

# CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

## BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

### Regular Meeting – March 17, 2008

Pursuant to due call and notice, a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, March 17, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Pro-tem Downs presiding.

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

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, Finance Director Ron Eischens, City Engineer Craig Gray, Assistant City Attorney Kristy Burdick, Public Works Director Andy Mack, City Clerk Kay Murphy.

#### **AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA**

Downs called for any amendments to the agenda. The following addition was requested:

- Application for a 1 Day Temporary Consumption & Display Permit (Chamber) - Consent Agenda – Requested by City Clerk

Motion by Johnson, seconded by Erickson, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **MINUTES**

Minutes of the March 3, 2008 regular meeting and February 25, 2008 work session were presented for approval. Motion by Johnson, seconded by Meuers, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The following Consent Agenda items were presented for approval. Motion by Erickson, seconded by Hellquist, to approve the Consent Agenda items as follows:

1. Approved Claims submitted by the Finance Officer in the total amount of \$1,552,891.34.
2. Approved Lawful Gambling Permit for Annual Ducks Unlimited Banquet.
3. **RESOLUTION NO. 5477:** Use Best Efforts to Refinance Outstanding Bonds for BCA Facility
4. **RESOLUTION NO. 5478:** Approving the Site for the 2008 Art in the Park Event
5. Approved Change Order #6 – Public Works Facility (\$27,651.00)
6. Approved a 1 Day Temporary Consumption & Display Permit – Chamber (4/8/08)

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

Bemidji State University Student Senate – Cody Nelson, Student Senate President, stated that the Senate formally approved a green fee at BSU which will generate approximately \$45,000 annually. He stated that BSU students have made several trips to the state capital to lobby on behalf of the events center and other BSU items. Chattin commented that the bonding conference committee members unanimously agreed that the BSU students made an impact.

#### **PRESENTATION**

##### Boys & Girls Club

Lenore Potter, Executive Director, stated that on behalf of the Board and staff of the BGCBA she is requesting that the Council consider an investment in the Club in the amount of \$10,000. She stated that other sectors in our community have contributed to the Club.

Carl Mork, Program Director, stated that one of the key tenants of the Club is safety. Every adult that comes in the Club requires a background check or is accompanied by a Club

member. The average age of club members is 11 or 12 years of age (5<sup>th</sup> grade). Discussion continued regarding the hours of operation.

Councilmembers made the following comments:

- Beltrami County contributes to the Boys & Girls Club which includes city taxpayers.
- Current moratorium on donations.
- The City gives to groups in-kind.
- It was noted that the Police Chief was not in favor of a contribution coming out of his budget.

Erickson stated that she called the Finance Director at Detroit Lakes and their Boys & Girls Club facility is owned by the City. Discussion continued regarding the comparison between the Detroit Lakes and Bemidji programs.

Meuers commented that the Council was going to create a committee to look at the city's policy on contributions and would like to see this happen.

The following individuals appeared before the City Council in support of the Boys & Girls Club:

- Cathy Francisco, 1022 America Avenue NW
- Kathy McBride, 603 America Avenue NW
- Dana Wolfe, 6620 Queens Lane NW
- Frances Sellon, 9907 Peace Lane NW
- Karen Schomberg, 2601 Delton Avenue NW

Markeson commented that the City started the Boys & Girls Club in Bemidji directly and indirectly and would like to encourage the City to sustain the budget. He suggested that when an item is under budget that the funds be used up to \$5,000 to fund the Boys & Girls Club.

Erickson stated that where do we draw the line on giving to non-profits. There are other non-profits, i.e., Headwaters Science Center, that have needs also.

**Motion by Johnson, seconded by Meuers, to discuss the City's charitable contribution policy at the April 14 City Council Work Session. Motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Hellquist, Meuers, Markeson, Johnson, Downs. Nays: Erickson.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Sprinkling Rate Discounts

Chattin stated that staff has investigated the possibility of adjusting utility rates for water sprinkling and the potential for a grant program to assist in the installation of sprinkling meters for city residents. The City's utility billing software is able to calculate sanitary sewer charges based on average water consumption over a selected period of time. Implementing these capabilities would require changes to each sprinkling customer account on an annual basis. Staff did not locate any grant programs to assist in the installation of water meters. Staff recommends continuation of the adopted policy for sprinkling rates. However, if the Council is considering a change, the following would be an option and compromise: "The City furnishes the sprinkling meter at no cost but installation costs would be paid by the customer."

