

Mayor Rich Bullard called the regular council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, with Council members Majorie Quammen, Ryan Christensen, and Julia DeMars present. Absent was Maslow. Also, present at City Hall were Clerk/Treasurer, Val Martin; Public Works Superintendent, Trevor Meece; Chief of Police Eric Dison, and JJ Cline, City Attorney.

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

**Hearing – Changes to Zoning Ordinances – Chapter 150 Shoreland Management**

- Mayor Bullard called the hearing to order.
- Call for public comment – no members of the public were present.
- The discussion was tabled for later in the meeting.

Shoreland  
Ord.  
Hearing

Christensen made a motion to close the meeting to discuss pending litigation allowed under MN Statute 13D.05. DeMars seconded. MCU

Closed  
meeting

Christensen made a motion to come out of the closed session and open the meeting back up. DeMars seconded. MCU

PFA's

DeMars made a motion to approve the complaint presented by Napoli Shkolnik PLLC Attorneys at Law regarding PFA's in the City's drinking water along with an updated agreement with the firm. Quammen seconded. MCU

**Visitors**

**John Christensen was present to present a commercial application for Gloria Axelson.** The application was for an additional rental storage facility where her current facilities are located. DeMars made a motion to approve based on the commercial checklist. Christensen seconded. MCU

Axelson  
Permit

**Jade Berube, City Engineer Report:**

- **South Battle Lake Trail and Stormwater Handling:**
  - A draft grant application was submitted to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources last week, with comments received from the program manager on Monday. The grant comments, along with the maps and letters of support will be submitted for the final grant application by the end of March.
- **Water System Improvements:**
  - The engineering consultant for the City of Clitherall called on Monday to discuss options for water system improvements and a potential connection to the City of Battle Lake. Based on the status of the City's water supply due to the Emergency Status of Well No. 4, the possibility of a system connection needs further review. Also, according to past discussions, the intent was to complete Well No. 5 before further discussion regarding connecting an additional user to the system. With the lack of redundancy in the system, the connection alternatives will require further review.
  - Future improvements and funding alternatives will determine the viability of connecting an additional roughly 100 users to the water system.
  - Additional discussions with Clitherall's consultant and City Staff will be required before improvement alternatives are considered.

City  
Engineer

Christensen made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. DeMars seconded. MCU

- *Treasurer's Report*
- *Claims List*
- *Minutes*
- *Extra Hours Report*
- *Work Log Compilation*
- *Special Event Application – Eucharistic Procession – June 2, 2024*
- *Special Event Application – Ninja Everywhere – May 25<sup>th</sup> in Railroad Park*
- *Gambling Permit – DU Banquet – April 18<sup>th</sup>*

Consent  
Agenda

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:**

**Liquor Store Report – Adam Freyholtz**

<i>Month – February</i>			
<b>Sales</b>	99,171	+ 4,145	+ 4.3%
<b>Transactions</b>	3,208	+ 345	+ 12.0%
<b>Average Sale</b>	\$30.91	- 2.28	
<b>Gross Profit</b>	30.89%		

Liquor  
Store  
Report

<i>Year</i>			
<b>Sales</b>	196,907	+ 5,141	+ 2.6%
<b>Transactions</b>	6,318	+ 512	+ 8.8%

Quammen made a motion to approve the resignation of Greg Gerhart as part-time liquor store clerk. DeMars seconded. MCU

**Police Report – Eric Dison**

<b>Calls for Service</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Animal Call	1
Assistance	4
Assistance-Public	4
Civil Dispute	1
Disturbance	1
EMS-Injury Accident	1
EMS-Medical	4
Fire-Alarm	1
Harassment Order Viol	1
Harassment/Stalking	1
Lost & Found	1
Open Door/Window	1
Parking Comp/Privileges	1
Resid/Busin/Area Checks	24
School Assistance	14
Suspicious Activity	3
Terroristic Threats	1
Theft/Fraud Rep	1
Traffic Stop Citation	3
Unlock	2
Warning-Traffic	37
Welfare Check	2

Police  
Report

Totals 109

## **Public Works Report – Trevor Meece**

- Working on year-end report for MN Office of Pipeline Safety
- Adam will be taking the Class D Water Exam at the annual MRWA Conference
- Decals were put on the new F350
- Met with Aaron Meyer with MRWA to go through the Wellhead Protection Plan. To inform me where we are with it.
- Brought the bike racks and sculptures to 59 Finishing to be re-powder coated
- Had recall work done on both the F150 and the Transit
- Working on figuring out a notification system for our Wells and Lift Stations

Public  
Works  
Report

Christensen made a motion to approve the hiring of Andrew Cihlar at Grade 5, Step 2 for Public Works Technician. DeMars seconded. MCU

Christensen made a motion to approve the low quote from North Central at \$95 cents a foot for dust control. Quammen seconded. MCU

## **Administration Report – Val Martin**

### **Report from Otter Tail County Community Development Agency (CDA) – January 16, 2024**

- The Battle Lake Youth Center project – approved MOU with Highpoint Homes (Jay Paulson). There has been discussion on surveying the larger employers in Battle Lake to see what the needs are for one-bedroom vs. two-bedroom.
- Community Growth grant of \$25,000 was awarded to Henning for the removal of a blighted building to add additional parking as well as a new entrance from the parking lot.
- Community Growth grant of \$10,000 awarded to Perham – Karvonen purchased the building next door to them for additional sales space.
- The Pelican Rapids project continues to move forward for new plat and infrastructure.
- Childcare – Working on a new substitute program for existing childcare providers to have access to someone who can run their daycare when they need a day off.
- Otter Tail Tourism is a finalist for the Explore MN innovative marketing award.

Admin  
Report

### **Other Activities to note:**

- Economic Development Authority.
  - Annual meeting held on Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Annual meeting write-up for paper, year in review sent to businesses.
  - Meeting with Jay Paulson/CDA on the Youth Center project.
  - Work on yearly calendar of events and coupon flyer.
  - Social media flyer redesign.
- Planning and Zoning:
  - Zoning Questions and site visits starting.
  - Beecher project – Sand Bay – working with attorneys and Trevor on location for possible easement.
  - Continue to work on shoreland management changes.
  - Commercial applications – Galloping Goose/Braaten.
- Ordinance committee meeting
- Codification items – publication for paper.
- Elections: election judge training, healthcare voting, set-up, and work elections.
- Work on several items for the Police Chief hire.
- Police officer opening – - set up on website, advertising, etc.
- Work on Short-term rental.
- Training – goals setting process.
- Grant app – AARP grant for pickleball courts.
- DNR grant app.
- Mailed letters for delinquent utilities for certification.
- Lunch meeting with Ottertail and Henning – Mayors and clerks.

### **EDA – Minutes and financials**

- Quammen made a motion to approve the EDA Goals and Priorities as presented. DeMars seconded. MCU

EDA

- For information – EDA has changed meetings to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:00 a.m. starting in April.

**BLAFRA – minutes**

**BLAFRA**

**Lakes Area Community Center (LACC) – DeMars reported**

**LACC**

**Art Advisory Committee – Quammen reported**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Natural Gas Rate:** April 2023 Rates: \$1.56; May 2023 Rate: \$1.02; June 2023 Rate: \$.99; July 2023 Rate: \$1.02; August 2023 Rate: \$1.04; September 2023 Rate: \$1.04; October 2023 Rate: \$1.05; November 2023 Rate: \$1.02; December 2023 Rate \$1.19; January 2024 Rate \$1.18; February 2024 Rate: \$1.24; March, 2024 Rate: \$1.22

**NG Rate**

**Fireworks –** Martin said that the LACC was considering some events on Friday of Wenonga Days. Would it make sense to have fireworks on Friday? The council felt that the fireworks kept the people in town after the parade and did not want to move to Friday night.

**Fireworks**

**Changes to Chapter 152 Shoreland Management:**

- Proposed changes were presented.
- Correspondence – no additional correspondence was received after the last public meeting.
- Council/public discussion – no additional discussion
- **DeMars made a motion to approve the changes to Chapter 152 Shoreland Management at presented. Quammen seconded. MCU**

**Shoreland Mgmt**

Martin will be sending letters out to property owners that have lakeshore property and those across the road from the lake so everyone is aware of the changes.

**New Business**

Martin presented a letter from Otter Tail County stating that the moratorium on the sale of hemp-derived cannabinoid products has expired. No further action has been taken by the County in regard to the newly enacted cannabis law. Martin distributed general information about the new cannabis law from the League of MN Cities. Council had a short discussion on what might happen in Battle Lake with no action taken. Martin and Freyholtz will be getting more information in the next few months.

**Cannabis**

A letter was received from Ringdahl Ambulance requesting a donation. The packet of information explained how they have not been able to cash-flow and the lack of reimbursements to cover costs from Medicare and Medicaid. The council followed up with discussion on whether it was time to provide our own ambulance service. Christensen will discuss with some of the township officials and report back.

**Ringdahl**

Christensen made a motion to approve **Resolution 2024-03-13A Certification of Unpaid Utilities.** Quammen seconded. With a roll call vote, those voting in favor of include Bullard, Christensen, Quammen, and DeMars with no members voting no. MCU

**Unpaid utilizes**

The council discussed options for a grant application for Blandins. They directed Martin to move forward with the application for pickle ball courts.

**Blandins grant**

**NOTICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE:**

- **No Comprehensive Plan Meeting March 18<sup>th</sup>**
- **Council Meeting – April 9, 2023**
- **BLAFRA Annual Meeting – Thursday, March 28, 2024 7:00 p.m.**

Adjourn 9:03 p.m.

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Valerie Martin, Clerk/Treasurer