

City of Battle Lake City Council Minutes

The Battle Lake City Council met in regular session Tuesday, November 12, 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. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

LADA- New board members were announced: Abby Johnson Chair, Linda Nelson Vice-Chair and Gwen Bruns Treasurer. Johnson gave a financial report indicating an ending balance of \$17,448.83 and \$915.10 in the Events account, of which \$250 is being held for Network Battle Lake. She also indicated plans to meet with Mike Henkenius at their next meeting; the group supports his regional economic development approach.

Fire Relief Association Treasurer Tyler Akermann reviewed the financial status of the Association and presented a proposal to increase firefighters' retirement from \$1500 to \$1750 per year of active service. He also noted the last increase was in 2005 however the Association plans to look at increasing this level on a more frequent basis in the future. Following discussion, the Council ratified the proposal. M-Quammen, S-Wasson, M/C with Ruhland abstaining.

The 10/08 minutes were approved after clarification that Christensen had voted in opposition to accepting the bid from Anderson Brothers for construction of the trails; the minutes are to be corrected to reflect that vote. M-Christensen, S-Ruhland, M/C.

Treasurer's report was reviewed and approved. M-Ruhland, S-Christensen, M/C.

The Extra Hour Report was reviewed; Police Department overtime was grant funded by the Safe & Sober program while Public Works Department overtime was attributed to the Hwy 78 project.

Liquor Store report was reviewed and manager Cody Munsell reported improvement in October sales however not up to last year's level. He also presented a quote of approximately \$6,945 plus tax from Total Register Systems for replacement of the 2005 inventory management system to include registers, monitors and security components.

Following review, the Council authorized that expenditure. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C. The new equipment is planned to be installed before the end of the year.

Police Chief Kent Kortlever reported on October activities and training; he also presented the Selection Committee report indicating that after reviewing 14 applications and interviewing 8 applicants, the Committee recommendation is to hire Joshua Pesta as a Part-Time Police Officer at \$15.42 per hour with eligibility for an increase at the first of next year for up to 28 hours per week upon satisfactory completion of a medical and psychological evaluation and background investigation. The Council approved that recommendation. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C.

Rescue Squad Captain Joyelle Hill presented a report indicating 19 runs for the month of October with 125 for the year to date. She also gave an update on training activities.

Fire Chief John Salvevold reported four calls since last month and gave a training/activity update; he also noted working on an equipment grant application and getting policy forms signed by department personnel. The Council approved his request to send two firefighters to Fire Officer School in Alexandria February 8-9 at a cost of \$500. M-Quammen, S-Ruhland, M/C.

Public Works Director Steve Seufert reported being busy with fall work and noted there is a punch list for the contractor finishing up the Highway 78 project although the amenity zone may not be finished until spring. He said MNDOT has done a good job on the City's behalf overseeing the project.

The Project List was reviewed briefly and it was noted a letter of intent has been submitted for the Safe Routes to School infrastructure grant with the full application due February 1st if we are selected. Regarding the Highway 78 project, it was also noted that a savings of approximately \$62,000 will be realized by changing out the colored concrete in the amenity zone to exposed aggregate however there may be some additional cost involved with moving street lights. Also regarding the Highway 78 project, Christensen contended the center turn lane should be eliminated because parking lanes are too narrow and will be unsafe. Ruhland and Reeve disputed this and stated that it is too late to change the design of the highway at this point. Christensen made a motion to ask MNDOT to eliminate the center turn lane however the motion died for lack of second. Quammen asked Public Works Director Steve Seufert to check with MNDOT to see if changes can still be made.

Committee Reports: **BL Motor Patrol**-reviewed agendas/financial reports from 9/9 and 10/15 meetings; Quammen reported on the 11/04 meeting at which equipment needs were discussed; the next meeting is 12/10 at 6:15 pm. **BL Area Fire & Rescue**-09/09 minutes/financial reports were reviewed; Christensen reported on the 10/17 meeting at which it was decided to have a survey done of the proposed site for a new fire/rescue facility; the next meeting is 11/21. **LACC**-minutes from 10/14 meeting were reviewed and Ruhland reported there was a meeting 11/11 although minutes are not yet available.

Natural Gas-report on 10/30 meeting at which a proposal from the City of Henning and updated information were reviewed; there was discussion on the Henning proposal which transfers some of the upfront costs to an increased annual transportation fee over a 15-year period resulting in savings of approximately \$20,000. The Committee recommended that the City Council direct staff and project manager to develop an amended rate structure, a draft ordinance and customer contract forms for Council review in December and to authorize additional hours for Bert Olson to assist with this project. The plan is for contracts to be sent out in December and additional marketing activities to take place in December/January with a final decision on proceeding with the project needed in February. Following discussion the Council approved the Committee's recommendation. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C. There was a question from the audience on the required number of customer sign-ups and it was noted that with a change in the rate structure it will be difficult to determine a specific number since the feasibility of the project will be dependent upon both the number of customers and estimated sales volume.

Claims were approved for payment in the amount of \$166,133.92. M-Ruhland, S-Reeve, M/C.

A draft Wellhead Protection Ordinance and environmental checklist were reviewed and discussed, noting that Clitherall Township has agreed to work jointly with the City of Battle Lake on enforcement in the Stormwater Management and Wellhead Protection areas. City attorney JJ Cline said he had no objections to the draft ordinance as presented and was pleased to see cooperation between the City and Township on this matter. Council members agreed it was good to take a proactive approach to managing development in this area. A final draft will be considered by the Council at a later meeting.

A warranty deed for the East 75 feet of Lot 1, Block 2 in Moen's Second Addition, conveyed by the City to Otter Tail Power, was approved. M-Wasson, S-Christensen, M/C.

A report from Mike Henkenius on Economic Development activity in the South Central Otter Tail area was reviewed and discussed. Mike was unable to attend the meeting however Reeve reported that Mike's proposal has been well received by area Mayors and applauded his intention to work with LADA going forward.

The proposed 2014 Water and Sewer budgets were reviewed and discussed. Due to some capital improvements and major maintenance work in the past two years, expenditures have been higher than revenues so some transfers from assigned investments accounts were needed with the remainder absorbed by fund balances. Updates of Appendix A and B to the Chapter 50 Utilities Ordinance were also reviewed and discussed noting debt service needs and replacement fund amounts. At this time, no water/sewer rate increases are recommended for 2014, however an increase will probably be needed the following year. The Council approved the Ordinance updates. M-Quammen, S-Wasson, M/C. The ordinance summary was also approved for publication. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C.

Resolution #11-12-2013 Winter Maintenance Agreement with Otter Tail County for the purchase of salt and sand was passed. M-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C on a unanimous roll-call vote.

A report on the 10/28 Bicycle Friendly Community meeting was reviewed. Mayor Reeve reported on the meeting held 11/8 and noted a Bicycle ordinance will need to be developed; the Ordinance Committee of Wasson and Ruhland will need to work with Chief Kortlever and Public Works Director Steve Seufert on this. Another meeting is scheduled for 11/22 at 8:30am at City Hall.

The Council approved closing City Hall Friday, November 29, the day after Thanksgiving. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C.

A letter of commendation from Dan Malmstrom was read by Mayor Reeve; Malmstrom wished to compliment Chief Kortlever and inform the Council of the Chief's courteous and professional conduct.

The next City Council meeting will be Tuesday, December 10 at 7pm at which time the final budget/levy will be considered.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Wanda Berg-Vorgert
Clerk-Treasurer