Markeson stated that he disagreed with the staff recommendations and stated that staff was asked to find a way to make this work and they did not. In maintaining the old system, the City is charging those who are trying to make their yards green and grow trees.

Chattin stated that staff would have to compute the sanitary sewer used during the winter months and apply that to summer usage. There are those who leave in the winter time and go south and basically would not get charged anything for the summer months. By far the fairest way is to give them credit for the water used for sprinkling. Staff has checked with several plumbers and the average cost for installation of a second meter is far less than \$500.

Erickson commented that purchasing a second meter is a savings to the property owner after two to three years.

Johnson suggested that a \$5 a month meter fee be charged until the meter is paid off. Discussion followed.

**Motion by Hellquist, seconded by Erickson, to keep the current sprinkling policy but provide residents the opportunity to pay for the second meter in 12 equal payments, interest free from the City. Motion carried with the following vote: Erickson, Meuers, Hellquist, Johnson, Downs. Nays: Markeson.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chat-A-Bout Topic - April 7– The Council asked Public Safety staff to review the City’s Noise Ordinance.

**ORDINANCES**

**Motion by Johnson, seconded by Markeson, to accept the revisions to an Ordinance Amending an Uncoded Section of the Bemidji City Code Pertaining to Street Vacation (Portion of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street NW). Motion carried unanimously.**

**ORDINANCE NO. 26, 3<sup>RD</sup> SERIES**, AN ORDINANCE Amending an Uncoded Section of the Bemidji City Code Pertaining to Street Vacation (Portion of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street NW) was given a final reading and passed by unanimous vote.

**ORDINANCE NO. 27, 3<sup>RD</sup> SERIES**, AN ORDINANCE Amending an Uncoded Section of the Bemidji City Code Pertaining to Street Vacation (Portion of 6th Street SE) was given a final reading and passed by unanimous vote.

An Ordinance Amending an Uncoded Section of the Bemidji City Code Pertaining to Street Vacation (Portion of Second Street SW) was given a final reading and failed by unanimous vote.

**EVENT CENTER UPDATE**

Chattin provided an update on the Bemidji Regional Event Center project. He stated that CPMI suggested that based on a small construction labor pool, the constructions costs could be 10-20% higher for a compressed project schedule (18 months versus 24 months).

Discussed continued regarding whether the \$50 million cap on the events center was lifted. Hellquist stated that the \$50 million cap was never lifted. The City Clerk was directed to provide minutes from their meeting on January 10, 2008.

Chattin reported that the meetings last week in St. Paul with the Bonding Conference Committee were fruitful. He stated that he and Mayor Lehmann, Mike Smith and Jon Quistgard will be meeting with Governor Pawlenty on March 18.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- Monday, March 24 5:30 p.m. Work Session – WWTF RFP Discussion & Events Center Hotel Partner (Bill Krueger)
- Monday, March 31 5:30 p.m. Work Session – 2007 Financial Review
- Monday, April 7 7:00 p.m. City Council Meeting
- Monday, April 14 5:30 p.m. Work Session – Charitable Contribution Policy
- Monday, April 21 7:00 p.m. City Council Meeting

**COUNCIL/STAFF REPORT**

- Gray reported that a survey has been sent to the residents along Birchmont Drive regarding the water and sewer extension. Northern Township will review the survey results at a special meeting on March 24 and will make a recommendation. One of the items discussed was extending the SAC/WAC fee until later than 2010. Some residents did not feel that the one season to connect was enough. Chattin stated that the letter from Northern Township is a policy question that should be answered by the Council. The more the Council defers the SAC/WAC fees the more the City will be in the hole. Consensus of the Council was to leave the policy as is.
- Meuers commented that she has been approached by Habitat for Humanity regarding the SAC/WAC connection fee which would affect the cost of the homes.
- Johnson reported that Bemidji will be featured on the Wednesday, March 19 Almanac at the Capitol program – Minute Man.

- Hellquist attended the RDG kickoff marketing study and was impressed with their approach to the project and he felt that the City would get a nice product.
- Erickson stated that Bemidji Green Up will be giving away 1,000 trees on April 24 and 25 to City residents at City Hall.
- Chattin provided an update on the fire substation. He recently met with the 49ers regarding the WWTF RFP's and they discussed what options are available. He will be meeting with WWTF staff this week in this regard.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, motion by Meuers, seconded by Hellquist, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kay M. Murphy  
City Clerk