

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
Special Meeting/Work Session – August 28, 2017

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, August 28, 2017, 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, Hellquist, Johnson, Plemel, Erickson, Larson

Staff Present: City Manager Nate Mathews, City Attorney Alan Felix, Finance Director Ron Eischens, City Engineer Craig Gray, City Clerk Kay Murphy

Others Present: Monte Hillman, Port Consulting; Jeffrey Shopek & Tom Goodrum, Loucks

Mayor Albrecht stated that the purpose of the meeting was to hear a proposal from Port Consulting for the possible redevelopment of the railroad corridor.

City Manager Mathews stated that the City Council had a work session to receive a proposal to assist staff with the rail corridor project. In 2009, a plan was developed by RDG, Central City Plan, as well as in 2013 another a plan developed by the HRDC. Staff met with Mr. Hillman and reviewed the project and asked that they submit a proposal. Mathews stated that the City has completed a Phase I and Phase II environmental of the site.

Monte Hillman, Sr. VP with Port Consulting, reviewed their proposal to design a comprehensive master plan for the redevelopment of the rail corridor. He stated that this project will benefit from their previous redevelopment work, the variety of similar projects that they have completed and their significant experience with projects along waterways.

Jeffrey Shopek, PE with Loucks, reviewed the project team “ABCD” planning approach. Tom Goodrum, Loucks, reviewed planning tasks and deliverables.

Mayor Albrecht stated she would like to see a plan that doesn’t “blow the bank” but a quality neighborhood plan. She noted that the city has a number of plans that could be utilized in the planning process.

Councilor Plemel commented that studies have been done for the area and the City has a developer who is interested in developing and questioned why we are going back to square one.

City Attorney Felix stated that the project needs to be handled comprehensively. There are a number of things that have been done on the site but done piecemeal. He recommended that the City have a consultant bring it together. He commented that if the Council is ready to move forward, they have a proposal before them to consider.

Councilor Hellquist commented that he was skeptical whether the City should spend the money on a consultant as there is no clear direction from the Council. He stated there are a number of other needs, i.e., wellfields, wastewater treatment plan. He felt that it is another \$100,000 spent and the City will get to the end with no funds to implement the project.

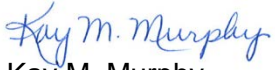
Mayor Albrecht responded that she recognized that there were a number of other projects. However, the City needs to take the lead on this redevelopment due to the issues on the site.

Motion by Johnson, seconded by Meehlhause, to authorize staff to enter into a professional services agreement with Saint Paul Port Authority regarding the redevelopment of the Rail Corridor. Motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Albrecht, Meehlhause, Johnson, Erickson. Nays: Hellquist, Plemel, Larson.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Hellquist, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk