

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Regular Meeting – March 15, 2010

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 15, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Lehmann, Waldhausen, Johnson, Hellquist, Downs, Negard, Meuers

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

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Mayor Lehmann called for any amendments to the agenda. **Motion by Meuers, seconded by Johnson, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

MINUTES

Minutes of the March 1, 2010 regular meeting were presented for approval. **Motion by Johnson, seconded by Negard, to approve the minutes as prepared. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

CONSENT AGENDA

The following Consent Agenda items were presented for approval. Downs requested to move the item regarding the Chief Bemidji Statue Subcommittee to new business for further discussion. **Motion by Downs, seconded by Johnson, to approve the Consent Agenda items as follows:**

1. Claims Submitted by Finance Officer in the amount of \$2,069,678.91
2. Business License Renewals for 2010 and On-Sale Beer License to Bemidji Softball League (Bardwell Park)
3. 1-4 Day Temporary Liquor License – BSU on 5/5/10 at Beaux Arts Ballroom
4. Consumption & Display Permit – Chamber on 4/13/10 at 222 3rd Street NW
5. Appointed Cynthia Gennes to the Heritage Preservation Commission (Term 1/31/13)
6. Declared Vehicles Surplus – Police Department
7. **RESOLUTION NO. 5618:** Support and Commitment for the Bemidji City Park Interlink Trail Project and Authorization to Submit a Grant Application to the DNR Local Trails Connections Grant Program
8. **RESOLUTION NO. 5619:** Support and Commitment for the Bemidji City Park Interlink Trail Project and Authorization to Submit a Grant Application to the DNR Trails Legacy Grant Program

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Bemidji Youth Advisory Commission – Stiina Stocker, BYA representative, reported on recent Commission activities. She further stated that the Commission supported the recommendations of the Sustainability Committee.

BSU Student Senate - Leo Clark, Co-Chair, reported on BSU Senate activities including recent efforts to raise awareness for the Census 2010.

PRESENTATION

Shared Vision and Census 2010

Michael Meuers and Rachelle Houle, representing the Shared Visions Group, provided an overview of the Shared Visions group's mission which is to "be a catalyst that encourages the Bemidji community to work together to expand social, economic, educational, and leadership opportunity for people of all races." Meuers stated that Rachelle Houle wrote a grant to the Census which incorporates both English and Ojibwe languages on a recycle bag.

NEW BUSINESS

REDI Catalyst Grant

Erika Bailey-Johnson, representing the Bemidji Sustainability Committee, presented a request on their behalf for the Council’s financial support to apply for the Rural Energy Development Initiative (REDI) grant program. The Committee will complete the grant application to hire a consultant to assess solar energy viability at the South Shore Development with the objective of gathering sufficient information to apply for a Solar Energy Legacy Grant. The Committee is seeking grant funds in the amount of \$10,000 to hire a consultant for a period of three months and it requires matching funds. Therefore, the Committee is requesting a commitment of \$5,000 from the City to show support for this grant.

Discussion continued regarding the potential savings and the cost of solar panels.

Motion by Meuers, seconded by Waldhausen, to use Event Center contingency funds in the amount of \$5,000 to apply for a matching grant from Rural Energy Development Initiative to hire a consultant for a period of three months to assess solar energy viability at the event center. Motion carried unanimously.

Birchmont Drive Connection Charge

Felix stated that with the onset of spring it is likely that additional property owners on Birchmont Drive will be requesting connections to the city’s water and sanitary sewer. The recent legal action brought forth by a number of the affected property owners resulted in the Court declaring that a reassessment of those parcels must be undertaken. In affect this negated the assessments for those parcels and any prepayment by these parcels has been returned to the property owner by Beltrami County. However, there is nothing prohibiting the parcels that are involved in the court case from connecting to the city’s system. If they do wish to connect they should be required to pay a City Connection Fee, so that they are not receiving the benefit of the system for free, while the other property owners are paying their assessments. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 444.075, the City Council can establish a connection fee for a public utility project. Staff recommends the connection fee, for those parcels that have not been assessed for the project, be established as follows:

Sewer Only Connection Fee	\$13,390
Sewer & Water Connection Fee	\$20,315

Felix noted that there may be some additional changes including the addition of another fee for the Royal Bay Townhomes. He suggested the Council approve the Resolution in substantially the format provided.

RESOLUTION NO. 5620: Establishing Charge(s) for Connection to Sanitary Sewer and Water Utility Facilities Constructed Extra-Territorially Along Birchmont Drive in Northern Township including the additional connection fee(s) was offered by Councilmember Downs, who moved its adoption, and upon due second by Councilmember Negard was passed by unanimous vote.

Chief Bemidji Statue Subcommittee

Downs stated he requested removal of this item from the Consent Agenda as he had concerns with the names that were presented for the subcommittee. He commented that he believed this was a self-appointed group and was not fair or balanced.

Council discussed the following:

- Native American representation
- Ad-hoc committee under the Parks & Trails Commission versus under Council

Carolyn Jacobs, Chair of Shared Visions, stated that a group of residents, artists and community members have been meeting and discussing creating a new statue of Chief Bemidji that would depict the City’s namesake with pride, dignity and respect his legacy deserves.

Sandy Kaul, artist, stated that the intent of the subcommittee is to engage the public in the City and from the surrounding reservations regarding the statue.

Motion by Downs, seconded by Hellquist, that the City receive applications for those interested in serving on a Chief Bemidji Statute Subcommittee to get a balanced group. Motion failed with the following vote: Ayes: Downs. Nays: Negard, Meuers, Lehmann, Hellquist, Johnson, Waldhausen.

Motion by Waldhausen, seconded by Johnson, recommending the Chief Bemidji Subcommittee be under the Parks & Trails Commission. Furthermore, the City of Bemidji will act as the fiscal agent for grant funding. Motion carried unanimously.

CITIZEN NOT ON AGENDA

No one appeared.

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Monday, March 22 5:30 p.m. Work Session - Canceled
- Monday, March 29 5:30 p.m. Work Session – Budget Reductions
- Monday, April 5 7:00 p.m. Council Meeting
- Monday, April 12 5:30 p.m. Work Session – Year 2009 Financial Review

COUNCIL/STAFF REPORT

- Council members provided updates on current events and meetings.
- April 5 Chat-A-Bout – Negard
- Waldhausen requested a special BEDA meeting to hear a proposal by a developer in the south shore. Chattin suggested that the Proposal Review Committee also be invited to the meeting. A special BEDA meeting was set for 6 p.m. on April 5 prior to the regular Council meeting.
- Downs suggested that the Council do a tour of the event center as a group. Staff will make arrangements for a tour on a Friday afternoon.
- Felix commented that the omnibus liquor bill is moving forward which would authorize the City to issue a liquor license at the event center.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Johnson, seconded by Hellquist, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk