

Fertile City Council Minutes

March 12, 2018

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, March 12, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens and Council members Reid Jensrud, Stanton Wang, and Todd Wise. Also present were City Administrator Lisa Liden, Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, and Twylla Altepeter from the Fertile Journal. Other visitors were Brian King from Ulteig Engineers, April Swenby, Mike Lindberg, and Jim Kerian.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkens and the agenda was approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried. There were no public comments.

The minutes of the February 12, 2018 meeting were approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried. The minutes of the March 5, 2018 Parks Committee meeting were also approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wang and carried.

Administrator Lisa Liden then briefly reviewed the Treasurer's Report and Bills. Liden went over the deposits and checks for the month of February and noted that the payments from the Nursing Home for the month of February had not been received until early March, so those income items were not on the report. Council member Wise then asked about the monthly charge for the porta potty and Liden explained that there was a rented unit in the park for the contractors working on the new building. She noted also that the winter chemicals for the unit made it more expensive than the regular cleaning. Council member Jensrud made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

Brian King then gave the Engineers Report. King reported that the geotech reports were complete and that the boring was also done and everything looked good. He explained also that the survey work had been completed since the last meeting and that the plans were about 50% complete. King then went on to explain that the repaving on Jefferson Ave. alongside the school would be tricky since the current sidewalk slope is not ADA compliant. This was followed by a discussion on whether to take out the street curb to curb and not go all the way to the sidewalk on the south side of the street. The other option would be to take out the sidewalk along the school and replace it in order to make it compliant. King noted that he didn't have an estimate on what that would cost but that he would prefer replacing the sidewalk. He noted also that the original estimate for the project did include other sidewalks along the route but that they hadn't planned on having to replace that sidewalk. Administrator Liden then inquired about grant funding through the Safe Routes to School program. King responded that the City could just do the street curb to curb and then look at replacing the sidewalk later under the Safe Routes program.

King then explained that on the far east end of the project with the looping to connect to the new St. Joseph's line that the line of trees on the edge of "Lover's Lane" would have to be removed. He noted also that the original plan on Garfield Avenue was to go on the north side of the road, but that there were so many pedestals and wiring on that side that they had determined it would be best to run the line on the south side of the road. This was followed by a brief discussion on the need to get easements from the property owners along the snowmobile trail in town.

Mayor Wilkens then asked if there would need to be hearings held regarding the funding for the project. Brian King explained that for Public Facilities funding that hearings were not necessary and that a notice needed to be published in the paper. King ended the project discussion by noting that the plans would be ready in two weeks and would be submitted to the State for approval.

Discussion then turned to the airport and King reported that a meeting had been held with Mayor Wilkens, Administrator Liden, himself, and Dan Triller from Ulteig. The group had gone over the Capital Improvement Plan for the airport and had broken down the runway rehabilitation project into smaller segments to make it more affordable. Mayor Wilkens then briefly touched on what zoning changes may be necessary if the runway is extended on the north end. Wilkens also noted that there had been discussion on the Flying Club becoming more active again and perhaps holding a Mother's Day pancake breakfast like they had done in years past.

Mayor Wilkens then called for the regular meeting to close and opened the Public Hearing for the Conditional Use Permit application submitted by Aaron and April Swenby. Administrator Liden then briefly went over the City Code section regarding CUP's and explained that the category Swenby's home business would fit under would be a bed and breakfast. Liden also explained that the business was located in the former St. Joseph's Church and that there was a daycare located in the basement of the church and that the daycare was a permitted use in a residential zone, so there was no permit required for the daycare.

April Swenby then explained that the former church is their second home and that the Paper Cut business was considered a vacation home rental in the upstairs area of the church. Mike Lindberg who was present for the hearing then asked whether the building would be added on to at all. Swenby stated that there would be no additions to the building and then explained further that the upstairs would be used for crafting weekends where guests would stay overnight.

