

## City of Battle Lake City Council Minutes

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The Battle Lake City Council met in regular session Tuesday, August 13, 2013 at 7 pm at City Hall. Present were Mayor Chuck Reeve and Council members Bob Wasson, Marjorie Quammen, Janet Ruhland and Ryan Christensen. Also present was city attorney JJ Cline.

The meeting was called to order and the agenda approved as amended. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

The 07/09 and 07/30 minutes were approved. M-Christensen, S-Ruhland, M/C.

Tyler Akerman, Treasurer of the Battle Lake Fire Relief Association presented the 2012 audit report and a summary of Form SC13 for calculating the City's liability, if any. The pension fund shows a comfortable surplus and no contribution will be required from the City. The Council approved the report. M-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C. Akerman also noted the Association is currently discussing an increase in their annual pension amount of \$1500 per year of service.

**LADA-** Board President Keith Baldwin presented a verbal financial report stating the cash balance is approximately \$19,000 with the fireworks fund having a small surplus to carry forward. He also reported plans to purchase a new laptop and that the Land-Use Committee met earlier in the day.

Treasurer's report was reviewed and approved; it was noted that some previously approved transfers have been completed. M-Ruhland, S-Reeve, M/C.

The Extra Hour Report was reviewed and discussed: Police Dept overtime involved vacations, holidays and the high activity level in July; Liquor Store overtime was a result of high customer counts and sales volume along with some short-term staffing issues.

Liquor Store report was reviewed and manager Cody Munsell reported July sales were very good.

Police Chief Kent Kortlever reported on July activities noting the highest number of calls he has seen in his tenure as Chief in Battle Lake. He also suggested a possible amendment to the City's Noise Ordinance relative to complaints received on the Prospect House cannon; there was discussion on how the public could be made more aware of this event. Kortlever reported he is gathering information on the MIR3 phone notification system which may be a practical option for the City to look into and also informed the Council that a Departmental employee is currently being interviewed by another agency.

Rescue Squad Captain Joyelle Hill presented her report indicating 15 runs for the month of July and the resignation of one Squad member. She also presented a letter requesting a 12-week leave of absence due to health issues with Vice Captain Heidi Jorud to assume Captain's duties during this time. The Council approved the request. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C. Hill also noted the Turkey Feed was well attended with a report to be available at the next meeting.

Fire Chief John Salvevold reported one service call in the last month and one complaint on use of sirens during fire truck rides over Wenonga Days.

Public Works Director Steve Seufert reported his department is getting ready for the Hwy 78 project. He also presented a request from George Dahl for the City to assume maintenance of a half-block graveled alley adjacent to his garage. The request was approved. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C. A letter from Good Samaritan Administrator Jim Wolf regarding a landscape project adjacent to their dock was reviewed; since the project will require a Conditional Use Permit it will be forwarded to the City Zoning Officer and the Planning Commission.

The Project List was reviewed briefly.

**Committee Reports:** **BL Motor Patrol**-minutes and financial reports from the 6/10 and 7/16 meetings were reviewed; Quammen commented on the 8/12 meeting at which there was a brief update on the Fire Association's building plans; **BL Area Fire & Rescue**-minutes and financial reports were reviewed from the 6/24 and 7/22 meetings; Reeve reported on the 7/22 meeting giving an update on the proposed building site discussion; he said the architect's proposal for a site assessment was disregarded and a plan to buy out the BL Motor Patrol interests in the current building introduced.

Council discussion ensued with the following points made: a need for more respectful discourse and willingness to compromise; need to consider future growth when planning for a new facility; lack of parking space for emergency responders especially during events such as the recent Art of the Lakes show. Reeve stated that following the next meeting 8/15, the City Council will need to make a decision on how to proceed based on the City's best interests for the future. **LACC**-minutes from 7/8 meeting reviewed; Ruhland reported on Wenonga Days and other current activities and noted Casey Love was recently appointed to the Board. **Natural Gas** –a report from 7/31 meeting with City of Henning was reviewed and discussed briefly noting that Henning is supportive and willing to look at proposals for a cooperative project. **Employee Relations** – report from 8/2 meeting was reviewed and discussed. Ruhland stated that Public Works employees are underpaid and they need to be given a raise in order to retain high-quality employees. It was noted that job descriptions, the Comp Worth and Step Pay plans would need to be re-evaluated across the board in order to comply with Pay Equity regulations, an employment consultant would probably need to be retained to do this and that re-evaluations will be needed within the next year anyway if a natural gas utility is established. The Committee recommended and the Council approved step, longevity and 3% cost of living adjustments for all employees for 2014, to re-evaluate job descriptions and the Comp Worth plan at a later time and authorized research into offering a cafeteria plan for employee insurance benefits. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

Claims were approved for payment in the amount of \$ 886,237. M-Christensen, S-Ruhland, M/C.

A memo presenting updates on current projects from engineer Jeremy Anderson was reviewed: he noted a re-bid on the revised trail plans has been authorized with a bid opening date of Sept 24; he will meet with Arvig soon to determine what is needed for design/engineering work sufficient to bid the Natural Gas project with more information to be presented at the September Council meeting; regarding the Hwy 78 project, work will begin on Battle Lake improvements Aug 26 with a completion date of Oct 3; Mark Sand & Gravel will have a construction office in town during the project to provide updates/information to those affected and will also hold weekly construction meetings. Relative to the Highway 78 project, the Mayor and Public Works Director were authorized to make any needed on-site decisions. M-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C.

Following discussion, the Council authorized closing the east/west alley between Battle Lake Hardware and Stella's to motorized traffic. M-Wasson, S-Reeve, M/C.

A commercial zoning permit was approved for a 28 x 56 attached garage at 715 Lake Shore Drive for Michael Smith and Cheryl Mertens of First Resort. M-Ruhland, S-Christensen, M/C.

A street light maintenance contract with Otter Tail Power was reviewed and approved. M-Ruhland, S-Christensen, M/C.

The updated Capital Improvement/Pavement Management Plan was reviewed noting revisions to the asset list and 10 year plan as well as addition of pavement management for trails. The Council approved the amendments. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

An easement agreement with Otter Tail Power for an underground power line servicing Hidden Meadows Addition was reviewed by the Council and city attorney and approved. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C. Public Works Director Steve Seufert noted there is currently a partial easement in effect in that location.

A summary of the 2012 Tax Increment Financing report from consultant Traci Ryan with David Drown Associates was reviewed and discussed briefly.

The next City Council meeting will be a Budget Work Meeting on Tuesday, August 27 at 5:30 pm

Public Works Director Steve Seufert informed the Council he would be getting cost estimates for some trail repair on Lake Shore Drive and also to televise sewer line on North Shore Drive. There were no objections from the Council. Wasson noted a good job of cleaning up after the Art of the Lakes event this past weekend.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Wanda Berg-Vorgert  
Clerk-Treasurer