

Ely City Council Regular Meeting February 15, 2011

The Ely City Council Regular Meeting was called to order by Mayor Skraba at 6:00 p.m. on February 15, 2011 at the Ely City Hall.

PRESENT: Council members Debeltz, Nikkola, Omerza, Salerno, Sheddy, Zupec and Mayor Skraba (7)

ABSENT: None

Moved by Salerno supported by Zupec to approve minutes of February 1, 2011 Regular Meeting and February 8, 2011 Joint Meeting with School Board as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

#### ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Old Business – Zupec added December Payroll Audit.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Skraba added a letter from Senator Runbeck and CDBG funding.

New Business – Mayor Skraba added the Mesabi Trail Resolution.

City Attorney – Klun added the Sheriff's Department Lease and the Latourell Land Exchange.

Moved by Zupec supported by Salerno to add the additions listed above to the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

State Bonding Project- Mayor Skraba discussed the need for Council to come up with a project for this year and bring it to the Legislature by May. The Community Center was suggested as a project with the understanding that the city would have to raise ½ of the money for the project. This will be added to the Study Session agenda for further discussion.

Wolf Track Classic Sled Dog Race to be held February 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, starting off at the Ely soft ball field.

Mayor Skraba discussed letter from Senator Runbeck inviting Mayor Skraba to share his ideas on Local Government Aid.

The federal government wants to cut funding of the Community Development Block Grant budget by 7.5%. Without CDBG and its annual aid of \$150K to \$300K, Ely would be able to complete its projects every year which aid in Economic Development. The Council will send a letter of support for maintaining the CDBG budget.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

A. 2011 Safety and Loss Control Workshop (authorize staff to attend)

B. Authorize Fire Department to advertise for First Responder Positions

C. Accept Rotary Donations for Benches, Bike Racks and Picnic Tables in Whiteside Park and for Community Center.

Moved by Debeltz supported by Zupec to approve consent agenda items A-C as presented with addition by Debeltz to send a thank you note to the Rotary Club. Motion carried unanimously.

#### REQUESTS TO APPEAR

Gerald Tyler from the American Legion Post 248 pointed out to the Council that according to MN Statutes public buildings can be used free of charge to groups consisting of veterans of any war in which the U.S was engaged for their meetings or assemblies. He also requested to have back payments of \$1300 paid to the City for use of the Community Center from September 2009 thru November 2010. It was stated that if the \$1300 was returned then \$250 of it will be donated to the Ely Nordic Ski Club in honor of Dick Zahn's granddaughter.

Moved by Debeltz supported by Salerno to have Kelly Klun review the MN Statutes in question. Motion carried unanimously.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council member Sheddy reported on:

- a. Fire Committee; Sheddy and Mayor Skraba met with Mary Tome to discuss the Fire Districts on February 8, 2011.
- b. Planning and Zoning Hearing set for 5:30pm on February 17, 2011 at the Community Center in the card room regarding the Rental Ordinance.
- c. Contributions are being accepted at the Credit Union for the school's 'GOT HEAT Project'.

Ely City Council Regular Meeting February 15, 2011 Continued

Council member Omerza reported on:

- a. Park and Rec Meeting which did not have a quorum but Bill Tefft will appear before the Study Session on February 22, 2011 to present the playground plans for Whiteside Park.
- b. EADA Executive Board Meeting – Business Mixer to be held beginning of March and the topic is “Firefly”.
- c. Mayor Skraba and Heidi Omerza attended the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Legislative Days in St. Paul.

Mayor Skraba reported on:

- a. Meeting with John Pierce from the Forest Service who has a plan for a community gymnasium with pool and ice arena.
- b. He stated funds were approved by Commissioner Forsman in the amount of \$394,000 (2015 funding cycle) for the Trail extension to Ely.
- c. The EADA meeting and its discussion of the “Firefly” audit which had no findings.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Fire Chief

Chief Erchull reported on the fire departments purchase of a generator in the amount of \$750 from MN State Surplus property which will be used as needed by various city departments.

City Operations Director

EUC Consent Agenda Items: The following items of business were recommended for approval at the regular EUC meeting of Wednesday, February 9, 2011:

- a. Authorized the foremen to attend the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust Safety and Loss Control Workshop in Biwabik on April 7, 2011.
- b. Approved the repair for the Burntside generator by Lighthouse Power Systems for \$2,208.68.
- c. Approved the purchase of parts for the Patterson high lift pumps at the WWTP for \$12,224.00

Moved by Debeltz supported by Salerno to approve EUC consent Agenda Items A-C as presented above. Motion carried unanimously.

Police Chief

Chief Lahtonen reported on scheduling issues with the department being down to five officers and is proposing that the Police Department share a city employee from another department who has a Peace Officers License instead of hiring and training a new employee. The request will be presented to both unions involved for a Memorandum of Understanding.

City Attorney

Attorney Klun reported:

- i. St. Louis county request for highway easement. There is no easement yet but they are moving forward with it.
- ii. Requested the council close the meeting at the end of the agenda to discuss the Beirbaum property.
- iii. She is still working on the Sheriff’s Department lease agreement.
- iv. Latourell Land Exchange – Final survey is being completed.

City Engineer

Moved by Debeltz supported by Zupec to approve the Central Avenue Improvement Work Orders 12-18 in the amount of \$14,384.06 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Debeltz supported by Shedly to approve the Water Treatment Plant Demolition Work Order Confirmation and to authorize advertising for bids as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS

The council reviewed the following communication items:

- A. Notice from Terry's Operational Services, termination of contract. It was noted that Michael Shusta will be certified to take over these duties.
- B. St. Louis County Fair request for contribution.
- C. CDMC Legislative Action Day.

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

- A. City and EUC claims for February, 2011 in the amount of \$1,086,228.78
- B. League of MN Cities Workmen's Comp Insurance 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter \$32,729.00
- C. Minnesota Rural Water Membership \$210.00

Moved by Salerno supported by Zupec to approve claims for payments A-C as presented above. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Moved by Salerno supported by Debeltz to waive readings in entirety of all ordinances and resolutions. Motion carried unanimously.

Morse Township Response to Annexation Agreement will be discussed at the Study Session February 22, 2011.

Mark Zupec and Terri Boese will meet and discuss the December Payroll Audit recently conducted by the IRS.

NEW BUSINESS

Moved by Debeltz supported by Omerza to appoint Bill Tefft to the Park and Rec Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Debeltz supported by Nikkola to approve the Kennel Permit for Sheila Moravitz, 108 E Washington St. as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Omerza supported by Zupec to facilitate a council retreat which would be led by a member of the League of MN Cities in order to help improve communication skills between the Council and City Department Heads. Motion carried unanimously.

Moved by Debeltz supported by Salerno to support the Resolution for the construction of the Tower to Ely segment of the Mesabi Trail as presented. Roll call: Debeltz-yes; Nikkola-yes; Omerza-yes; Salerno-yes; Shedly-yes; Zupec-yes; Mayor Skraba-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was recessed at 7:13 p.m. and reconvened at 7:26 p.m. following the EEDA Meeting.

The meeting was closed at 7:29 p.m. to discuss Beirbaum property issue with Attorney Klun.

The meeting was reopened at 7:43 p.m.

Moved by Omerza supported by Nikkola to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Terri Boese  
Clerk/Treasurer