

Fertile City Council Minutes May 13, 2019

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, May 13, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Daniel Wilkens, and Council members Todd Wise, Linda Widrig, Stanton Wang, and Reid Jensrud. Also present were City Administrator Lisa Liden, Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, and Public Works Director Kevin Nephew. Present also were City Engineer Alex Ranz, Dan Triller, Airport Engineer from Short Elliott Hendrickson, April Swenby, Sand Hill River Watershed Administrator, Ken Freberg, and Twylla Altepeter from the Fertile Journal.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkens at 6:30 p.m. Council member Wang asked to move the first agenda item under old business, the watershed's interest in a City property, to be dealt with first on the agenda. The agenda with the change in order was approved on a motion by Council member Wang that was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

The first item to be addressed was the watershed's interest in potentially purchasing the City property located just north of the golf course. April Swenby, Sand Hill River Watershed Administrator, explained that they weren't yet to the point of having any firm plans as far as size of the building they were interested in or its location on the lot. The Watershed just needed to know if the City would be willing to sell a portion of the lot and how much the lot would sell for.

A discussion was then held on the taxable value of the entire lot and who would be responsible for all the closing costs. Also discussed was having a survey done of the lot. Swenby indicated that the Watershed would be willing to pay the survey costs.

After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Widrig that the City would be willing to sell the south half of the lot for \$10,000 or under if the buyer would be willing to pay the survey and closing costs. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

Under public comments, Ken Freberg asked to address Council. He explained that he owns two duplexes on the west end of the City and he stated that the road into the newest duplex gets quite wet and full of mud ruts every spring. Freberg asked if the City would ever be willing to pave that street. Administrator Liden pointed out that there are several other streets in town that are not yet paved and that those would have to be considered as well in any discussions on further paving projects. It was also noted that the street that Freberg was asking about only provides access to just the duplex and not any other residences. Freberg then indicated that he might be willing to take care of paving the street himself if the City would allow it and provide guidance on specifications for paving.

Mayor Wilkens then asked Kevin Nephew if he could contact the contractor who will be doing the paving for the water project to get an estimate on the cost for Freberg. This was followed by further discussion on the specs for paving the street. Nephew indicated that he would get in contact with Freberg about the requirements and the cost estimate.

The minutes of the April 8, 2019 and May 1, 2019 minutes were approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wang and carried.

City Administrator Lisa Liden then gave a brief overview of the financial statements and the out of the ordinary bills paid in April. 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.

Fair Meadow Nursing Home Administrator Angie Leiting then gave her report to Council. She reported that they began the month of April with 41 residents and ended the month with 42, operating at 95.87% occupancy. They had also served 291 home delivered meals.

Leiting then went over the profit and loss reports for April as well as for the current year to date. She noted that the numbers didn't look good for April since they were waiting for payment on a couple of residents that totaled almost \$120,000. Leiting noted that the Budget to Actual comparison numbers were close to spot on.

The next nursing home item on the agenda was a price increase for the assisted living service package. Leiting noted that those prices had not been increased since the facility opened. Leiting had provided financial information on increases at 10%, 12%, or 15% and explained that the 10% or 12% options would put Fair Meadow above McIntosh but lower than the Villa. The 15% increase would put Fair Meadow's rate at the top end with the Villa.

After discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Jensrud to increase the service package rate by 12%. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

Alex Ranz from Ulteig then gave the Engineers Report. He began by reporting that the project was ahead of schedule and that the west end work will be done by the end of May. Since Sellin would likely want to proceed with the west portion of Jefferson Ave. by the school, Ranz had checked with the Superintendent to see if they could begin before school was done for the year. This was followed by a discussion on parking by the school and bus loading. Ranz said that he would touch base with Superintendent Clarke again to see if they could proceed with the work by the school.

Ranz then went over a list of items covered by change order #2. He explained that all of the added costs were due to unforeseen circumstances and that they were all covered by the contingency amount in the project fund. The amount on the change order was \$26,059.50 and over half of that was for the boring that was required under the new skating rink.

Ranz then presented information on the first pay application for the water project. The pay application was for \$420,575.57 and covered the work that was done the month of April as well as supplies.

A motion was then made by Council member Jensrud to approve change order #2 and to pay Sellin for the amount submitted. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

This was followed by a discussion on the water line that was installed to the fertilizer plant north of town. Ranz explained that the City's cost on that was roughly \$23,000 and, since it was installed on private property, he wanted to know if any arrangements had been made between TDS and the City for the cost of the line. Administrator Liden said that she would get in touch with TDS to discuss the matter.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Director, gave his report to Council and the first item up for discussion was the two pickups that Garden Valley had advertised for sale on bids. Discussion was also held on the MnDOT tandem axle truck that was now available for the City to purchase.

After discussion of equipment needs, a motion was made by Council member Wise to purchase the MnDOT truck for \$16,000 and to pursue submitting bids on the two pickups offered by Garden Valley. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

Mayor Wilkens then reported that the equipment committee would look at other options for snow removal. One option would be to get snow attachments for the John Deere mower. Another option would be to look at getting a skid steer. Council member Wise then commented that the City should look into getting a toolcat since they were very versatile with many attachment options.

A brief discussion was then held on selling off the city's surplus equipment and unused items. Administrator Liden said that she would contact Tim Oistad to get working on setting up an online auction. Liden would have Oistad contact Kevin Nephew to set up a time to get pictures of the items to be sold off. Nephew then commented that when he had spoken with Oistad earlier about an online auction that Oistad had indicated that he would likely combine it with another online auction since the City didn't have that many items to sell.

The next agenda item to be addressed was the opening of gravel bids. Administrator Liden explained that letters were sent out to all the usual haulers but that only one had submitted a bid. Mayor Wilkens commented that going forward he would also like for the City to advertise in the paper seeking bids. The one bid submitted, from Lindberg Enterprises, was then opened and reviewed.

The gravel bid from Lindberg Enterprises for \$10.50 per ton of Class 5 gravel was accepted on a motion by Council member Jensrud. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

The next item up on the agenda was the City Administrator's Report. Liden reported that she had continued work in relation to the audit and that the auditors had completed their onsite work. She had also worked with Kevin Nephew and Polk County on flood damage assessment due to the damage done to the Nature Center bridge and road. She had also worked with Dan Triller on the airport projects paperwork and attended meetings for Airport Zoning, Fair Meadow Finance Committee, and the Equipment Committee.

The City Administrator's Report was approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

There were no reports for the Fire Department, the Airport, and the Personnel Committee.

Under Old Business, the first item to be addressed was the access road to the sewer ponds. Mayor Wilkens reported that he and Kevin Nephew had gone to look at the road to see exactly where it was situated in regard to ownership. Wilkens said that he would follow up with Mark Gullickson, Garfield Township Clerk, to see what procedures had been followed when the road was abandoned several years prior.

Under New Business, the airport lighting project was the next item addressed. Daniel Triller from Short Elliott Hendrickson was present at the meeting and he began by going over the bids that were submitted for the runway lighting. The low bid had been submitted by Neo Electrical out of Hudson, WI and Triller reported that he was familiar with their work and they were a reputable firm quite capable of taking on the project.

Triller then went through the project cost summary which included the pre-design work for the runway rehabilitation project which would be done in state fiscal year 2020. The total costs for all the projects listed for 2019 was \$448,024 and the State would pay 95% up to the first \$150,000 and 90% for all costs thereafter.

Triller also explained the new item on the project list which was for runway GPS approach surveys. He had spoken with MnDOT and they would still have funding available for the year. MnDOT recommended going with the GPS approach survey done to FAA standards.

After a brief discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Wise to accept the low bid submitted by Neo Electrical, approve the contract with SEH for construction administration of the lighting project, approval for the Mayor to sign off on the GPS approach estimate when the numbers are finalized, and to submit all projects as listed in the project cost summary to MnDOT for grant funding in fiscal year 2019. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

The next item up on the agenda was Resolution #5-1-19 Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of a \$1,654,575 General Obligation Revenue Note, Series 2019B, and Providing for Its Payment. Administrator Liden explained that approval of this resolution was the final step in securing funding from MN Public Facilities for the water project.

Resolution #5-1-19 was approved on a motion by Council member Wang that was seconded by Council member Widrig and carried.

Resolution #5-2-19 was up for consideration next on the agenda. Administrator Liden explained that this resolution approved the Airport Maintenance and Operation Grant Contract with the State of Minnesota which was effective from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021. The reimbursement rate would remain at 75%.

Resolution #5-2-19 was approved on a motion by Council member Jensrud that was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

Approval of the draft Zoning Ordinance was the next item up for discussion. Mayor Wilkens briefly went over the restrictions in Safety Zones A & B. He explained to Council that the City could approve variances from those restrictions if any of the properties in those zones were to be improved. Wilkens also reported that the Joint Airport Zoning Board had approved of the draft and that it was now up for review by Garfield and Liberty Townships and Polk County.

A motion was made by Council member Wise to approve the Draft Airport Safety Zoning Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

The next item on the agenda was a lease agreement with MP Nexlevel for a lot in the Industrial Park. Administrator Liden explained that they had rented a lot a few years ago for \$200 per month for storage of equipment and supplies when they were working for Garden Valley installing fiber optic lines. Their crews were going to be working in the Maple Lake area all summer and they were looking for space to store their equipment on weekends. They would be willing to pay \$200 per month again.

A motion was made by Council member Wang to approve the lease agreement with MP Nexlevel for \$200 per month. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

This was followed by a discussion on the property where the skating rink was previously located. Mayor Wilkens would like to see the property surveyed in order to learn where the property lines were. He would also like to see the water salesman that is located north of the former warming house moved to a better location so that the property could potentially be used for an RV campground. This was followed by a discussion on possibly locating the water salesman at the east side of the fire hall.

A motion was then made by Council member Wise to pursue having the former rink property surveyed and pinned. The motion was seconded by Council member Jensrud and was carried.

This was followed by a discussion on setting a date for a Public Hearing for a setback variance. Administrator Liden explained that with the publication and notification requirements in City Code that the earliest a hearing could be held would be June 3rd. A special meeting was then called for on June 3rd to hold a Public Hearing on a variance request.

There was a brief intermission while a computer and television was set up for an electronic meeting on the Agassiz Environmental Learning Center (AELC) Master Plan update. Wendell Johnson, AELC President, Wayne Goeken, AELC Secretary, and Danielle Spiten AELC Education Director then joined the meeting. Joining the meeting via computer were Linda Kingery of the NW Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (NWRSDP) and Jacob Mans from the University of Minnesota.

The presentation on the Master Plan began with Linda Kingery giving a brief overview of the planning process, her involvement in the project, and how it all began. She explained further that the City had received grant funding from the NW Minnesota Foundation for Master Plan development and that the NWRSDP had been funding Jacob Mans work on the plan. She explained that the Master Plan was an essential piece for the application to become a Park of Regional Significance. Once that designation was achieved, the City and Learning Center would be eligible for legacy funding to make capital improvements.

Danielle Spiten then addressed the group and explained her part in the Master Plan process and that she had been working on the strategic plan focused on education and wellness. Her goal with the strategic plan was to target learners at all age levels.

Jacob Mans then went over the Master Plan and the updates to the phasing and timelines of the various projects. He noted that the biggest change from the last draft was to do a limited retrofit to the current visitor's center/classroom building and to focus on building a new classroom building. This was followed by discussion on the current building site and what that structure could be used for if another classroom was built.

Mans then went over the site plan for a campground in the prairie that would accommodate both tents and RV's. Discussion was also held on the ATV policy for the AELC and Jacob Mans had incorporated the DNR policy into the plan that would allow for ATV use for disabled visitors.

Mayor Wilkens then asked Linda Kingery about the timelines for submitting the Master Plan in relation to the current funding and grant cycle. Kingery explained that the application deadline for this year was August 2nd and that the Master Plan could be reviewed at the State level and approved to still meet that funding deadline. Time was going to be quite tight, however, to get everything put together for submittal.

A public meeting on the draft Master Plan was tentatively scheduled for June 13th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 p.m. on a motion by Council member Wise.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator