

Fertile City Council Minutes

March 14, 2022

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, March 14, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were Vice Mayor Todd Wise, and Council members Mary Kiefert and Matthew Massmann. Also present were City Administrator Lisa Liden, Public Works Director Kevin Nephew, Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting, and Twylla Altepeter from the Fertile Journal.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Mayor Wise 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 Kiefert and was carried.

There were no public comments.

The minutes of the February 14, 2022 regular meeting and the February 28, 2022 and March 10, 2022 special meetings were approved as presented 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 February. Under the check listing Liden noted the amounts that had been deposited and spent for the fire department, the check to Minnesota Public Facilities for interest on water fund debt, and a payment to Ulteig Engineering for the cemetery survey.

The Treasurer's Report was approved on a motion by Council member Kiefert that was seconded by Council member Massmann and was carried.

Under the airport, Administrator Liden noted that there would be a final inspection of the apron and taxiway project this spring and if all looked well, especially in regard to the newly seeded areas, the final payment would be issued on the project.

Fair Meadow Administrator Angie Leiting gave the report for Fair Meadow Nursing Home. The month of February began with 39 residents and ended with 40, operating at 91.66% capacity. They had also served 178 home delivered meals. Leiting noted that cash was still lower than she would like to see it given the fact that there would be three payrolls in April. This was due to persistent increased costs due to Covid but no more Covid money being distributed to help with those costs. She also noted that the prices of everything were going up due to increased fuel costs and inflation.

In reviewing the profit and loss reports, Leiting reported that for the month of February there was a combined total loss of just over \$18,000 with the nursing home showing a loss of over \$19,500 and the assisted living showing a profit of over \$1,000. For the year-to-date profit and loss, the nursing home and assisted living showed a combined loss of almost \$234,000 with over

\$232,000 of the loss attributed to the nursing home. Council member Massmann asked if there was a light at the end of the tunnel regarding the Covid losses and Leiting responded that if some of the proposed changes come through their financial situation would improve.

Leiting went on to report that staffing continued to be a struggle and they were currently paying for two temp staff noting that one of the temps was an RN who was filling an LPN position due to the fact that there are no LPN's anywhere to hire for the position. This was followed by a discussion on the staffing shortages at all medical facilities including EMS. Leiting reported on a grant opportunity she had learned of through Leading Age. Fair Meadow could be eligible for up to \$100,000 per year for four years for education and training. This grant could pay tuition for CNA's to become LPN's so Leiting was hopeful that this would help to alleviate the current LPN shortage.

A brief discussion was held on an anonymous letter that had been sent to the Mayor about a couple of Fair Meadow matters. Administrator Leiting explained that vacation pay was currently frozen due to the cash situation leading up to the three payroll periods in April. Leiting said that staff could take time off unpaid if needed and that they were willing to pay vacation if the situation warranted it. She noted further that they had to do this in the past and that there had been no complaints. The situation was temporary and would likely end in April.

The letter writer had also questioned some positions at Fair Meadow and were concerned about the high costs of those positions. Leiting explained that the positions mentioned were paid at the normal RN rate so there were no added costs with those designations.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Supervisor, was next to give his report to Council. Nephew began by reporting that the Ford F350 pickup that had been discussed in January had been purchased that day. Nephew and Chris Zimmel had driven to Fergus Falls to look at the truck and whether there were any potential issues with rust. The undercarriage looked good and overall the pickup was in really good shape with low miles. The total purchase cost with tax and licensing was \$27,789.

Discussion was held on the camouflage truck and whether that should be sold. Nephew said that the truck was in fair shape given that it was a 1983 model. After further discussion of the matter, a motion was made by Council member Massmann to advertise the camouflage pickup for sale on sealed bids with the right to reject any or all bids. The motion was seconded by Council member Kiefert and was carried.

Nephew reported that there had been several frozen water lines so he had rented a jetter from Crookston Welding to thaw them. Once the bill was received from Crookston Welding, the rental cost would be divided between the property owners who had frozen lines. Nephew went on to report that once the streets had softened up a bit with the warmer temperatures that he would scrape them down. They were also working on opening up the storm sewers.

The City Administrators report was briefly reviewed and there was no report for the Fire Department or the Personnel Committee.

The first item addressed under new business was the replacement of the roof at the Nature Center. Administrator Liden noted that the roof replacement had been discussed for the past few years, and that it was time to replace it before there were problems with leaks. It was felt that it would be best to go with a steel roof for longevity purposes. After a brief discussion of the matter, Administrator Liden was instructed to seek bids on getting the roof replaced.

The final agenda matter to be addressed was Resolution #3-1-22 A Resolution Reestablishing Precincts and Polling Places. Administrator Liden explained that the resolution was necessary since part of the state had been redistricted and was a formality since the City of Fertile precinct had not been changed due to the redistricting.

A motion was made by Council member Massmann to approve Resolution #3-1-22. The motion was seconded by Council member Kiefert and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 on a motion by Council member Kiefert.

Daniel Wilkens, Mayor

Lisa J. Liden, City Administrator