

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Special Meeting/Work Session – April 28, 2014

Pursuant to due call and notice, a special meeting/work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, April 28, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. at the City Park multi-use building, Mayor Albrecht presiding.

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

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, City Attorney Alan Felix, Finance Director Ron Eischens, Parks & Recreation Director Marcia Larson, Public Works Director Craig Gray, Arena Attendant Evan Meyer, City Clerk Kay Murphy

Mayor Albrecht stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the future of the City's Neilson Reise Arena. Prior to the meeting the group toured the Arena.

Larson stated that the Neilson Reise Arena is a community asset that is home to the Bemidji Figure Skating Club and utilized by a variety of youth hockey organizations for games, practices, camps and tournaments. She noted that the Arena is the only year-round ice arena in the area and is highly used. The Arena has an aging plant and floor, a direct R-22 system, and the building and other infrastructure are substandard. R-22 is being phased out with a proposed phase out date of 2020. She stated that due to the age and condition of the Arena she is recommending that it is now time to discuss and plan for the future. Larson stated that she has solicited a proposal from Stevens Engineers for an Evaluation Study of the Arena. Stevens will evaluate options for improvements to the building, replacements or improvement options for the plant, floor and dasher system as well as HVAC and dehumidification. The proposal outlines the proposed services, project team members and cost. The cost of the evaluation study is \$9,300 which does not include reimbursable expenses.

Chattin commented that Honeywell has suggested that it will cost between \$1.2 and \$1.3 million to fix the plant. Staff does not feel it makes a lot of sense as there are more problems with the building than just the plant. He further stated that staff feels that the current sheet of ice either needs to be repaired or replaced. Discussion continued regarding the number of hours the arena is used and the need for additional ice.

Dan Dow, President of the Bemidji Youth Hockey Association (BYHA), commented that the Bemidji Community Arena operates in the black. That has been accomplished by a number of factors, i.e., fundraisers and advertising. In addition, the BYHA hosts a couple of tournaments annually which generates funds for their arena. Discussion continued regarding operation of the Community arena.

Sarah Haman, coach and board member with the Figure Skating Club, stated concerns that the Club has no place to grow to. She further commented that they are locked in and if their ice time is taken there is no other sheet of ice available.

Erickson stated that the Arena is used by a large percentage of non-residents. She suggested that upgrades should be a community effort to provide this ice. Discussion continued regarding the fees charged for rental of the facility.

Mike Cronin, Director of Operations at the Sanford Center, discussed the potential of adding a second sheet of ice at the City's Sanford Center. He stated that he believed that the current plant could handle a second sheet of ice but he would have to check.

Jim Humeniuk commented that the City of Blaine collaborates with the County which equalizes who pays for their arena.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Erickson, directing staff to negotiate a not to exceed \$10,000 contract for services with Stevens Engineers, Hudson, WI to perform an evaluation study of the City's Neilson Reise Arena designating Contingency funds be used for this project. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss South Shore Dock/Marina

Larson stated that the first phase of the City's Marina for the South Shore includes 20 slips that would be rented for seasonal usage in accordance with a Dock Management Plan to be adopted by the City Council. Based on the dock design and construction materials for approximately 24 slips it is estimated to cost between \$40,000 and \$60,000. In addition, the City would need to construct a bituminous trail connecting the existing parking lot/sidewalk to the marina at the estimated cost of \$35,000-\$40,000. The City has \$100,000 set aside in reserves for the marina.

Mayor Albrecht stated that if there is no lift in a slip, it could be used for day dockage. She commented that having a marina expands the use of the lake to those that don't live on the lake.

Chattin commented that the rents collected will help defray capital costs.

Council discussed the following:

- The marina was part of the Planned Unit Development for the South Shore which was adopted by the Council.
- Size requirements of the lifts.
- Dock/lift storage locations – WWTF or on land behind event center.
- Floating breakwater – Up to DNR.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Hellquist, seconded by Olson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk