

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Regular Meeting – October 19, 2020

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, October 19, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Albrecht presiding via video and telephone conference.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Albrecht, Meehlhause, Peterson, Rivera, Erickson. Absent: Johnson

Staff Present: City Manager, Nate Mathews, Finance Director Ron Eischens, City Attorney Alan Felix, Assistant City Attorney Katie Nolting, City Engineer Craig Gray, Assistant City Engineer Sam Anderson, Rental Inspectors Joe Swenson and Todd Beito, City Clerk Michelle Miller

SWEARING IN CEREMONY

Chief Mastin introduced Officer Rachel Kniss and City Clerk Miller conducted the oath of office.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Mayor Albrecht called for any amendments to the agenda. **Motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Peterson, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.**

MINUTES

The following minutes were presented for approval:

Council Meeting: October 5, 2020

Motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Rivera, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

Albrecht called for any items to be pulled from the consent agenda. The following Consent Agenda items were presented for approval. **Motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Rivera, to approve the Consent Agenda items as follows:**

1. Claims Submitted by Finance Officer in the amount of \$1,963,250.23
2. Claims Submitted by VenuWorks for the Sanford Center in the amount of \$27,725.76
3. Business License Renewals for 2021
4. **RESOLUTION NO. 6320:** Appointing Election Judges for the 2020 General Election
5. Approve Special Event Permit – Treat Street – October 31 (South Shore Parking Lots)
6. Approve Purchase of Two (2) 2021 Ford Interceptor SUVs (Tenvoorde Ford)
7. Approve CARES Act Funding Allocations for August (\$125,266.00)

Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Albrecht, Erickson, Peterson, Meehlhause, Rivera. Absent: Johnson

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

James Dodds, Wee Gaus Drive SW, expressed questions and concerns regarding current content on the website and lack of some content on the website.

Jacob Wiley, Project for Change, spoke in favor of a Police Advisory Committee.

REPORTS

Bemidji State University

Dr. Faith Hensrud, President, provided a report and oral presentation regarding BSU and NTC enrollment, academics, housing & residential life at BSU, athletics, upcoming events and a COVID-19 Update and dashboards. Dr. Hensrud addressed several questions and concerns from council.

Update on COVID-19

Sanford Health's Dr. David Wilcox as well as Beltrami County Health and Human Services Director Cynthia Borgen provided information and an update on the COVID-19 Virus in the Bemidji and surrounding area. To date, Sanford Bemidji has conducted 14,444 tests with 13,143 negative, 896 positive, and 295 pending. Currently 15 patients are hospitalized at Sanford Bemidji with three in ICU and six deaths. There has been a significant uptick in cases over the last month. They continue to encourage the community to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by wearing masks in public places, limit contact with large gatherings (including family gatherings) and follow the CDC guidelines. Dr. Wilcox and Borgen addressed several questions and concerns from council.

Rental Inspection Program Update

Mathews introduced the new City Rental Inspector Todd Beito and provided an update on the rental inspection program and procedures during the pandemic. In April, in person rental inspections were suspended. However, they will be implementing a self-inspection process through April 2021; which will be re-evaluated to see if in person inspections can begin again. Staff addressed several questions and concerns with council.

PUBLIC HEARING

Conduct a Public Hearing on Proposed Assessments for the 2020 Street Renewal Project – City Project 20-01

Assistant City Engineer Sam Anderson stated that this is the assessment hearing for the 2020 Street Renewal Project under Minnesota Statutes 429 for the following street segments:

<u>Street</u>	<u>From/To</u>
Riverside Drive NE	Lake Avenue – Country Lane NE
Country Lane NE	Riverside Drive NE – Greenbriar Lane NE
Greenbriar Lane NE	Lake Avenue – Country Lane NE
Ivy Lane NE	Riverside Drive NE – Greenbriar Lane NE
Gould Avenue SE	2 nd Street SE – 4 th Street SE
Wilson Avenue SE	3 rd Street SE – 4 th Street SE
27 th Street NW	Park Avenue NW – Irvine Avenue NW
29 th Street NW	Park Avenue NW – Irvine Avenue NW

According to the City’s assessment policy, the proposed assessments are as follows:

Street Assessments:	\$38/lineal foot
Sanitary Sewer Service Line:	\$1,070/each
Water Service Line:	\$1,070/each

Anderson stated that if any property owner does not see an increase in the value of their property or did not benefit from the project in an amount equal to or greater than the proposed assessment can appeal the assessment amount. The council may act on the appeal or adopt the assessment roll. If a property owner appears at this hearing and is not satisfied with the outcome, can appeal to district court.

The total project cost came to \$857,191 with the assessments for the project totaling \$161,501 which is about 19% of the total project costs. The city’s share of the project is funded with the street property tax levy, stormwater utility fund and appropriate shares from the water and sanitary sewer utility funds. The assessments will be spread over a 15-year period with an interest rate of 2.0%. Staff’s opinion is that each parcel on the assessment roll has benefitted from the project in an amount greater than or equal to the proposed assessment.

Pursuant to published notice a public hearing was held regarding input on regarding Proposed Assessment for the 2020 Street Renewal Project – City Project #20-01. Mayor Albrecht opened the Public Hearing at 7:16 p.m. Hearing no comments Albrecht closed the Public Hearing at 7:17 p.m.

RESOLUTION NO. 6321: Adopting Assessment Roll for 2020 Street Renewal Project - City Project 20-01 was offered by Councilmember Erickson, who moved its adoption, and upon due second by Councilmember Meehlhause was passed by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Erickson, Peterson, Rivera, Albrecht, Meehlhause. Absent: Johnson.

Conduct a Public Hearing on Proposed Assessments for the 2020 Birchmont Drive Reconstruction Project (City Project 20-02)

Anderson stated that this is the assessment hearing for the 2020 Birchmont Drive Reconstruction Project under Minnesota Statutes 429 for the following street segments:

<u>Street</u>	<u>From/To</u>
Birchmont Drive NE	10 th Street NE to 14 th Street NE

According to the City’s assessment policy, the proposed assessments are as follows:

Street Assessments:	\$38/lineal foot
Sanitary Sewer Service Line:	\$1,070/each
Water Service Line:	\$1,070/each

Anderson stated that if any property owner does not see an increase in the value of their property or did not benefit from the project in an amount equal to or greater than the proposed assessment can appeal the assessment amount. The council may act on the appeal or adopt the assessment roll. If a property owner appears at this hearing and is not satisfied with the outcome, can appeal to district court.

The project included the replacement of the City’s underground utilities, curb & gutter, sidewalks and pavement. The total project cost came to \$811,794 with the assessments for the project totaling \$78,353.30 which is about 10% of the total project costs. The city’s share of the project is funded with the street property tax levy, stormwater utility fund and appropriate shares from the water and sanitary sewer utility funds. The assessments will be spread over a 15-year period with an interest rate of 2.0%. Staff’s opinion is that each parcel on the assessment roll has benefitted from the project in an amount greater than or equal to the proposed assessment.

Pursuant to published notice a public hearing was held regarding input on regarding Proposed Assessment for the 2020 Birchmont Drive Reconstruction Project – City Project #20-02. Mayor Albrecht opened the Public Hearing at 7:21 p.m. Hearing no comments Albrecht closed the Public Hearing at 7:22 p.m.

RESOLUTION NO. 6322: Adopting Assessment Roll for 2020 Birchmont Drive Reconstruction Project - City Project 20-02 was offered by Councilmember Meehlhause, who moved its adoption, and upon due second by Councilmember Rivera was passed by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Peterson, Albrecht, Meehlhause, Rivera, Erickson. Absent: Johnson.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Award of Quote for Well #3 and Well #4 Modifications

City Engineer Craig Gray stated that the existing city wells need to be upgraded to insure that they can supply water through the plant at the proper pressures with the start-up of the new water treatment plant. Three quotes were received and reviewed by Barr Engineering:

Bergerson-Caswell:	\$69,150
Thein Wells:	\$73,500
LTP Enterprises, Inc.:	\$76,410

Motion by Erickson, seconded by Meehlhause, awarding the quote for the refurbishment of Wells No. 3 and 4 to Bergerson-Caswell in the amount of \$69,150. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Rivera, Peterson, Erickson, Meehlhause, Albrecht. Absent: Johnson.

Presentation and Request from Beltrami County Historical Society (125 Years)

Sue Bruns, President of the Beltrami County Historical Society, provided an introduction and update regarding the Historical Society.

Dan Allosso, Board Member, stated that Bemidji will be celebrating 125 years in 2021. The Board has developed some initial planning that includes plans to develop, produce, and publicize a commemorative book and major new museum exhibit, as well as other special activities and events. He stated that while a majority of the effort will come from a network of volunteers, there are necessary hard costs to produce both the book and the exhibit. The Board is requesting that the City contribute half of that cost of \$6,900 and Beltrami County the other half.

While the Council sees the value and importance of a 125 year celebration, Council discussed the funding constraints by the City and suggested that the board seek to pursue grant funding and/or meeting with staff to discuss potential funding options from the City.

Consider Council Chambers Technology Upgrades

Mathews stated that MoreCom has provided some initial consultation regarding improving the audio, video and broadcast capabilities in Council Chambers. Kyle Moorhead, President of MoreCom, provided recommendations to Council addressing solutions for immediate needs as well as options for future improvements as follows:

Item	Description	Base Cost	Add Option Cost
1	Improve Council Chamber Audio	\$17,843.00	
1a	Improve Reinforced Sound		\$19,996.00
1b	Add Hearing Loop in Chambers		\$16,820.00
1c	Wireless for General Purpose		\$16,131.00
2	Update Presentation System	\$7,773.00	
2a	Improve Readability for Council		\$5,750.00
2b	Improve Readability for Audience		\$4,250.00
2c	Improve Document Readability		\$1,250.00
3	Automate Broadcast	\$42,604.00	
3a	Improve Broadcast Quality		\$12,521.00
3b	Web Conferencing Plug-in		\$3,475.00
4	Automate Playback, Update Graphics	\$14,268.00	

4a	Amazon Web Services		\$2,000.00
4b	Software Updates, Technical Support		\$2,200.00
5	Improve Sound in Conference Room	\$8,675.00	
5a	Connect Audio to Hearing Aids		\$9,214.00
6	Protect Equipment from Power Surges		\$4,446.00
7	Move Equipment		\$14,323.00
	Total Base Cost Estimate	\$91,163.00	
	Total Options Cost Estimate		\$112,376.00
	Grand Total Presented Estimate		\$203,539.00

Eischens stated that these upgrades could be funded from PEG Fees, which currently has a balance of approximately \$150,000. Council discussed the pros and cons of the items and came to a consensus in support of the following:

- 1 – Council Chamber Audio - \$17,843
- 2 – Presentation System - \$7,773
- 3 – Automate Broadcast - \$42,604
- 4 – Automate Playback, Update Graphics - \$14,268

Total Base Estimate: \$82,488

And the following Add Options Estimate:

- 1a – Reinforced Sound - \$19,996
- 1b – Assisted Listening - \$16,820
- 1c – Wireless for General Purpose Meeting - \$16,131
- 2a – Council Member Readability – \$5,750
- 2b – Audience Readability – \$4,250
- 2c – Document Readability - \$1,250
- 3b – Web Conferencing - \$3,475

Total Add Options Estimate: \$67,672

Total Project Estimate: \$150,160

Motion by Erickson, seconded by Peterson, approving the base upgrades 1, 2, 3 and 4 and options 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2c, and 3b as presented in the MoreCom estimate up to \$150,000. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Erickson, Albrecht, Rivera, Meehlhouse, Peterson. Absent: Johnson.

ORDINANCES

Rivera expressed opposition to the \$46.00 increase of the Street Reconstruction Assessment Fee as well as concern with inconsistencies with other fees.

AN ORDINANCE Amending Fee Schedule for 2021 was given a first reading.

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Monday, November 2 6:00 p.m. Council Meeting
- Monday, November 9 5:30 p.m. Work Session???
- Monday, November 16 6:00 p.m. Council Meeting
- Monday, November 23 5:30 p.m. Work Session (Water/Sewer Rate Study)

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Peterson, seconded by Rivera, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle R. Miller
City Clerk