

# CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

## BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

### Regular Meeting – January 6, 2009

Pursuant to due call and notice, a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Tuesday, January 6, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Council members were declared present. Lehmann, Hellquist, Johnson, Downs, Meuers. Absent: Erickson, Markeson.

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, City Attorney Alan Felix, City Engineer Craig Gray, Finance Director Ron Eischens, City Clerk Kay Murphy

#### OATH OF OFFICE

City Clerk Murphy administered the Oath of Office to newly elected officials Kevin Waldhausen (Councilmember Ward 1) and Greg Negard (Councilmember Ward 5), and re-elected officials Richard Lehmann (Mayor) and Ron Johnson (Councilmember Ward 3).

#### MINUTES

Minutes of the December 15, 2008 regular meeting and December 8, December 22 and December 30, 2008 work sessions were presented for approval. Hellquist noted a correction to Pete Aube's last name in the December 15 minutes. **Motion by Downs, seconded by Johnson, to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

#### RESEATING OF THE COUNCIL

Mayor Lehmann reseated the Council, Waldhausen and Negard were counted present, and the meeting continued.

#### AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Mayor Lehmann called for any amendments to the agenda. Bruce Hemstad requested that the Bemidji Fire Relief Association presentation be removed. Downs requested that discussion of the stimulus package/Paul Bunyan drive trail be added. **Motion by Meuers, seconded by Johnson, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

#### CONSENT AGENDA

The following Consent Agenda items were presented for approval. Negard requested that the item regarding the Manager's Auto Allowance be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion. **Motion by Downs, seconded by Waldhausen, to approve the Consent Agenda items as follows:**

1. Approved Claims submitted by the Finance Officer in the total amount of \$528,562.39
2. Approved miscellaneous business licenses for 2009
3. Approved Designation of Mayor Pro-tem - Downs
4. Approved Commission/Committee Appointments/Reappointments for 2009 – It was noted that Meuers be appointed to Race Relations not Waldhausen.
5. Designated Official Newspaper of Publication for City – Bemidji Pioneer
6. **RESOLUTION NO. 5540:** Designating Depositories for City Funds in 2009
7. Declared Equipment Surplus – Bemidji Public Library
8. Approved Council Travel:
  - CGMC Action Day – St. Paul 1/15-1/16 - Johnson
  - LMC Newly Elected Conference – Nisswa 1/9-1/10 – Waldhausen
  - LMC Newly Elected Conference – Bloomington 2/20-2/21 – Negard
  - Legislative Travel as Needed – St. Paul - Lehmann

**Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Bemidji Youth Advisory Commission – Rachel Munson, BYA representative, reported that on January 4 the BYA committees met and graded their performance during the first semester

and began planning for next semester and the June 7 Youth Day. She stated that the Commission is not doing any listening lunches until February at which time they will hear about the art center and getting the students more involved.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Stimulus Package/Paul Bunyan Trail**

Downs stated that this is one of the biggest opportunities for the city to lobby for funding for the Paul Bunyan Trail crossing bridge over TH197. He stated that there is a good model for a bridge that was designed by WSN which is located over Hwy 210 in Brainerd that could be used to assist in that effort.

Chattin stated that the trail bridge project has been submitted to all of our state and federal representatives; however, staff will assist in getting additional information. He commented that perhaps the City can piggyback with the County's lobbyist. Mayor Lehmann suggested that Chattin discuss this further with the County Administrator.

**Motion by Downs, seconded by Hellquist, directing staff to work with WSN to obtain information regarding the bridge built in Brainerd that could be submitted to our representatives for consideration for stimulus program for a bridge trail over TH197. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **2009 Street Renewal**

Gray stated that on November 3 the Council authorized the preparation of the proposed 2009 street renewal project. The next step is to approve the feasibility report and set a public hearing date for the project. Using a combination of bond funds, utility funds and assessments this project will reconstruct over one mile of city streets. The streets were selected due to the poor condition of the bituminous surfacing, poor stormwater surface drainage and the age and deterioration of some of the existing underground utility water mains. The proposed project will remove the existing bituminous and gravel base and after completion of the necessary underground work replace it with new Class 5 gravel base and 3-1/2 inches of bituminous. This should provide a new roadway with a life of approximately 40 years. If the feasibility report is approved, staff will hold a neighborhood informational meeting on Thursday, January 15 with the residents to outline the project and answer any questions prior to the public hearing.

Meuers asked if these were the worse streets in the City.

Gray responded that there are about 10 miles of poor streets, this project includes one mile. These streets were selected close together to keep the contractor in one area.

**RESOLUTION NO. 5541: Approving 2009 Street Renewal Feasibility Report and Call for a Public Hearing (City Project 09-02) was offered by Councilmember Meuers, who moved its adoption, and upon due second by Councilmember Negard was passed by unanimous vote.**

### **City Parking Lot 3**

Gray stated that he has been working with the DDA regarding improvements to Parking Lot 3. After a few revisions and minor modifications, a "parking subcommittee" selected Concept 3A. This alternative provides 45 spaces that meet design standards. This will create a parking lot that functions and looks better than the current lot. The estimated cost of the project is \$120,000 which could change slightly if additional lighting or landscaping is requested by the DDA. The project would be paid for with funds from the Parking Development Fund.

Jim Ekstrom, Board member of DDA, noted that the parking spaces in Lot 3 currently indicates 66 spaces, however, only 56 vehicles could currently park there. The DDA limits the number of parking permits issued for this lot to keep it available for shoppers. He stated that the DDA will be exploring the parking ramp at Lot 4. The DDA was unanimously in favor of the reconstruction of Parking Lot 3 as proposed in Concept 3A.

**Motion by Hellquist, seconded by Downs, authorizing the City Engineer to prepare plans and specifications (Concept No. 3A) and receive bids for reconstruction of City Parking Lot No. 3. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Manager's Auto Allowance**

Negard asked that this item be removed to discuss it further. He stated that any employee should be reimbursed for expenses incurred and questioned how many miles the Manager actually incurred and the expense. He stated that the City might be further ahead in leasing a vehicle for the City Manager.

Mayor Lehmann stated that the \$300 auto allowance was negotiated with the consultant in the City Manager's contract.

Eischens stated that if the auto allowance is moved to Manager's salary it would be subject to PERA.

Chattin stated that incorporating the auto allowance into his salary has no adverse fiscal impact to the city, but would be a benefit to him in that future PERA benefits could be increased.

**Motion by Negard, seconded by Johnson, to include the City Manager's auto allowance in his salary. Motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Meuers, Negard, Waldhausen, Lehmann, Johnson, Downs. Nays: Hellquist.**

#### **LIBRARIAN REPORT**

Paul Ericsson, Librarian, reported on recent activities at the library. He stated that there is a winter reading program for adults called "Snowtime to Read". Readers keep track of the books they are reading or recorded books they are listening to and at the end receive an incentive prize when they have read 15 books over 3 months. An upcoming informational meeting for the digital conversion will be held at the library. Discussion continued on what will happen to the surplus equipment (computers) at the library.

#### **EVENT CENTER UPDATE**

Chattin stated that there is no update from Leo A Daly. Chattin stated that staff is working diligently to resolve lease issues. Hopefully, by the end of this week there will be more to report. A memorandum from Bill Maki, BSU Vice President for Finance and Administration, was given to the Council regarding the status of the BSU lease agreement at the BREC.

Downs stated concerns regarding the lease agreement with BSU and as it stands, will withdraw his support of the BREC.

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- Monday, January 12            5:30 p.m.    Work Session – Event Center
- Wednesday, January 14    6:00 p.m.    GBJPB
- Tuesday, January 20        7:00 p.m.    Council Meeting
- Monday, January 26         5:30 p.m.    Work Session – Review City-owned Properties

#### **COUNCIL/STAFF REPORT**

- Chattin stated that the Labor Management Committee met and finalized revisions to the Personnel Manual for the Council to review at a future work session. He has requested that staff set a goal to cut their overtime in half for 2009 which will help reduce the budget. Most of the overtime is from the police department. He stated that staff is exploring other ways to decrease the budget by \$500,000 in 2009. A comprehensive list will be available with recommendations for the Council's consideration in February.
- Waldhausen promoted local high school events.
- Hellquist reported that there will be a DDA meeting on January 10. He requested that a work session be set to discuss the procedure used for the City Manager's performance and evaluation. This discussion will be added to the February 9 work session.
- Johnson encouraged other council members to attend Bemidji Day at the Capitol on February 18. He commended the Street Department for their snow removal efforts.
- Chat-A-Bout for February 2 – Downs.
- Mayor Lehmann stated that there is a meeting in St. Cloud on January 22 regarding creating energy efficient properties. He is unable to attend and if any councilmember is interested in attending, please let him know.
- Felix stated that Assistant City Attorney Burdick left employment with the City for a position with the County. The City is exploring other options for handling the workload.

#### **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, motion by Downs, seconded by Hellquist, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy  
City Clerk