

City of Battle Lake City Council Minutes

The Battle Lake City Council met in regular session Tuesday, December 10, 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.

LADA- Board Chair Abby Johnson reported updating LADA bylaws and plans to set up Quick Books in order to maintain operational transparency and provide complete financial reports for the Council. The group is also anticipating working with Mike Henkenius on economic development activities.

South Central Otter Tail Economic Region Director Mike Henkenius reported working with area schools on a CEO program to be sponsored by businesses and allow students to be trained as entrepreneurs, and with Perham companies interested in recruiting employees from this area and who may provide transportation to the work site. He is also in the process of organizing steering committees among area Mayors to move forward with economic development activities and has asked LADA board members to assist with gathering pertinent demographic information.

The corrected 10/08 minutes and the 11/12 minutes were approved. M-Wasson, S-Quammen, M/C.

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

The Extra Hour Report was reviewed; some Police Department overtime was grant funded through the Safe & Sober program and the remainder was due to being shorthanded on weekends.

Liquor Store report was reviewed and manager Cody Munsell reported improved sales and that the new computer equipment will be installed later this week.

Police Chief Kent Kortlever reported on November activities and training; he also noted newly hired officer Josh Pesta will start 12/14 and work mostly weekends for now since he is also presently working full time for OT County. Rescue Squad Captain Joyelle Hill presented a report indicating 14 runs for the month of November and 138 for the year to date. She also gave an update on training activities and noted that Squad members have been successfully utilizing Cadpage or Active911 apps on their smart phones.

Fire Chief John Salvevold reported 2 calls since last month and gave a training/activity update. The Council approved the following slate of officers: Chief-John Salvevold, 1st Assistant Chief-Dan Christensen, 2nd Assistant Chief-Mark Christensen, Training & Safety Officer-Alex Morical and Secretary-Tim McCarte. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C.

Public Works Director Steve Seufert reported working out some issues that arose during the 11/27 power outage and receiving a \$3300 quote for repair of a sewer line on Lake Shore Drive where damage to a service is causing sand and gravel to enter the line. He also noted infiltration issues in that area will need to be addressed in upcoming years. The Council approved the repair. M-Quammen, S-Ruhland, M/C.

The Project List was reviewed; a Safe Routes to School meeting is scheduled for 12/17 at 2pm at City Hall to get started on the new infrastructure grant application.

Committee Reports: BL Motor Patrol- Quammen reported on a meeting held earlier in the evening; backup drivers are still needed and snow plowing policies were reviewed; next meeting is January 7. **BL Area Fire & Rescue-** 10/17 minutes/financial reports were reviewed; Reeve reported on the 11/21 meeting at which concerns were raised about Workers Comp premium increases; also city attorney JJ Cline has been retained to update abstracts of the proposed site for the new Fire & Rescue Facility; next meeting is 12/19. **LACC-**minutes from 11/11 meeting were reviewed and Ruhland also reported on tree lighting and decorating; no information was available from the 12/9 meeting.

Claims were approved for payment in the amount of \$ 193,212.12. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

Final drafts of the Wellhead Protection Ordinance and environmental checklist were reviewed and approved and publication of the ordinance was authorized. The Wellhead Protection annual report was also reviewed and approved. M-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C. City staff will continue to work with Clitherall Township and also with Otter Tail County on joint enforcement of the Ordinance within the Drinking Water Supply Management Area and Stormwater Management Area.

Project Manager Jeremy Anderson presented a draft Natural Gas Utility Ordinance and information on an amended rate structure which consists of a lower monthly base rate and a higher gas usage rate. It was noted both rates may be adjusted from time to time to meet financial needs and as new customers are added and sales volume increases. A proposed service contract form and various marketing materials were also reviewed as well as a time line for activities to be carried out in upcoming months with a final decision from the City Council needed by February, 2014. Following discussion the Council approved proceeding with natural gas contract and marketing efforts. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

A draft 2014 Budget was reviewed and the following items discussed: potential impact of a 2014 sales tax exemption for cities and the 2014 Local Government Aid increase; comparison of levies, tax capacities and tax rates over the past 10 years and regional property tax comparisons; impact of expenditure increases such as insurances, including Workers Comp, a wage/benefit increase, 2014 election costs and upcoming maintenance projects. Special Revenue Funds and Debt Service Funds were also reviewed as well as the enterprise fund budgets for Water, Sewer and Liquor Store operations. Water/sewer rates are not scheduled to change in 2014 however some needed sewer line maintenance work may require use of capital replacement funds. There was no public comment and Resolution #12-10-13 adopting the final 2014 budget and levy of \$524,602 was passed. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C on a unanimous roll-call vote.

The 2014 Rates and Fees Ordinances was reviewed, discussed and approved noting some rate increases in Land-Use Management fees as well as additional Administrative Fines set out for tobacco offenses, public nudity and vandalism. The Ordinance summary was also approved for publication. M-Quammen, S-Ruhland, M/C. Resolution #12-1013A certifying delinquent water/sewer bills to the County for collection was passed. M-Christensen, S-Wasson, M/C on a unanimous roll-call vote.

The following business licenses renewals were approved for 2014 contingent upon compliance with all requirements: Garbage hauling for Kenneth Saurer Garbage Service, Denzel's Region Waste, Inc., Waste Management of Detroit Lakes and Steve's Sanitation; Off Sale 3.2 Beer for Dale Cameron/Battle Lake Standard; On-Sale Liquor for Stub's Inc.; On-Sale Liquor and Sunday On-Sale Liquor for Pek-Man, Inc/Shoreline Restaurant and Lanes, Stella's LLC and Old Brick Inn & Grill, Inc. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C. Ruhland suggested that fees for garbage hauling licenses should be increased considering the adverse impact of garbage trucks on city streets.

Resolution #12-10-13B declaring PT Police Officer Joshua Pesta eligible for PERA was passed. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C on a unanimous roll-call vote.

A 2014 legal services agreement with Svingen, Cline & Larsen PA was approved. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

The Lakes Country Services Cooperative annual membership renewal was approved. M-Ruhland, S-Wasson, M/C.

Resolution #12-10-13C requesting Otter Tail County sponsor the Safe Routes to School project was passed. M-Wasson, S-Ruhland, M/C on a unanimous roll-call vote.

Resolution #12-10-13D approving delegation of authority to the Clerk-Treasurer for paying end of year claims was passed. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C.

A request from Wayne Elmer to terminate a blanket easement on his property on North Shore Drive was reviewed and discussed. City attorney JJ Cline stated that legal descriptions will need to be mapped out in order to identify existing utilities and consider future plans for utilities in that area. The Council agreed by consensus to direct Cline, engineer Jeremy Anderson, City Zoning Officer Bert Olson and Public Works Director Steve Seufert to research the matter and bring a recommendation back to the Council.

Mayor Reeve was authorized to sign an engagement letter from Carlson Highland regarding the 2013 audit. M-Ruhland, S-Quammen, M/C. A price increase of \$1000 over last year was noted.

The next City Council meeting will be Tuesday, January 14, 2014 at 7pm. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Wanda Berg-Vorgert
Clerk-Treasurer