

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 17, 2020
5:45 PM

The March 17, 2020 council meeting was called to order by Mayor Lowell Helget at 5:45 PM. Those present include Helget, John Mueller, Sam Hesse, Theresa Backman, Mike Rothmeier, City Attorney Paul Muske, City Manager Joe Stremcha and City Clerk Amy Vogel. Others present include Bill Helget, Shane Traulich, Linda and Greg Roiger, Greg Ryan, Stacy Walton, John Nicholson, Scott Johnson, Dale Knutson, Kevin Miller, Larry Smith, Travis Richert, Joe Micka, Justin Robertson, Wendy Krier, Paula Thomas, Jill Riederer and Donna Woidylla.

Motion by Beckman, second by Hesse to adopt the agenda with the addition of the 2020 street project, Res approving State agreement for E-Charging, and consider local declaration of state of emergency. All ayes.

Stremcha presented Red Cross facility use agreements for the Springfield Area Community Center and the medical center at 625 N Jackson Ave in case of emergency need. Motion by Mueller, second by Hesse to approve the facility use agreements with Red Cross. All ayes.

Miller explained that Allina is willing to provide ambulance management support as well as providing an ambulance coordinator. They would like to retain the employment of Paula Thomas. The agreement is for full salary and benefits and administrative costs. This would be an additional annual cost of about \$40,000, noting that the city would have to subsidize this service due to the additional cost. They have reviewed the training needs and protocols. Motion by Beckman, second by Hesse to approve the ambulance service management agreement with Allina. All ayes.

Motion by Mueller, second by Beckman to approve the Allina business associate agreement that deals with HIPAA. All ayes.

Bill Helget stated that plans have been approved by MNDOT. The city has received the cooperative agreement for the LPP funding of \$500,000 and the acceptance letter for the LRIP funding of \$750,000. Since Brown County is the lead on the LRIP, they have to set the advertising so they will request board action at the next meeting. The tentative advertising date is April 1 with a bid due date of April 28. It will be published in the New Ulm Journal, Springfield Advance Press and Finance and Commerce. The council may need to call a special meeting to review bids and call for a public hearing. There has been no further contact for the alley improvements by Riverside Animal Clinic and Teske Mfg. The Covid-19 may delay the project but this is unknown yet. There may be a need to stretch the dates into next year with the final wear course being done in 2022. Motion by Mueller, second by Rothmeier to approve the Cooperative Construction Agreement with the State of MN. All ayes.

Motion by Rothmeier, second by Beckman to adopt Res. #20-031701 authoring the mayor and city manager to execute the Cooperative Construction Agreement. All ayes.

Richert explained that he would like to extend the land lease for the airport property for 3 years which terminates after this crop year. He noted that he has done a lot to improve the condition of the land from when he started. Fixing the 4 wet spots has increased the farm land by about 6 acres. He noted there are 2 spots that need a little work – west of the trap range and where the cottonwood trees are growing. He noted that \$200 seems to be the average rent and requested the council to renew the lease for 3 years at \$200/acre rent. Motion by Hesse, second by Rothmeier to approve extending the lease with Richert for 3 years at \$200/acre. All ayes.

In citizen forum, Smith asked the council if they awarded the bid for the tree removal. To review, the bids received were Keck Tree Service \$95.00, Ryan Tree Service \$139.59 and Zinniel Tree Service \$277.50. Keck received good references and said that he wouldn't have a problem removing the trees by the end of March if his bid was approved. Motion by Hesse, second by Helget to accept the low bid of \$95 from Keck Tree Service. All ayes.

Walton explained to the council that all property owners in that block of Burns are opposed to the proposed trail. Some of the owners have done extensive front yard work. Stremcha stated that city staff met with most owners and didn't receive any opposition. It was suggested that the trails committee look at this again. Motion by Rothmeier, second by Beckman to table this matter until the trails committee reviews it. All ayes.

Motion by Mueller, second by Beckman to approve the consent agenda. All ayes. Farmward and Land O'Lakes were thanked for their donations.

Motion by Rothmeier, second by Beckman to approve payment of the Salonek Concrete pay estimate for \$22,096.43. All ayes.

Motion by Beckman, second by Hesse to table the rental ordinance. All ayes.

Riederer explained that the survey showed support for the daily pool hours as 1-5PM and 6-8PM. It will be open by Memorial Day weekend and it is proposed to close mid-August. Motion by Beckman, second by Hesse to approve the pool daily hours, opening by Memorial Day and closing mid-August with the exact date planned when employees are hired. All ayes. The closing date should be brought back for council approval.

Stremcha presented a quote of \$3,040 from Paape Companies for programming IP devices related to the camera and card access system due Mayo resetting all POE switches. It was approved because it was believed that these were included in the Thriveon quote but it was not. Motion by Beckman, second by Mueller to approve the Paape Companies quote of \$3,040. All ayes.

The council discussed the option of adopting a PEG fee of 1% with the cable franchise agreement. This would cover the community center director's time. It was noted that the software has not been supported since 2002. No action was taken on this as council didn't want to impose more fees on the residents.

The first reading was conducted of a zoning ordinance 18.04 amendment regarding ornamental fences, posts, poles, markers, walls, shrubs, trees, bushes and other objects or fixtures. There will be a public hearing for this amendment on March 23, 2020 at 5:30 PM.

Nicholson explained that Mike Gordon is willing to be a PT police officer if needed. Micka stated that he was a good officer but the current PT wages haven't been adjusted in 5 years. He suggested paying the officers based on experience. Motion by Rothmeier, second by Beckman to approve hiring Gordon PT and have the police commission meet to discuss wages. All ayes.

Motion by Mueller, second by Rothmeier to stick with the current coverage for flood insurance at the pet shelter and pool house. All ayes.

Stremcha stated that Anthony Lenz, safety officer, has recommended moving our council meetings to the community center for various reasons including lack of an emergency exit(s) and city hall storage issues. Motion by Mueller, second by Hesse to move future meetings to the community center. All ayes.

Stremcha asked council to consider approval of purchasing ergonomic equipment for city hall staff. It was suggested that city hall make some changes now so that not everything needs to be done when the actual remodel gets done about 2026. It is expected to be about \$6,000. Motion by Hesse, second by Beckman to approve the ergonomic equipment not to exceed \$6,000. All ayes.

The council reviewed 3 quotes for floor waxing at the community center. Buntjer's quoted \$4,550, R&S Cleaning was \$6,557.40 and John Hamre was \$3,000 but this doesn't include stripping the old wax off. Hamre did the floors last year and it didn't seem to hold up. The board is recommending the Buntjer's service for \$4,550. Motion by Beckman second by Mueller to accept the Buntjer's quote noting that the low bid was not accepted due to last year's experience. All ayes.

Knutson stated that he would like all tissue dispensers to be the same throughout the city so one key will work for all of them. The dispensers are free if the toilet paper is purchased through them. Hillyard was about \$2.00/case cheaper so he recommended going with Hillyard. Motion by Rothmeier, second by Beckman to approve the quote from Hillyard for the dispensers and toilet paper. All ayes.

Stremcha met with Derek Tonn, Shari Koll, Denise Gicker and Sharon Pieschel on the Welcoming Communities initiative. Activity ideas discussed include a sidewalk chalk project and painting murals for the top row of the city hall building. The idea was to do this during Riverside Days. It is not known how permanent the murals would be.

Motion by Rothmeier, second by Mueller to accept Officer Eric Gratz's resignation with appreciation for his service. All ayes.

The city was requested to extend the time frame that the City of Rushford has to repay the federal funding for airport improvements. They had a fire at their airport so they have an

immediate need. Motion by Beckman, second by Hesse to approve the agreement with the City of Rushford extending the repayment period to March 31, 2021. All ayes.

The library board presented by-laws and policy changes for approval. They added an AED policy and changed a name from assault report form to incident report form. Motion by Beckman, second by Rothmeier to approve the changes as presented. All ayes.

Tim Birkemeyer presented a plan to provide an EMT class in Springfield. Thomas knows of 2 retirements in the next couple of months. He would need a down payment of \$5,000 for a class of a minimum of 8. They have 5-7 interested individuals at this time. However, with Covid-19, training has been halted. Thomas has reached out to Mountain Lake, Sleepy Eye, Lamberton, Sanborn and Comfrey.

Bryan Page submitted the plans and specs for the apron expansion for the crop spray transfer operations. Motion by Beckman, second by Hesse to adopt Res #20-031703 approving the plans and specs for the crop spray transfer operation and authorize advertising for bids. All ayes.

Council discussed declaring a state of emergency for the coronavirus (covid-19). Roiger stated that the ALA recommended that all libraries close and there are only 3 open in the Traverse de Sioux system. Motion by Beckman, second by Mueller to authorize the Mayor to declare the emergency when there is at least one case in Brown County. All ayes.

Staff questioned when facilities should be closed to the public. Council agreed that staff would report to work as scheduled or stagger shifts and/or work from home depending on the level of the emergency. Employees would be paid as they were scheduled normally during this period. Those who take time off during the period must use sick or vacation. Those choosing not to work to avoid the virus would not be paid. Council agreed that the offices should be closed to the public with at least one case in Brown County and closed to work from home if there is a community spread case noted. Motion by Beckman, second by Hesse to close the library immediately. All ayes.

Muske stated that the E-charging agreement with the State has to be renewed. Motion by Beckman, second by Rothmeier to adopt Res #20-021704 approving the State of MN joint powers agreements with the City on behalf of the city attorney and police dept. All ayes.

Helget stated that alleys need to be worked on to cut them down to where they should be and then put the gravel back.

Motion by Mueller, second by Rothmeier to adjourn at 8:44 PM. All ayes.

Lowell Helget, Mayor

Amy A. Vogel, City Clerk