

## City of Battle Lake Council Meeting – August 22, 2023

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Mayor Richard Bullard called the regular council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 22, 2023, with Council members Don Maslow, Ryan Christensen, and Marjorie Quammen attending. Absent was Julia DeMars. Also present at City Hall were Clerk/Treasurer, Val Martin; Public Works Superintendent, Chris Johnson; Chief of Police, Todd Quaintance; Attorney Crystal Lemmers, and City Attorney, JJ Cline. Additional visitors from the public were in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Maslow made a motion to approve the agenda. Bullard seconded. MCU

### Visitors:

**Jonathan Hartman and Paul Ness, Battle Lake School Board Members** were in attendance to present information on the upcoming bond referendum. Some of the details included:

- There is a need for a major overhaul of the school including much of the infrastructure.
- A committee has been working with Site Logic to work on the needs of the building.
- Full project scope includes:
  - **Create** safe and secure entryways.
  - **Improve** ventilation and HVAC system.
  - **Upgrade** existing restrooms, locker rooms, and interior doors to be ADA-compliant.
  - **Remodel** Career and Technical Education (CTE) space.
  - **Remodel** the computer lab/Makerspace.
  - **Remodel** the digital media lab to support programming needs.
  - **Build** a new addition to include a music suite, weight, and fitness room, receiving area, and changing rooms.
  - **Replace** the existing roofing systems
  - **Replace** exterior windows and doors.
  - **Crack fill** and **seal coat** parking lots.
  - **Pave** and **expand** existing gravel parking lots.
  - **Update** the cafeteria
  - **Replace** the waste delivery system piping.
  - **Upgrade** outdated electrical systems.
  - **Replace** the current fire alarm system.
  - **Replace** the existing diesel generator.
  - **Replace** the boilers and water heater.
- Estimated cost is just over \$30 million. It would be a 20-year bond. An estimated cost for a completely new building was around \$80 million.
- Even with the cost of this bond, taxpayers of Battle Lake will still have the lowest tax impact in comparison to surrounding schools. A home valued at \$350,000 would see an increase of approximately \$32.87 per month.

**Steve Branby, Brooks Anderson, and Kurt Mortenson** from Otter Tail County were in attendance to discuss the future plans for single-sort recycling. Solid Waste worked with a steering committee from people throughout the County, including Chris Johnson, Public Works Director along with sending out a survey. They found that people wanted single-sort recycling to be picked up at their homes. The strategic plan includes a hybrid model where Cities over 500 and densely populated areas will get this pick-up service. Fergus Falls and Perham currently have single-sort recycling pick-up. Any licensed haulers in the County will also be required to also pick up recycling. They will determine the fee to the property owner and take care of providing containers. The Henning transfer station will be going through some remodeling including a compactor for recycling items.

Some council members had concerns that this plan might eliminate some of the smaller garbage handlers. They also suggest a single sort at the current recycling drop-off sight might be a better use of funds. Commissioner Mortenson commented that this plan was set up in response to a survey of residents and a recommendation from the committee.

Christensen made a motion to approve the claims list as presented. Quammen seconded. MCU

**Jade Berube, City Engineer**

The Council received recommendations from the street committee in regard to the shared parking lot and meeting with C I Construction and Engineer Berube:

The city's share of the balance of the work will be utilizing the grant funds - C I Construction will pay the balance of the expenses for sidewalks, street repairs, and reconstruction and paving of the City's parking lot while doing their parking lot. They will provide the receipts for the grant reimbursement which may include some added stormwater expenses to get to the needed match of \$33,950.

Reconstruct and pave the City's lot according to the City's requirements. Remove the median and paint the parking spots

Allow the installation of a height restriction bar at the entrance of the City parking lot.

Work with OTP on moving the pole with an electrical connection and the installation of streetlights for the parking lot - adding two to four streetlights.

Maslow made a motion to approve these recommendations Christensen seconded. MCU Snow removal has been discussed with C I Construction – this is a work in progress. There is an upcoming meeting with Otter Tail Power next Wednesday.

Quammen made a motion to approve the amendment to Neverbetter's Commercial application for the patio to add a small structure in the back. Christensen seconded. MCU

Quaintance has not received final quotes on the cost for a new squad car but requested the council approve the purchase when they become available to order. There can be as little as a twelve-hour window to order these vehicles once the window opens up. Bullard made a motion to approve the purchase of a new squad for delivery in 2024, up to \$45,000. This does not include the cost of equipment. Christensen seconded. MCU Quaintance suggested we keep the old squad and not trade it in for a backup if there comes a situation where both squads are down. They've had some serious issues in the past few years. The council had a lengthy discussion about this and decided to table this until the new squad comes in.

The finance committee met with staff last week to discuss and recommend council approval of the General Fund Budget. The staff reviewed the budget and highlighted any changes. Council members were all in agreement that the budget looks good and are ready to move forward with approval in September. Some items that came out of the conversation:

- Work with Clitherall Township on an increase to their rent which is \$200 a month and includes the use of the council room for their meeting. All expenses are paid by the City. There has not been an increase since 2012. Council members discussed several amounts and most felt \$1,000 was the value of what they were getting. Bullard will discuss an increase in rent with one or two of the township supervisors.
- The Fire Department has not come up with an equipment/vehicle replacement plan but has been discussing this with the BLAFRA board. No amount was budgeted for 2024.
- The Police Department has additional expenses that Quaintance stated were related to taser replacement, training, new platforms and equipment needs.
- Street repairs – some may still happen this year. Berube and Johnson are working on a pavement management plan for future projects.

Recommended Fund Transfers for 2024 from Liquor Store was discussed with councilmembers in agreement:

1. EDA \$20,000
2. Streetlights \$25,000
3. Storm Water \$10,000
4. To LQ Store Debt Service \$40,000

NOTICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE:

- ☐ Joint Council/PC Meeting – September 7, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.
- ☐ Council Meeting – September 12, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

Adjourn 8:45 p.m.

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Valerie Martin, Clerk/Treasurer