

## **Ely City Council Study Session May 24, 2011**

The Ely City Council study session was called to order by Mayor Skraba at 6:00 p.m. on May 24, 2011 at the Ely City Hall.

PRESENT: Council members Debeltz, Nikkola, Omerza, Shedly, Zupec and Mayor Skraba (6)

ABSENT: Council member Salerno (1)

Additions & Omissions to agenda:

Delete III2 – Alternative Energy Task Force Presentation

Add – V2 – Reader’s Digest \$10,000 gift

Add – V3 – Essentia Health – Old Clinic Property

Motion by Debeltz supported by Nikkola to approve the Additions & Omissions to the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

### **REQUESTS TO APPEAR**

Chuck Novak gave an update on the Ely Area Ambulance Service. Ely’s contribution is based on 2000 Census at \$5.05/person which for 2011 comes to \$18,806. Existing Board Members are: Anders Nicholson-Winton, Rod Gruba-Fall Lake, Bob Berrini-Morse, Chuck Novak-Ely, Rochelle Sjoberg-EBCH. EAAS current year activity: average time out the door is 1.6 minutes; 20 year lease agreement with EBCH for the ambulance garage; EMSRB Audit was completed successfully; Licensed for 25/30 service area with variances; only ambulance service that flies. Their current inventory consists of a 1997 Ford, 2000 Ford & 2007 Ford 4X4. The oldest are due for replacement and grant applications have failed to produce. Net cash on hand is \$320,000 and a new ambulance is estimated to cost \$160,000. Their investment fund fully funds the depreciation of ambulances and other equipment. The Investment Fund Policy will guide annual contributions from Joint Powers members. The EAAS uses revenue recapture for reimbursements on delinquent accounts. They use an external billing company and their accountant is D&D Accounting.

Mayor Skraba requested to see a copy of their budget. Novak will present the request to the EAAS Board at their next meeting. The council also asked to see the minutes of their meetings which Novak was hesitant to allow due to the privacy issues of the customers.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Attorney Klun discussed the information presented to the Council regarding the options of being a Charter City versus a Statutory City.

Mayor Skraba discussed Interim Use Permits and how they should be used especially in relation to renting the open space in Whiteside Park. It is used to allow the use of an area that is different from its normal use. Attorney Klun stated that a festival is the only use that is governed by an interim use permit. She stated the Council should be approving all of the interim use permits. It was agreed to move this discussion to the next Park and Rec meeting and to have Attorney Klun research what the City can legally do in regards to charging and renting space in the Park.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There will be an IRRRB Focus Group Meeting on Thursday, June 2, 2011 at 1:30pm in Eveleth which will be conducted by a professional facilitator. The purpose of this focus group is to obtain input on the agency’s organizational performance. Mayor Skraba said anyone can go if they so wish.

Mayor Skraba spoke about the Reader’s Digest Award to the city of \$10,000 from the on-line contest. Discussion centered on where to spend the money that would benefit the community the most. It was felt that using it to keep our parks in working order would be most beneficial to our community. Council member Zupec suggested using the money as the 10% match required for a grant through the Parks and Trails Legacy program. After 2012, the match would be 25%. Council member Nikkola suggested turning this over to the

## **Ely City Council Study Session May 24, 2011 Continued**

Parks and Rec Committee for a recommendation. Boese talked with Auditor Gary Giroux who said it needs to be used for the public as a whole and not a special interest group such as a non-profit.

Mayor Skraba discussed Essentia Health's gift of the old Clinic Property to the City of Ely. They need a decision by June 30<sup>th</sup> if the City is interested in accepting this offer. Essentia Health will provide an official letter regarding the gift to the City at the next meeting. Valuation of the property is approximately \$130,600 (\$124,800 for the land & \$5,800 for the building & taxes about \$4,000 for the year). Debeltz suggested tearing the building down and using the lot for a parking lot. Director Langowski spoke about an environmental assessment and demolition of the building. Attorney Klun suggested having the results of the environmental testing before agreeing to the ownership of the building. The council needs to make a decision on accepting the property by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

John Soghigian spoke as a private citizen in regards to the old clinic building. He has been working with Lori Schulze (local realtor) on possible uses for the land and to develop an estimate of what it would take to remove the building. One use would be a multipurpose use facility to expand health care and provide ground level access for the food shelf.

Motion by Nikkola supported by Omerza to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Terri Boese  
Clerk/Treasurer