Lindberg then asked if he could address another matter with Council regarding traffic in his alley during the fair. He said that there is a great deal of traffic with people going down the alley to cut across from the fairgrounds to Elm Street to get out of town. He was concerned since cars frequently drove fast down the alley and he had a young son who played in the backyard. Lindberg asked if it would be possible to close the alley during the fair and Council member Wise and Administrator Liden stated that the alley probably could not be shut down since it was a public right-of-way and that it needed to be open for emergency vehicles. Liden also noted that traffic during the fair was an issue with many other alleys in town and that it was not feasible to shut any of them down.

Discussion then returned to Swenby's CUP application and there were no more questions or concerns. Jim Kerian and Mike Lindberg both commented that they had no problem with the permit being granted.

The Public Hearing was then closed and the regular meeting reconvened. A motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the Conditional Use Permit for Aaron and April Swenby. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

April Swenby then asked if she could ask a question she had regarding the new skating rink. She explained that she was working with the Close Up group at the school and they were trying to raise funds to take a trip to Washington DC. Swenby was wondering if it would be possible for them to have Dippin' Dots for sale at the ice rink. She stated also that they would provide the freezer to keep them in. Administrator Liden then explained that there had been discussions in the past about having concessions at the rink but that they never had because then rink employees would have to handle money. Swenby then asked if they could sell there if the kids involved in Close Up did the selling. This was followed by a discussion on getting set up to sell in the summer when the splash pad was open. Swenby said that she would check with her group to see if anyone would be willing to volunteer.

Due to the absence of Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Liden, the nursing home report was read by City Administrator Lisa Liden. Liden reported that for the month of February they began with 41 residents and ended with 40, operating at 94.55% of capacity. They also served 308 home delivered meals. Liden then briefly reviewed the financial reports for the nursing home and noted that for the month of February the home had shown a profit of \$3,820 and the assisted living showed a profit of \$11,462. For the year to date reports Liden noted that the nursing home showed a loss so far but that the assisted living was showing a profit of over \$58,000. Finally, Liden noted that on the balance sheet there was a positive balance in the checking account and that there were also undeposited funds of over \$18,000 to go in to the bank.

The City Administrator's Report was then reviewed by Lisa Liden. Liden reported that in addition to her regular monthly duties that she had also spent a great deal of time working on loan papers for the interim water project loan as well as information needed for the permanent financing for the project. She had also been working on boxing up older records to make room for the end of year records for 2017.

Mayor Wilkens then referenced the item on the Administrator's report on the progress that was being made on getting the wood from Chad Olson. He explained that the attorney costs would be too high to pursue the matter

through the Courts so instead Liden had requested a letter from the attorney making a formal request to get the wood in exchange for \$1,000 which was the estimate for the work that Olson had done. Rather than take that route, however, Wilkens had met with Verdell Olson and had also spoken with Faye Olson in order to resolve the matter without having to bring attorneys into it. Since the original estimate of Chad's work was between \$800 and \$1,200 he felt it would be better to increase the City's offer to \$1,200 to get the matter resolved. Wilkens asked Liden to prepare a letter to Faye Olson making an offer of \$1,200 and that the letter had been picked up last week. Wilkens stated that now we just had to wait for Faye to have the opportunity to speak with Chad to see if he would accept the new offer.

Under the Agassiz Learning Center Liden reported that the Board would be holding a meeting sometime next week.

Under the Fire Department Council member Wang reported that they had responded to three calls the previous month and the calls were for a fire, a car accident and a lift assist. He reported also that three fire department members had attended training the previous weekend.

For the Personnel Committee, Council member Jensrud reported that the committee had met in January and had reviewed a couple of sections of the personnel policy and had made some changes that they were recommending for approval. One change was to delete the sentence on page 20 that stated that part-time employees would receive pro-rated holiday pay since part-time employees were not eligible for holiday pay. The other change, also on page 20 was to change the premium pay for working on holidays from two times the regular pay to one and a half times the regular pay. Administrator Liden explained that since employees were already being paid for a holiday that giving two times the regular pay meant they would be paid three times their pay when working on a holiday. The final change the committee recommended was an update to the benefits page giving the information on health, dental, life and vision insurance that was now being offered through the City.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the changes recommended by the Personnel Committee. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

Council member Jensrud then reported that the Personnel Committee would need to meet again in the near future to discuss a pay increase for the community center cleaning position. Jensrud had just learned that the cleaning position had not been given a raise for the last couple of years when raises were determined for the other city positions. The Committee would make a recommendation to Council at the April meeting.

Public Works Director Kevin Nephew then gave his report to the Council. Nephew reported that a couple of weeks ago he had noticed that the pumping rate was decreased for one of the two city wells. The well company had come in to take a look at it the beginning of the previous week and they determined that the casing on the standpipe was full of pinholes and pitted so it needed replacement. The current pipe was steel but it was recommended to replace it with 4 inch plastic pipe. Mayor Wilkens questioned whether plastic would be suited for that and Nephew assured him that it would work just as well as the steel.

Council member Wise then commented that he had been asked about the snow pile located between Motteberg Accounting and the house next door. When the pile started melting it would fill the driveway of the house with water and then it would freeze at night making the driveway dangerous for walking. Nephew assured Wise that he would look at it and see what could be done to allow for better water flow away from the driveway.

This was followed by further discussion on the water and sewer project and some of the other changes Nephew was recommending for the plans. Nephew noted also that they were looking at not replacing the sewer on Garfield if it was in good shape still. He would have the line televised to determine whether it needed replacement. Not replacing that line would save the costs of tearing up half of that street and replacing it afterwards.

Administrator Liden then informed Nephew that she had received a complaint from Council about him taking the City plow home to clear not only his driveway but also the neighbor's driveway. Nephew explained that he had always plowed out his own driveway but that he did it on his lunch break so he was not on City time when doing

that. He had only plowed out the neighbor this time since the township grader usually cleared their driveway but was currently out of commission.

Council member Jensrud then stated that as a State employee he was not allowed to use State equipment for personal use and that he would be fired if he plowed out his own driveway. Council member Wang then commented that he had to use his own equipment to clear his own driveway. When asked who clears out her driveway Administrator Liden commented that she pays someone to clear hers out. Mayor Wilkens then asked if the Personnel Committee could discuss the matter and come up with a formal policy on employee use of City equipment.

The next item up on the agenda was Application Resolution #3-1-18. Administrator Liden explained that this resolution needed to be passed to signify the City's intent to apply to the MN Public Facilities Authority for a loan for improvements to the water and sewer system.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Council member Jensrud to approve Application Resolution #3-1-18. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

The micro-loan through MN Rural Water was the next item up for discussion. Administrator Liden explained that the loan was to cover the interim costs for the plans and specs for the water project and that the loan would be paid back when the project loan through PFA was received.

A motion was made by Council member Wang, seconded by Council member Wise to accept the interim micro-loan through MN Rural Water. The motion was carried.

Resolution #3-2-18 A Resolution Authorizing the Issuance, Sale and Delivery of a \$140,000 General Obligation Temporary Utility Revenue Note, Series 2018A was then up for discussion. Liden explained that this Resolution approved the interim loan discussed earlier as well as giving the details of the loan and also information on pre- and post-issuance compliance. Liden explained further that the City was already familiar with the issuance compliance policies since those also applied to the Assisted Living Bond issue and the Nursing Home Renovation Bond issue.

A motion was then made by Council member Wise to approve Resolution #3-2-18. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

The final matter to address in regards to the interim financing for the project was approval of the MN PFA Credit Enhancement Program Agreement. Liden explained that this was an agreement with the State that in the event the City was unable to make payment on the loan that the State would make the payment on the City's behalf.

Council member Wise made the motion to approve the MN PFA Credit Enhancement Program Agreement. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

Council member Wang then reminded Administrator Liden about a Car Show matter that should be discussed. Liden explained that the Car Show Committee could use assistance from City Maintenance staff in setting up for the Car Show this year. It was a great deal of work getting picnic tables and benches moved to the downtown area and that it was difficult finding volunteers to assist with that. Council member Wang commented that assistance with the street barricades would also be needed. Council member Wise stated that he was fine with City staff providing assistance as long as it didn't involve them working overtime.

The meeting was then closed to discuss a personnel matter.

After discussion of the personnel matter, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Council member Jensrud.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator