

## **City of Battle Lake**

### **City Council Minutes**

The Battle Lake City Council met in regular session Tuesday, October 8, 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-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C.

Mayor Hal Leland and Economic Development Director Harold Stanislawski from the City of Fergus Falls presented information on economic development stating that a regional approach is most effective in rural areas of Minnesota. Stanislawski suggested a number of steps to foster economic development beginning with inventorying workforce, listing current businesses, completing a community profile, inventorying properties available for development and taking advantage of resources such as West Central Initiative, State and County programs. He also suggested reviewing regulatory policies periodically to determine whether there might be impediments to business development.

Network Battle Lake member Mike Henkenius presented a proposal to serve as Director of Regional Economic Development for the South Central Economic Development Region including the cities of Battle Lake, Henning, Ashby and Underwood for the purpose of packaging and promoting the area to attract good paying jobs that would not involve commuting to larger cities outside the region and therefore raising household incomes, benefitting area businesses, increasing school enrollment and improving the overall economy of the Region. The Director would be an unpaid position with an expense account of \$1000 per month. Financing of the proposed agreement would come from the Economic Development Fund with funding of LADA probably to be temporarily suspended. There were questions on how this position might interact with LADA and members of the LADA Board voiced support for the idea and plan to meet with Henkenius soon. Following further discussion, the Council accepted the proposal as presented. M-Ruhland, S-Reeve, M/C with Quammen opposed. The Mayor and City Clerk were authorized to execute a one year agreement with Henkenius effective 10/14/13. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

Jeremy Anderson with Design Tree Engineering presented a recommendation to accept the low bid of \$365,775.22 from Anderson Brothers Construction for the Glendalough and Halverson Park trail projects. Although a funding gap on the project still remains after the re-bid, significant additional local philanthropy is anticipated and the City would need to contribute to and support the project at some level. Factors believed to impact the disparity between bid price and 2008 grant application estimates containing a 25% inflation allowance, include substantial increases in material costs, changes in economic climate, contractors being busier due to additional spending by MNDOT in the region this year and impact of western ND development on area contractors causing higher labor costs. Following discussion, the Council accepted the bid from Anderson Brothers. M-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C with Quammen and Christensen opposed.

Richard Fugleberg of Mayville, ND, a lessee at the Battle Lake Airport, presented a proposed lease amendment calling for a 20 year term extension with review and possible adjustment of the current rate of \$385 per year, every 5 years, beginning in 2018. Mayor Reeve stated another draft lease had been discussed and tabled in April 2013 so it would be necessary for the Airport Committee to review both proposals, discuss details and bring a recommendation back to the Council at a later meeting. Christensen stated that additional rules and regulations deter economic development; Quammen favored moving forward with the proposal for the good of the community; Wasson said the issue has been debated too long already and the City airport should not be a self-supporting or profitable entity; Ruhland stated she was in favor of the airport and wanted to be sure the new lease was unbreakable; City attorney JJ Cline noted the proposed lease contains no guarantees on either side; Reeve said he thought the proposed lease rate was too low and the proposal needed further review. Cindy Beck, airport manager in Wahpeton ND and lessee Brad Deckert of Eureka, Illinois also spoke in support of the proposed lease. Christensen made a motion to accept the proposed lease amendment, seconded by Quammen. Airport Manager Steve Seufert asked for clarification of some airport rules and regulations attached to Fugleberg's proposal referencing a non-existent Battle Lake Airport Authority and containing contradictions to the City's Airport Ordinance. Following further debate and discussion it was agreed the attached rules and regulations section would be removed from the proposal. At this point a vote was called and the motion carried with Reeve opposed. Upon request for clarification, it was determined the new lease terms would go into effect for current lessees 07/15/14 and immediately for any new lessees. Additional discussion ensued related to changing the airport status from private to public to gain funding resources however, engineer Jeremy Anderson reminded the Council of a prior meeting with MNDOT Aeronautics at which a number of fairly significant obstacles to that conversion were established.

LADA Board member Gwen Bruns gave the financial report indicating a balance of \$17,716.57 with an additional \$900 in their event account. The group's annual meeting was held earlier in the evening.

The 9/10 minutes were approved. M-Ruhland, S-Christensen, M/C.

Treasurer's report was reviewed and approved noting transfers of funds in the last month. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C. The Third Quarter Budget Report was reviewed and discussed briefly.

The Extra Hour Report was reviewed and Public Works Department overtime attributed to the Hwy 78 project.

Liquor Store report was reviewed and manager Cody Munsell reported the Hwy 78 construction has had a negative impact on September sales.

Police Chief Kent Kortlever reported on September activities and training noting that activity has slowed down. He also presented the Selection Committee report indicating that after reviewing five applications and interviewing three applicants, with one applicant withdrawing, the Committee recommendation is to re-issue and widen the scope of an amended advertisement in hopes of attracting a larger number of applicants with the intention of having a recommendation for the Council at the next meeting. The Council approved that recommendation. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C.

Rescue Squad Acting Captain Heidi Jorud presented a report indicating 5 runs for the month of September; she also gave an update on training activities and reported a generous donation from a family.

Fire Chief John Salvevold reported no calls since last month, gave a training/activity update and was authorized to purchase \$250 in fire prevention program materials. M-Quammen, S-Ruhland, M/C. He also reported working on a grant application for equipment.

Public Works Director Steve Seufert gave an update on the Hwy 78 improvements stating MNDOT has been doing a great job on the project and progress has been satisfactory considering weather issues; he also reported working with MNDOT reps on amenity zone details and there may be additional cost to the City for moving street lights. Following discussion Seufert was authorized to proceed with graveling a parking area near the public pier (M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C) and purchasing a generator for approximately \$1000 plus tax. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C. Rip-rap at County Park and replacing the airport beacon light was deferred until more cost information is available. There was also discussion on possible replacement of a segment of sewer line on North Shore Drive due to tree root issues; the matter is to be addressed in the 2014 budget.

The Project List was reviewed briefly.

**Committee Reports:** **BL Motor Patrol**-no minutes/financial reports available for 9/9 meeting; Quammen said the next meeting is 10/14. **BL Area Fire & Rescue**-minutes/financial reports from the 8/15 meeting were reviewed; September information not available; Reeve reported a contract with architect Tony Stoll was approved and preliminary site plans indicate a need for a variance from impervious surface requirements; Reeve is unable to attend the next meeting 10/17 so Christensen will represent the City at that meeting. Ruhland asked about an independent site evaluation study for the new facility and Reeve indicated that did not happen. **LACC**-minutes from 9/9 meeting were reviewed; Ruhland noted the next meeting is 10/14. **Employee Relations**-meeting scheduled for 10/24 for the purpose of employee evaluations. **Natural Gas**-report on 9/30 meeting at which new information was reviewed; further research needs to be completed prior to a Committee recommendation; plans are to present additional information to Council next month; discussion on bond rates, estimated sales volume and planned meeting with City of Henning. **Wellhead Protection**-report on 9/18 meeting at which implementation activities were reviewed and grant status discussed as well as 2014 grant opportunities; a number of implementation items are ongoing or will need to be addressed in upcoming years. A draft Wellhead Protection Ordinance and environmental permit checklist will be considered next month.

Claims were approved for payment in the amount of \$235,131.34. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

A snow removal quote from Olson Lawn Care of Underwood for the 2013-14 season was reviewed and accepted. M-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C. The Mayor and City Clerk were authorized to execute the snow removal contract. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

Reba Gilliland with Network Battle Lake, informed the Council of a downtown walking tour scheduled for 10/15 at 5:30pm followed by dinner at the Community Center, comments from business owners and an idea exchange. Council members are invited to attend and support the goal of cooperating with businesses to beautify the downtown area prior to a ribbon cutting event next May. Christensen commented that the City's Weed Ordinance needs to be enforced.

An update on Safe Routes to School activities was presented, noting a recently announced 11/15 deadline for letters of intent related to the infrastructure grant. The Council authorized proceeding with the SRTS infrastructure grant. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C. A meeting regarding TAP funding is scheduled for 10/23 at West Central Initiative.

A quit claim deed related to title issues in Good Samaritan's acquisition of the Nagagaki property was presented. City attorney JJ Cline reviewed the corrections related to the Halverson Park boundary and vacating an old sewer easement. The Council approved execution of the quit claim deed as presented. M-Quammen, S-Ruhland, M/C.

A proposal for an additional health insurance plan option for eligible city employees was reviewed, discussed and approved. M-Christensen, S-Ruhland, M/C. The new plan has a higher deductible and lower monthly premiums with a Health Savings Account feature.

A meeting of a regional Trails Group will be held 10/15 in Battle Lake, beginning at City Hall and continuing at Glendalough Park.

The next City Council meeting will be Tuesday, November 12 at 7pm at which time enterprise fund budgets will be considered.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:40pm.

Wanda Berg-Vorgert  
Clerk-Treasurer