

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

February 16, 2021

5:30 PM

The February 16, 2021 council meeting was called to order by Mayor Lowell Helget at 5:30 PM. Those present include Lowell Helget, Mike Rothmeier, Theresa Beckman, Nicholas Klisch, John Ryan. Others present were City Attorney Paul Muske, City Manager Joe Stremcha, City Clerk Amy Vogel, Jessica Green, Brian Fuhrmann, Tim Gramentz, Dale Knutson, Chris Gartner, Denise Gicker, Joe Micka, John Nicholson, Wendy Krier, Kris Morgan, and by Zoom - Brian Grogan with Moss & Barnett and Scott Sparlin with MN River Congress. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Mike Rothmeier, second by Theresa Beckman to adopt the agenda. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0

Motion by Mike Rothmeier, second by John Ryan to approve the consent agenda. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed Beckman offered a thank you to the donations that were received and to Valerie Hauser for her service to the city.

Grogan recapped the history of trying to renew the Nuvera franchise ordinance. New terms are recommended for a 10-year term with a 5% franchise fee with a stronger definition of "gross revenues". A Letter of Credit in the amount of \$10,000 would be issued to cover possible alleged violations. There would be 2 PEG's and free service to public buildings with dedicated return lines to city hall and the community center. FCC preemption provision?? He recommended adoption of the cable franchise ordinance with Nuvera. Motion by Theresa Beckman, second by Mike Rothmeier to adopt Ordinance 438 establishing a franchise agreement with Nuvera and approved publishing in summary. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed

Stremcha heard from Robert Jones that the city's cost for new sidewalks would be only 10%. Due to the size of Springfield, there would be no cost to the city for ped ramps, first or second RRFB, driveways and no cost for extra width of roadway that could be used as parking. This will be on the March agenda

Green recapped the proposed finance plan for the Central St project for \$4,185,000 for 2021B. This would facilitate Central St and realignment with Hwy 14. Repayment would be 2022-2036 15 years and interest is estimated at an average of 1.23% and true interest of 1.40% with a sale date in April. Proposals would be due March 16, 2021 for consideration at council meeting that night. The bonds include capitalized interest to pay the first interest payment on Dec 15, 2021 as there isn't any levy to pay this. Special assessments over 15 years beginning in 2023 and continuing to 2037. Sewer, water and storm water funds will contribute annually over the term of the bonds at the rates of 8.68%, 8.23% and 11.91%, respectively towards the 105% levy. If a premium is issued, the city may request to lower the bond amount borrowed. The bond rating call is scheduled for March 1 at 2 pm. She also recapped the calendar of events for this

issue.

Stremcha mentioned that upcoming capital purchases are fire tanker and city hall and police dept remodels. There is a possibility of bonding for these instead of paying outright to keep a balance in the capital equipment fund. Green stated that cities are moving projects up to take advantage of the lower interest rates. She presented a plan to bond for the remodels at \$325,000 and \$200,000 for fire equipment. A 5-yr capital improvement plan would have to be adopted after a public hearing. There would be a 30-day reverse referendum period in which voters may petition the city to put the improvement to a vote. The equipment doesn't require a hearing and is subject to a 10-day reverse referendum. The hearing would be March 10, 2021 with bond sale on April 13 and proceeds in early May in time for first pay estimate planned for May 2021. Interest rates could be affected due to the longer time period but they could change in the next month too. Interest rates a year ago were 2.89% so the year delay saved about \$600,000. Gramentz stated that he isn't sure if they can get a new tanker for around \$200,000. Bonding together with the street project would likely see a better interest rate because they could use the city's bond rating and would be tradeable and a larger scale of bonds. Motion by Nicholas Klisch, second by Theresa Beckman to approve proceeding with bonding for the remodels \$325,000 and fire equipment \$205,000 with a public hearing scheduled for March 10, 2021 at 5:00 PM at the Springfield Area Community Center. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed

Stremcha is looking at grants from FEMA, DNR, etc to mitigate Springfield's exposure risks and to reduce the ultimate peak flow that the city realizes during a flood. The Springfield flood gates were closed for 100 days in 2018 and 2019. LCCMR (Legislative-Citizen Commission of MN Resources) is researching the Cottonwood River to assist with other watersheds. They are asking for a resolution of support with no local cost share. This will be on next meeting's agenda.

Scott Sparlin with the MN River Congress joined on Zoom requesting support of legislation for a watershed initiative for stormwater storage to get rate flows more consistent within the MN River Watershed. He asked The City to consider a resolution of support for their efforts to advocate for the managing water flows in the MN River Basin through increased water storage and other strategies and practices. They are hoping to detain the water long enough to stabilize local water levels. When asked if there are any large projects on the horizon for the MN River, he noted that there is no large project, but cumulative small projects will more realistically deal with the stormwater runoff. Motion by Theresa Beckman, second by John Ryan to adopt Res #21-021603 in support of managing water flows in the MN River Basin through increased water storage and other strategies and practices and approve the letter of support. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed

Stremcha shared the the Cottonwood River Watershed Coalition was working with Jason Ulrich with the Science Museum of Minnesota on an Legislative-

Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) grant application due April 2nd. The goal of the project is to determine the most cost-effective strategies for reducing future flood damage to Springfield. This research project would also collect information for the other groups within the watershed to fund projects related to their needs. The proposal is still being developed and action on this item will take place during the March City Council meeting to support the LCCMR grant application.

Sheena Dauer joined the meeting over Zoom and explained that she is starting a private physical therapy business in Springfield and is interested in some medical center equipment being liquidated. She used 20% value due to depreciation and valued some pieces higher at 30-40%. She would take care of all removal costs. This is separate equipment from the supplies that were liquidated earlier.

Beckman submitted a list of equipment she is interested in and it appears that Dauer's and her lists overlap by a couple of items. She believes they can come to an agreement who will get what. She believes the equipment is in good shape and the prices are fair. Motion by Mike Rothmeier, second by Nicholas Klisch to accept Dauer's proposal for purchase of surplus equipment less the traction machine. Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 1 Passed

Motion by Mike Rothmeier, second by John Ryan to approve the sale of surplus property less the posters and bariatric chair. Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 1 Passed

Stremcha stated that there was some confusion on previous bidding for the remaining medical supplies. The January bid was not clear what the person would get as the lump sum was for everything but some has been sold. Then there was a late bid from Lower Sioux - \$402.00 and Beckman \$275.50. Motion by Nicholas Klisch, second by John Ryan to rescind the motion from January to sell the supplies for \$1,000 and approve the sale of the supplies to Lower Sioux and Beckman. Yes 4, No 0, Abstained 1 Passed

Gicker explained that the CVB would like to apply for a Pieschel grant and Springfield Area Foundation grant to be used for advertising purposes for local businesses during the Central St project. She also said that the Chamber would like to apply for both grants to continue with upgrades to the downtown Christmas decorations. Motion by Theresa Beckman, second by Mike Rothmeier to approve the CVB and Chamber grant applications for these projects in the City's name. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed

Motion by Theresa Beckman, second by Mike Rothmeier to approve the grant application for fire equipment. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed

Knutson recapped proposed Martha Anderson Veterans Memorial Park project to be done in phases over the next five years. He met with the Legion and they are willing to help with the project. Proposed plans include more green space, sidewalks, replacing trees, moving the parking lot to the old Ruby's lot, veterans' memorial along with a possible piece of military equipment and possibly even electric vehicle charging stations. There were questions regarding the loss of

close parking for Central St businesses and apartments. He asked for permission to apply for a Pieschel grant to help with the funding. Motion by Mike Rothmeier, second by Nicholas Klisch to approve the grant application as requested. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed

No bids were received for the community center surplus items. It was recommended to try the MN Bid site.

Muske recapped proposed lease with the Food Shelf \$6,228 and an annual contribution of \$750 for utilities. Motion by John Ryan, second by Theresa Beckman to approve the food shelf lease as presented. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed

Stremcha stated that Planning and Zoning is requesting the city to consider amending the height of the sidewalls from 9.5 ft to 12 ft. This would require a hearing if the council wishes to amend the ordinance.

It has been on a case by case basis and the variance process has been used recently. No action was taken.

Stremcha stated that the Police Commission agreed to advertise for the vacancy left by Hauser.

Ryan is concerned that the adjoining businesses to the old Ruby's will need to make repairs to the adjoining walls and who will be responsible for these costs. This should be reviewed before a check is issued.

Muske presented Windom's policy on substandard housing in January and asked if the council was interested in it. He believes it may make a difference with cleaning up the the Cass Ave property and building a new building. Stremcha stated that he hadn't had a chance to review at EDA. It was noted that most city lots are small so there are restrictions of what can be built. Stremcha and Muske will work on this during the budget process.

Motion by Mike Rothmeier, second by Theresa Beckman to adjourn at 8:13. Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0 Passed PM. Passed.

Lowell Helget, Mayor

Amy A. Vogel, City Clerk