

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
Regular Meeting/Work Session - January 8, 2007

Pursuant to due call and notice, a regular meeting/work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, January 8, 2007, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

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

Staff Present: Ron Eischens, John Chattin, Kay Murphy-Schuett
Others Present: Sandy Nelson, Bill Smith, Mary Harding, Kay McCune, Scotty Tesar, Sharon Geisen, Margaret Olson, Marian Ridge, Marilyn Heltzer, Lila & Arley Bruun

Mayor Lehmann noted that the purpose of the meeting was to give the Council an opportunity to review the audit procedures in preparation for the 2006 audit and to discuss any particular concerns with the auditor. In addition, the Council would hear a proposal presented by the Save Our Library Committee of the Friends of the Bemidji Public Library.

Pre-Audit Review

Sandy Nelson, auditor from Miller, McDonald, Erickson & Moller, Ltd., provided an overview of the procedures involved in a Financial Statement Audit. She noted that random tests are performed on information provided by management to determine whether the information appears reasonable. In addition, the auditors will be doing some unannounced cash counts at City Hall and at the Police Department. She noted that preparations are underway for the 2006 audit and asked if the Council had any particular concerns or areas that they would like reviewed. The Council expressed no concerns.

Discussion – Library

Mayor Lehmann stated that the proposal from the Save Our Library Committee basically is requiring the City to take over management of the Bemidji Public Library and to make the employees City employees. Mayor expressed concerns about separating from KRLS in particular what will happen to the City of Blackduck's library and the book mobile.

Bill Smith, Save Our Library Committee, responded that their group believes that the library must be separated from the management of Kitchigami Regional Library System (KRLS) in order to better reflect the qualities of our community and thus serve it more effectively. He stated that we need to reassume local control of our library and align the management structure of our library with the funding structure—responsibility and authority must reside in the same location. He suggested that City staff review the proposal.

Mayor Lehmann stated that the City Attorney does not have time currently to review the proposal, however, the manager and finance director can review it and give their input to the Council.

Mary Harding reviewed a handout of a sample budget for 2007. Discussion followed regarding the budget assumptions.

Erickson asked if the Save our Library Committee had the support of the Friends of the Library and Library Board and why they are requesting this change at this time.

Harding responded that the group was greatly encouraged by the response of the City; however, it was their perception that nothing had been accomplished by the negotiating team. She stated that no vote has been taken by the Friends.

Marian Ridge, KRLS, stated that they have not had any experience with contracting; however, this does not mean that it should not be looked at. She further stated that changing to a new system will not happen quickly as there is a Joint Powers Agreement.

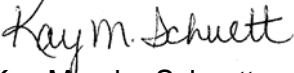
Marilyn Heltzer commented that perhaps working with the new branch librarian on this issue is in order. He will begin mid-February. She suggested that the Committee should ask for input from Beltrami County.

Motion by Erickson, second by Hellquist, directing staff to review the Save Our Library Committee proposal by July 1, 2007, pending the written notification of support from the Friends of the Library and Library Board. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Meuers, second by Hellquist, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Kay Murphy-Schuett
City Clerk