

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Regular Meeting – December 21, 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, December 21, 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, Johnson, Rivera, Erickson.

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, City Clerk Michelle Miller

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Mayor Albrecht called for any amendments to the agenda. **Motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Johnson, to approve the agenda 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 \$1,811,984.72
2. Business License Renewals for 2021
3. Liquor, Sunday Liquor and Wine License Renewals for 2021
4. **RESOLUTION NO. 6327:** Accepting Donations for 2020 – Parks
5. **RESOLUTION NO. 6328:** Accepting Donations for 2020 – Fire
6. **RESOLUTION NO. 6329:** Approving 2021 City Pay Scale and City Benefit Contribution Level
7. Approve Development Agreement (Mountain View Meadows)
8. Approve Appointment to Parks & Recreation Commission (Bethany Wesley)
9. Approve Appointment to Joint Planning Commission (Joe Gould)
10. Approve Reappointment to Joint Planning Commission (Don Heinonen)
11. **RESOLUTION NO. 6330:** Establishing Ballot Board (February 9 Special Election)

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Jorge Prince, 2085 Grotte Avenue, expressed gratitude and best wishes to the outgoing council members and thanks to the current and newly elected council members.

PUBLIC HEARING

2021-2025 Capital Improvement Plan

Eischens stated that the five year CIP is a long-term guide for planning major capital outlays including improvements and equipment. CIP expenditures and funding sources for 2021 have been included in the City's annual budget. Items in years 2022-2025 are placeholders and have not been approved for purchase or construction by Council. The Current CIP includes anticipated construction projects of \$41.7 million and equipment purchases totaling \$6.8 million for the efficient operation of the City totaling \$48.5 over the next five years.

Pursuant to published notice, a public hearing was held regarding input on the 2021 to 2025 Capital Improvement Plan. Mayor Albrecht opened the Public Hearing at 6:16 p.m. and hearing no comments, closed the hearing at 6:17 p.m. Staff addressed several questions from council regarding capital improvement items, including the Neilson Reise Arena and the Sanford Center.

RESOLUTION NO. 6331: Adopting the 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Plan was offered by Councilmember Meehlhause, who moved its adoption, and upon due second by Councilmember Erickson was passed by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Johnson, Albrecht, Erickson, Peterson, Meehlhause, Rivera.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Claims Submitted by Venuworks for the Sanford Center in the amount of \$20,497.11 **Motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Rivera, approving the claims submitted by VenuWorks for the Sanford Center in the amount of \$20,497.11. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Erickson, Rivera, Peterson, Albrecht, Meehlhause. Nays: Johnson.**

Sanford Center 2021 Budget

Tiffany Vickaryous-Hubbard, Executive Director, reported to council on December 7 regarding the 2021 Sanford Center Budget. Johnson suggested that the council should hold Sanford Center to live within the annual budget that it is given.

Motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Rivera, approving the Sanford Center 2021 Budget. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Yeas: Meehlhause, Albrecht, Rivera, Erickson. Nays: Peterson, Johnson.

Consider Contribution to City of Bemidji 125th Celebration (Quasquicentennial)

Mathews stated that the council contributed funds for the 1996 Bemidji Centennial. Peterson believes the city should help fund its own anniversary celebration and should do so in the amount of \$7,000. Erickson feels that this request falls under the city's current policy prohibiting donations to non-profit agencies. Beltrami County has approved a contribution of \$1,400. Bruns stated that they would plan an event within the amount of funds they receive.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Johnson, approving a \$7,000 contribution from contingency funds to the Beltrami County Historical Society for the City of Bemidji 125th Celebration. Motion failed with the following roll call vote: Yeas: Peterson, Johnson, Albrecht. Nays: Rivera, Meehlhause, Erickson.

Motion by Rivera, seconded by Peterson, approving a \$1,400 contribution from contingency funds to the Beltrami County Historical Society for the City of Bemidji 125th Celebration. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: Yeas: Albrecht, Meehlhause, Johnson, Rivera, Peterson. Nays: Erickson.

2020 Tax Levy Collectible in 2021

Eischens stated that the total levy is \$6,517,521, an increase of \$397,000 or 6.5% from 2020. The statewide average levy increase was 4.5%. Due to the value of new construction and property value increases, tax rates remained constant at 50.3%.

RESOLUTION NO. 6332: Approving Final 2020 Tax Levy Collectible in 2021 in the amount of \$6,517,521 was offered by Councilmember Erickson, who moved its adoption, and upon due second by Councilmember Meehlhause was passed by the following vote: Yeas: Meehlhause, Johnson, Rivera, Erickson, Peterson, Albrecht.

Final 2021 Budget

Eischens stated that the general fund includes a surplus of \$109,000 due to fluctuations in capital purchases from year to year. Revenue diversification continues to be important due to large projects coming before the council in the near future. A broader funding source, such as a hospitality tax, is more equitable than utilizing local property taxes. Eischens noted that this budget only includes funding of the \$450,000 contribution to the Sanford Center as well as land bond payments.

RESOLUTION NO. 6333: Approving Final 2021 Budget was offered by Councilmember Rivera, who moved its adoption, and upon due second by Councilmember Meehlhause, was passed by the following vote: Yeas: Albrecht, Meehlhause, Johnson, Rivera, Erickson. Nays: Peterson.

ORDINANCES

Amended Fee Schedule Relating to Utility Rates

Pursuant to published notice, a Public Hearing was held to receive input regarding an Ordinance Amending the Bemidji City Code, Adopting an Amended Fee Schedule Relating to Utility Rates, Mayor Albrecht opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m., hearing no comments the public hearing was closed at 7:31 p.m.

AN ORDINANCE Amending the Bemidji City Code, Adopting an Amended Fee Schedule Relating to Utility Rates, was given a second reading.

Prohibiting Wells for Irrigation Purposes and for Other Domestic Use on Properties within the City Served by the City Water System

Pursuant to published notice, a Public Hearing was held to receive input regarding an Ordinance Amending Chapter 26 of the Bemidji City Code, Article IV, Entitled "Water", Adding Sections 26-123 through 26-125, Prohibiting Private Wells for Irrigation Purposes and for Other Domestic Use on Properties within the City Served by the City Water System, Mayor Albrecht opened the Public Hearing at 7:32 p.m., hearing no comments the public hearing was closed at 7:33 p.m. A written response from Dave Hofer, President of Irving Oaks Association, 630 Robin Lane SW, Bemidji, MN 56601 was submitted to the clerk prior to the meeting. The request included a statement that the Association believes more time is needed to seek public input before the Council moves forward with the proposed ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE Amending Chapter 26 of the Bemidji City Code, Article IV, Entitled "Water", Adding Sections 26-123 through 26-125, Prohibiting Private Wells for Irrigation Purposes and for Other Domestic Use on Properties within the City Served by the City Water System, was given a second reading.

Unimproved Alley – Finseth Addition to Nymore

Pursuant to published notice, a Public Hearing was held to receive input regarding an Ordinance Amending an Uncoded Section of Bemidji City Code Pertaining to Alley Vacation (Unimproved Alley – Finseth Addition to Nymore), Mayor Albrecht opened the Public Hearing at 7:34 p.m., hearing no comments the public hearing was closed at 7:35 p.m.

AN ORDINANCE Amending an Uncoded Section of Bemidji City Code Pertaining to Alley Vacation (Unimproved Alley – Finseth Addition to Nymore), was given a second reading.

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Monday, January 4 6:00 p.m. Council Meeting (Swearing in of elected councilmembers and reseating of council)
- Tuesday, January 19 6:00 p.m. Council Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Johnson, seconded by Erickson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle R. Miller
City Clerk