid to the City to put in reserve for upcoming bond payments.

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

Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting then gave her Administrator's Report. She reported that the month of March began with 39 residents and ended at 41, operating at 95.23 % occupancy. The home had also provided 361 home delivered meals.

Leiting then explained that Keith Bolstad's term on the Advisory Board had expired and she recommended that Jeremy Hovde be appointed to fill the vacancy. A motion was made by Council member Wise and seconded by Council member Jensrud to appoint Jeremy Hovde to the Advisory Board. The motion was carried.

Leiting then gave a brief review of the profit and loss statements as well as the out of the ordinary checks that had been issued during the month of March. Leiting then explained that she had a couple inquiries on purchasing the vacant lot located east of the nursing home. City Administrator Liden outlined some of the options that were available for selling that lot as well as the option to close the meeting since it involved a discussion on selling City owned real estate. It was decided to table the discussion until the end of the meeting when the meeting could be closed.

Kevin Nephew, Director of Public Works, then gave his report to the Council. Nephew began by showing Council the revised plans for the park bathrooms and warming house that he had just received prior to the

meeting. The new plan allowed for the bathroom entrance to be located on the east side of the building. He explained that those plans were no longer necessary since the site plan at the park had been modified to allow for the earlier bathroom/warming house layout. Nephew then went over the site plan for the park.

Nephew reported that three building permits had been issued since the March meeting and that two were for decks and one was for an overhang. All three had been approved since they all fell within the established setback requirements. He also reported that an estimate for crack sealing at the airport had been sent to MnDOT and that we were waiting to see if it would be funded for this summer. He ended by reporting that there had been an issue with the phone line and fuel pump at the airport that had been fixed last week.

Administrator Liden then gave the Administrator's Report. The report outlined her activities since the March meeting as well as information on employee absences for the month. Liden's activities included preparation for the upcoming audit, working with MnDOT and the Airport Commission on setting up a meeting on capital improvements, working with Angie Leiting on nursing home matters and assisting with writing a grant for the park project.

Council member Jensrud then gave the fire department report. The department had been out on three calls during March and they were also working with the Nature Center on doing another controlled burn in the oak savannah the following week. He also reported on the department training that would be starting soon.

Mayor Wilkens then closed the regular meeting and opened a Public Hearing for discussion and comments on Resolution #2017-02. Mayor Wilkens then proceeded to go over each section of the Ordinance to see if anyone had any questions or comments on them. It was decided to amend section 33.02 B to change the number of Council representatives on the Advisory Board to two rather than one. After a review of the Ordinance, Wilkens then asked for public comment.

Advisory Board member John Swanson asked what function the Advisory Board will have going forward. FMNH Administrator Leiting stated that the Advisory role will remain the same as before but that now the Council will have final approval on all financial matters. Mayor Wilkens then explained to those present why the Council had decided to take a more active role in oversight of Fair Meadow.

Eric Bergeson then asked to address those present and he began by stating that there were very few municipally owned nursing homes in the state of Minnesota and that it was very important to the operation of the home for it to remain municipally owned and locally operated. He also explained that since the nursing home served a large area surrounding the City, it might be wise at some point to create a special taxing district similar to the area that is under the school tax district. That way, if the nursing home required a tax levy, the levy would be more accurately spread across the entire area that the home served, rather than just the City of Fertile.

Dr. Bruce Ring then addressed Council and he started by listing off all the area skilled nursing facilities that had either closed recently, were in the process of closing down, or had converted to assisted living rather than skilled nursing. With the reduction in skilled nursing beds in the area, he stated that it was more important than ever for Fair Meadow to remain open. He also expressed that Fair Meadow is a very well-run facility that provides top notch care. John Swanson and Elisabeth Ring also commented on the excellent care that Fair Meadow provides.

There being no further public comments, the Public Hearing was closed and the regular meeting reconvened.

A motion was made by Council member Wise to approve Ordinance #2017-02 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 33 of the Fertile City Code Concerning Fair Meadow Advisory Board as amended. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

The next item up on the agenda was a presentation by April Swenby on a proposed new website for the City. Swenby began by explaining that the main goals of the new website would be to provide better public

information and also to provide support for the local business community. She showed those present the current City website and then went over the draft of her proposed new website. One item she recommended for the new site would be an updated logo for the City and she proposed getting the school website class involved in designing the new logo and the City could perhaps offer a small scholarship for the student whose design is chosen.

This was followed by a discussion on editing the new site and whether that could be done by City staff or whether Swenby had to do that herself. She explained that since the website was written in code, it would be difficult for someone else to do the edits and she explained that Administrator Liden had been doing a good job on keeping an ongoing list of edits that were submitted once or twice a month to keep the costs of editing down.

Another feature of the new site that Swenby explained was the search feature that could be added. This would allow users to search in past City minutes to find when certain subjects had been discussed. Eventually all of the historic City minutes could be put on the site and all of those would be searchable as well. The minutes would also be forever preserved if they were located on the website. Liden explained, however, that for most of the early years, the minutes were handwritten and would need to be typed up first. She explained that she could have Terry Baumgartner work on that as an ongoing project when she had time available.

When asked how much the new website would cost, Swenby stated that she didn't have a firm number yet but that she felt it would be in the \$2,000 area. After further discussion, a motion was made by Council member Jensrud to approve the new website proposed by April Swenby with the cost not to exceed \$2,500. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

Under the Airport Commission, Mayor Wilkens reported that the group had their first meeting on Friday, March 24th. The group met with staff from MnDOT Aeronautics to discuss capital improvements at the airport and it had been a very good meeting. Wilkens also noted that it would be good for the Commission to possibly meet monthly for awhile to get a good start in putting together the capital improvement plan and to work on becoming a NPIAS (federally funded) airport. Wilkens then outlined some of the requirements for becoming a NPIAS airport and what the financial benefits would be.

The next item on the agenda was the Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Early Childhood Initiative for the splash park. Liden explained that since the funding for the splash park was going through the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, that group had advised the local ECI that they would like the MOU changed to remove the section of the agreement that stated that ECI would assist with future funding for necessary repairs.

After a review of the changes to the MOU, Council member Wise made a motion to approve the revised Memorandum of Understanding between the City and ECI. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

Possible questions for the upcoming interviews with City Engineer candidates were then briefly discussed. Administrator Liden had provided Council with a list of several potential questions, and it was decided that Council would review them, make suggestions and recommendations and return them to Liden by Wednesday, April 19th.

Gravel bids for 2017 were then opened and reviewed. Bids were submitted by D.R. Gravel for \$8.57 and Lindberg Enterprises for \$9.10. This was followed by a discussion on the quality and type of gravel that each of the companies provide, as well as whether it was acceptable to accept both bids.

After discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Jensrud to accept both bids. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and carried.

Fire Department gaming permits for the year was the next item up on the agenda. Liden explained that the department had pull tabs in the three on-sale liquor establishments in town and that Council was required to approve their permits for this each year. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Council member Wise and seconded by Council member Widrig to approve fire department gaming for the year. Motion was carried.

Several items for the Car Show were then addressed. The first item was City sponsorship of the event this year. Liden explained that the City was involved in the planning and organization of the event and that in previous years had either provided funds to offset costs or had purchased any added insurance policies that were required. Liden was not yet sure if added insurance would be needed this year, but in past years that policy had cost around \$800. If the insurance was not needed, then the Car Show Committee had requested financial support of \$300 to \$500.

After discussing the matter, Council member Widrig made the motion for the City to pay the insurance premium if a separate policy were required or to donate \$500 if no insurance was needed. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

The closure of three different streets for the Car Show was the next item up for discussion. Liden explained that the first block of Lincoln Ave. NW would need to be closed as well as the first block of Washington Ave. NW and also a section of Second St. NW between Lincoln and Washington Avenue. The Council approved the closure of those streets on a motion by Council member Wise that was seconded by Council member Widrig and carried.

The Committee had also requested permission to use the City lot located behind Thrifty White as well as Cannon Park for Car Show activities. The use of these areas was approved on a motion by Council member Wise that was seconded by Council member Widrig and carried.

The final Car Show item to be address was for Council permission to keep Lincoln Ave. NW closed through the evening for Side Street Bar & Grill to hold a street dance after the car show. The closure was approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wang and carried.

The priority list was then briefly reviewed and updated with the items that were either taken care of or were currently in progress. Mayor Wilkens noted that he would contact Deb Kiel to discuss whether or not Fair Meadow would be able to get approval for VA funding for nursing home care at Fair Meadow.

The meeting was then closed for discussion on the potential sale of the lot that is owned by Fair Meadow. After a brief discussion of the matter, Council member Jensrud made the motion to not pursue selling the lots at this time. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and then carried.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wang.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator