

Fertile City Council Minutes

June 14, 2021

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, June 14, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were Mayor Daniel Wilkens, and Council members Stanton Wang, Matthew Massmann and Todd Wise. Also present were City Administrator Lisa Liden, Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, City Engineer Alex Ranz, Airport Engineer Dan Triller, Shawn Theis, and Twylla Altepeter from the Fertile Journal.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkens at 6:30 p.m. and began with those present reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda was approved as presented on a motion by Council member Massmann that was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

Under public comments, Shawn Theis asked to address Council. Theis explained that he lives on North Mill Street and there is a sidewalk and curb issue in front of his house. The curb is sinking and the sidewalk is buckling. Public Works Director Kevin Nephew explained that he had already been touch with Swenby's to get it fixed. Since the sidewalk and curb issue is by a storm sewer, he would have to dig out the area to see what had caused the issue in the first place and then repair it before the sidewalk and curb are replaced.

Theis then asked about the vacant Council seat and why someone who had shown interest in the seat was not accepted. Mayor Wilkens began by explaining the process of appointing someone to fill a vacant seat. He then went on to explain that he had read the letter of interest that had been submitted but everyone on Council at that time stated that they were not willing to serve with that individual. Knowing that the appointment wouldn't be approved, Wilkens had not nominated that individual.

Next Theis asked about whether it would be possible for a group of locals to use an area in the Industrial Park for remote control car racing. Kevin Nephew said that the area could be cleared easily and he could make a track with the grader. Nephew's only concern was that the area be used properly and that no garbage should be left behind. Council agreed that the track could be made easily enough and that the group could go ahead and use the area.

The minutes of the May 10, 201 meeting were reviewed and approved on a motion by Council member Massmann that was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

City Administrator Lisa Liden gave the Treasurer's Report. Liden went over the out of the ordinary deposits and checks for the month of May. Liden noted the out of the ordinary checks written to RDO for the payload, the check to the Building Center for the campground fence, and a check to Downs and Nowacki for three new streetlight poles. This was followed by a brief discussion on restitution when vehicles damage streetlight poles. Administrator Liden explained that most often the cost of the repairs or replacement are covered by the car owner's insurance policy.

The Treasurer's Report and Bills was approved on a motion by Council member Wang, seconded by Council member Massmann and carried.

Airport Engineer Dan Triller gave his report to Council. He began by reporting that the runway project was finished and that the striping had been done on the previous Sunday. The final pay request for the project would be submitted at the July meeting. Triller noted that he would start talking to MnDOT about funding for the environmental study that would be needed for the runway extension. Once the environmental study was done the extension could maybe be done next year if State funding was available.

Council member Massmann asked how much more would be done at the airport for projects and if there was an end in sight. Mayor Wilkens explained that as long as the State was willing to pay 95% of the project costs that the

City would be smart to take care of as much work as possible. Once the extension was done, the next big project would be an arrival and departure building. Once that was done the only future work would be asphalt maintenance and possible further taxiways. Dan Triller explained that the future projects were outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the airport and that the plan was available for viewing on the MnDOT website. Administrator Liden noted that she had a copy of the CIP and that she could email it to Massmann.

The next item under the airport was pay application #3 for \$780,471.19 the runway project. A motion was made by Council member Massmann to approve payment on the application. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

Resolution #6-1-2021 was next to be addressed. Administrator Liden explained that the resolution gave Council approval for the Mayor and Administrator to sign the MnDOT Agreement for the Taxiway and Apron Reconstruction, Apron Expansion, and Hangar Taxilane. The motion was made by Council member Wise and seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

City Engineer Alex Ranz was next to give his report to Council. Ranz began by noting that the following day was June 15th and was the deadline for the sidewalk on the north side of the school to be replaced. There was currently no work done on it yet since the discussions with Sellin and Classic Concrete were ongoing. Ranz noted that there had been a meeting at the school in May with Sellin, Classic Concrete, Lakes Gravel, School Superintendent Brian Clarke, Administrator Liden, Mayor Wilkens, and Kevin Nephew. Since the discussions were ongoing, the deadline to complete the replacement of the sidewalk had been extended to the end of June.

Ranz reported that the survey crew had been out at the cemetery the week before and that the surveyors and Kevin Nephew had found many of the pins indicated on the previous survey. The cemetery would be mapped again and a copy sent to the city. Ranz then asked about the survey work that was needed at the Learning Center and when that could be done. Administrator Liden explained that the Learning Center still needed to meet with one party to see if they would be willing to either donate or sell the portion of their property where Learning Center trails were located.

Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting gave her report to Council. She reported that the month of May began with 37 residents and ended with 37, operating at 85.48% capacity for the month. Leiting noted that there were currently six open beds in the nursing home. They had also served 111 home delivered meals. Due to the low occupancy count the payroll and staffing was down 15%. Leiting also reported that the State had a warehouse full of personal protective equipment (PPE) that they were distributing to nursing homes for free. Fair Meadow had received several pallets of equipment so they wouldn't have any PPE expenses until at least the end of the year. She noted also that Fair Meadow had received a \$34,000 scholarship grant for the assisted living. Finally, Leiting noted that the State had given a \$222 reduction in rates per resident starting January 1st.

The profit and loss for the month of May showed combined income of over \$127,000 with the nursing home showing income of \$137,700 and the assisted living reporting a loss of almost \$10,000. The combined year-to-date profit and loss showed an income of over \$388,000 with the nursing home showing a profit of \$430,000 and the assisted living a loss of just over \$41,000. For the budget to actual report, it was noted that the target number was 67% and that income was at 77.69% and expenses at 70.89%.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Supervisor, was next to give his report to Council. Further discussion was held on the Shawn Theis sidewalk issue and Nephew stated that he would get in touch with Swenby's again to arrange the repair of the sidewalk. Nephew also reported that Garden Valley had bored through a storm sewer line when they were boring in town to install fiber optic lines. Nephew reported also that J & R Wastewater was in town jetting sewer lines. He reported on what was done each year when they were town noting that every line in town is jetted every four to five years and that some of the lines were done every year or every other year if they were problematic.

Mayor Wilkens asked about the new water salesman and why it wasn't working properly all the time. Nephew explained that it seemed to stick a little when coins were put into it and that lightly hitting the mechanism seemed to

fix it. Mayor Wilkens asked about the new payloader and if it was working well. Nephew said that it was working really well and that he was pricing out some other equipment for it. He was interested in getting a grapple bucket and a push blade for it. Wilkens asked also about the situation with the Wi-Fi at the campground and Nephew explained that they still need to move the pole to the center of the campground for the Wi-Fi to be installed. Nephew reported that they would be starting on their fair preparations real soon and that Cole Christianson would be coming to do some leveling at JD Mason Park so the park could be seeded.

The meeting was closed on a motion by Council member Massmann for a Public Hearing on Ordinance #2021-2. There was no public present to comment or ask questions about the proposed ordinance so a brief discussion was held on the purpose of the ordinance. A motion was made by Council member Massmann to close the Public Hearing and reconvene the regular meeting.

A motion was made by Council member Wang to approve Ordinance #2021-2, an Ordinance Repealing City Code Chapter 73 Entitled “Snowmobiles/All-Terrain Vehicles/Mini Trucks” and Replacing it With Chapter 73 Entitled “Special Vehicles/Snowmobiles/All-Terrain Vehicles/Mini Trucks.” The motion was seconded by Council member Massmann and carried with all Council voting in the affirmative.

City Administrator Lisa Liden gave her report to Council noting that the audit had kept her quite busy for the last month and that she had spent well over 50 hours getting information located, copied, and uploaded to the auditor portal. She noted further work with the City Attorney on the new ordinance as well as work on the annual workmen’s comp audit and Baker Tilly on the wage study.

For the Learning Center Mayor Wilkens reported that the Summer Newsletter had just gone out and that a \$10,000 grant had been awarded for improving signage.

For the Fire Department Council member Wang reported that the department had responded to two grass fires, had checked on another grass fire and had went out on two medical assist calls. The department was also busy with fair planning.

For City Personnel Administrator Liden reported that work was continuing with the wage study and that Baker Tilly was gathering information from other cities for comparative purposed in developing a new wage scale.

The next agenda item was the lease between the City and Riverview for rental of the clinic space in the Community Center. Administrator Liden explained that the lease was the same one that Council had reviewed last month and that Riverview would soon be signing the lease with a start-date of September 1st.

A motion was made by Council member Massmann to approve signing the clinic lease. The motion was seconded by Council member Wise and was carried.

The final agenda item was three requests for the Polk County Fair. The Fair Board had requested permission for a parade to be held on Sunday, July 11th, permission for the 5K run on Saturday, and approval of a 3.2 liquor license for Sunday for beer to be sold at the grandstands. Liden noted that the Fair Board serves beer in the grandstands all five nights of the fair and that many years ago Council had approved the issuance of up to 12 days of temporary liquor licensing for the Fair Board each year. A temporary license from the State for intoxicating liquor could only be granted for four consecutive days, so a city license to serve 3.2 beer needed to be approved for Sunday.

A motion was made by Council member Massmann to approve all three requests made for the Polk County Fair. The motion was seconded by Council member Wang and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.