

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Work Session – December 14, 2015

Pursuant to due call and notice, a work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, December 14, 2015, at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of City Hall, Mayor Albrecht presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Albrecht, Meehlhause, Johnson, Hellquist, Olson, Erickson, Larson

Staff Present: City Manager Nate Mathews, Finance Director Ron Eischens, City Attorney Alan Felix, Deputy City Clerk Michelle Miller

Others Present: Curt Lundquist, Mitch Rautio and Curtis Webb.

Mayor Albrecht stated that the purpose of the work session was to discuss the options relating to restructuring the VisitBemidji Board.

City Manager Mathews stated he has had many constructive and informative discussions in the community and with the leaders of VisitBemidji regarding the effective use of these dollars, and whether the current makeup of the VisitBemidji Board is appropriate. The current VisitBemidji Board consists of the following:

- 3 Directors nominated by the hotel owners
- 3 Directors nominated by the VisitBemidji Board from the Chamber of Commerce
- 1 Director nominated by the BSU President
- 1 Director nominated by the VisitBemidji Board from the retail community
- 1 Director nominated by the Mayor and City Council of Bemidji

On October 10 the Public Affairs committee held a joint meeting with VisitBemidji to discuss the board structure of VisitBemidji, and whether changes should be made to ensure that the current board representation is satisfactory. During this meeting, the overall size of a potential restructured board was discussed, as new board member positions and/or organizations were identified that could add value to the VisitBemidji board: Executive Director of the Sanford Center, City Manager, Airport, Sanford Health, Greater Bemidji Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce Director.

On October 29, the VisitBemidji Board held a special meeting, to discuss restructuring the VisitBemidji Board. The Hotelier association attended this meeting to communicate their opinions on a potential VisitBemidji board restructure. From this meeting the VisitBemidji Board has provided this recommendation for Council consideration:

VisitBemidji Board Restructure proposal:

- 3 Chamber of Commerce Representatives
(Category adjusted to reflect 1 Financial, 1 Media and 1 Chamber Executive Director)
- 3 Innkeeper Representatives
- 1 City Representative
- 1 BSU Representative
(Category adjusted to reflect 1 BSU Foundation or Marketing Representative)
- 1 Retail at Large Representative
- 1 Sanford Center Representative
- 1 Visitor Attraction Representative

Council discussed adding the following to the VisitBemidji Board:

- The Sanford Center Executive Director is important
- Food and Beverage representative should be considered
- Downtown representative should be considered
- An additional City Representative (City Manager)
- EDA/Greater Bemidji Representative
- Possibly consider 13 members (9 is current; 11 is proposed by VisitBemidji)

Mitch Rautio, VisitBemidji Vice President, stated that the Board will communicate better with the City Council by providing the monthly financial reports to council through the council representative; and the Executive Director of VisitBemidji, Susan Goudge will appear before the council two times a year to provide a summary of the work being done by the board.

Consensus of the Council and VisitBemidji members is that these member suggestions will be brought back for consideration by the VisitBemidji Board; and an Amended VisitBemidji Marketing and Promotional Agreement will be presented to Council for their consideration at a regular Council meeting.

Fire Relief Association Request

A request from the Fire Relief Association was brought before the council to be added to the December 21, 2015 agenda for reconsideration of their December 7 request. After discussion the request was denied at this time. The Council would like to first meet with staff to discuss the issues before providing additional direction on this matter.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Hellquist, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle R. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Michelle R. Miller
Deputy City Clerk