

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

May 23, 2005

Pursuant to due call and notice, a meeting/work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, March 23, 2005, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Erickson, Hellquist, Markeson, Meuers, Lehmann, Downs, Johnson. Absent: None.

Others Present: Minke, Sherman

Deer Management Committee: Wes Djonne, Rod Witt, Foster Hudson, Steve Caron, Dean Robertson, Janice Moberg, Barry Yocum

Mayor Lehmann called the meeting to order and added the following items to the agenda:

Pawnshop Ordinance Amendment

The City Council is in the process of drafting an amendment to an existing pawnshop ordinance. The County Board wants to draft an ordinance that mirrors the City ordinance. It was suggested that two City Councilmembers and two County Board Members work together as a joint committee to draft the ordinances. Lehmann recommended appointment of Erickson and Hellquist to that committee. Motion by Meuers, second by Johnson, to approve the appointment of Erickson and Hellquist to a Joint City/County committee to draft the pawnshop ordinance. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

City Arena

Lehmann noted several issues at the arena involving substantial repairs. Minke noted that there would be no arena ice until the issues are resolved. Lehmann requested that the Public Works Committee convene to discuss the needed repairs and make recommendations to resolve the issues. Hellquist will set a date for the meeting and notify city staff.

Highway 197 Landscaping Partnership

Lehmann expressed the need to appoint a city representative to the joint City/MnDOT Hwy 197 Landscaping Partnership. He noted that both Markeson and Erickson have expressed an interest to serve in that capacity. Therefore, Lehmann recommended appointment of both Councilmembers if that is acceptable to MnDOT. Motion by Johnson, second by Downs, to appoint Markeson and Erickson to represent the City for the Joint City/Mn/DOT Hwy 197 Landscaping Partnership. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Lehmann noted that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to review and discuss the proposed Deer Management Plan. Lehmann expressed appreciation to the Deer Committee members for their involvement in the process.

Councilmember Erickson introduced members of the Deer Management Committee. Lehmann expressed appreciation to the committee members for their involvement in the process.

A copy of the Deer Management Plan was distributed to Councilmembers several days before the meeting for their review. Erickson provided some background information on the project.

Meuers asked how the committee decided that there were too many deer. Caron stated there is no direct measure or count to determine deer population. The DNR used citizen tolerance – damage to property and vegetation – unusual feeding habits. He noted that until approximately 4-5 years ago there was no problem. Historically severe winters have equalized deer populations. Eight of the past eleven winters have been mild, impacting the mortality factor. Caron noted that the entire city is experiencing increased problems but the issue seems to be more troublesome in the east area of the City.

Downs inquired about the possibility of spraying vegetation to discourage the deer feeding. It was noted that the solution wears off with the weather and the deer eat the new growth that does not have the solution

DNR suggested actions to discourage communal feeding. Erickson discussed the need for an ordinance that would include a ban on feeding. Markeson wanted to discourage anything that would pit neighbor against neighbor. He suggested issuing a warning first – then if the practice is repeated, a penalty should be attached.

Caron discussed the proposed deer harvest and noted other communities have used law enforcement personnel – firearm experts – sharpshooters to implement the harvest. During subsequent discussion, the question was raised regarding the use of the venison meat. It was suggested that the meat be processed at a certified plant and sold or distributed to a list of people who have expressed an interest.

Motion by Erickson, second by Johnson, to adopt the Deer Management Plan as presented, including an ordinance banning the feeding of deer. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Motion by Hellquist, second by Meuers, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Sherman, City Clerk