

# CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

## BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

### Work Session – Monday, July 29, 2019

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, July 29, 2019, at 5:30 p.m. in the Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Albrecht presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Albrecht, Meehlhause (arrived at 5:45), Beard, Johnson, Rivera, Erickson, Thompson.

Staff Present: City Manager Nate Mathews, Finance Director Ron Eischens, City Attorney Alan Felix, City Engineer Craig Gray, Planning Director Casey Mai, City Clerk Michelle Miller

Others Present: Brian LeMon, Barr Engineering; Nancy Burke, Attorney

#### **Discuss Rules/Regulations for Temporary Storage Containers**

Mai stated that earlier in the year, planning staff received several complaints regarding temporary storage containers, in residential and commercial areas. The complainants stated that these containers are diminishing property values. In a residential area, the code allows a storage container for no more than 15 days with the issuance of a building permit or land use permit. Anything longer would require an interim use permit. In commercial areas, containers are allowed for no more than 90 days. The code states that the use of semi-trailers are prohibited. A sub-committee was formed to discuss this issue. That committee recommended that temporary containers be prohibited in residential areas. They could not come to an agreement for commercial areas; particularly in the Industrial Park.

Council members expressed concerns regarding the ability to enforce this. Council would also like a summary of examples from other cities. They asked that the committee meet again to consider the information from this discussion.

#### **PFC Update**

Brian LeMon from Barr Engineering, provided an update on PFAS guidance and levels in city wells; site findings for a new well; National Contingency Plan process; treatment alternatives and costs of potential solutions. The city's wells are above the health risk index (HRI) of 1.0 which is not acceptable. After considerable research and well site testing, it was determined to move away from a new well option and pursue a near term treatment and permanent treatment of the water from the existing wells. In addition to looking at treatment options, it was recommended that the city participate in the National Contingency Plan (NCP) process that will allow for future recovery of funds.

The two near term options for water treatment are granular activated carbon with a cost of approximately \$2,300,000 and single pass ion exchange resin with a cost of approximately \$1,900,000. The goal to have a near term treatment system operating would be June of 2020. A near term treatment plant could last 5-10 years. Council also discussed the possibility of providing either bottled water or filters between September of 2019 and June of 2020 if the HRI continues to stay above 1.0 within that time period. Comments were made regarding the Minnesota Department of Health providing "guidelines" to the levels in the water and are not required at this time. However, the MPCA could place requirements on the city.

The long term solution timeline is dependent on funding and potential costs are approximately \$2.6 million to \$3.8 million; not including the cost of iron/manganese pretreatment.

Staff recommends that council authorize the City to enter into VIC program; approve NCP process action by Barr Engineering and approve design of MPCA approved remedy as a step to proceed with a near term treatment option. The total cost is approximately \$260,000 and would be paid by utility reserves.

**Motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Thompson to authorize the City to enter into VIC program, approve NCP process by Barr Engineering at an estimated cost of \$30,000 and approve the design of MPCA approved remedy at an estimated cost of \$230,000. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Beard, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Michelle R. Miller  
City Clerk