

## **Ely City Council Special Joint Meeting with the ISD 696 School Board Minutes, October 25, 2012**

Meeting informally called to order at 7:00 PM in the Joint Maintenance Facility's Conference Room located at 2210 East Sheridan St., Ely, MN.

Those in attendance included:

Mayor Roger Skraba; City Councilors Debeltz, Polyner, Sheddy, Nikkola, Omerza; School Board members Ray Marsnick, Chairperson, and James Pointer, Director; School and City Staff, Harold Langowski, City Operations Director, Alexis Leitgeb, School Superintendent, Terry Lowell, City Clerk/Treasurer, and reporters Joe Domich, Ely Echo and Keith Vandervort, Ely Timberjay.

The City Clerk asked about election expenses and if the City wished to continue its practice of not charging the school district any fees for conducting the election for the school district. The City Council agreed to continue the past practice of not charging the school district for school election services.

Discussion regarding the City of Ely's Comprehensive Plan, currently under review and revision, included information from Harold about the prospects of biomass as a method of providing heating to the schools, hospital, and City Hall. A group of citizens have been working on gathering information about this alternative energy source and have reached the stage of determining the financial feasibility of such an enterprise. This feasibility report will be completed in the next month or two and will be available for review. Mayor Skraba and Harold reported on their tour of Rice Lake and Barron, Wisconsin's biomass heating facilities and spoke of their success in efficiency and cost effectiveness.

School Board members thanked the City of its participation in helping with the renovation of the school's hockey facility. They thanked especially Harold and the public works crew for their effort. It was noted that the community had come together to make this renovation happen and that such an effort reflected well as to citizen participation when the need was evident and the communities involvement was necessary to make it happen.

The school reported that the issues it faces were the same issues the city faces. Reduced student enrollment (declining population), although both have increased in the past year; a decline in funding; and older buildings in need of more attention and maintenance.

Mayor Skraba reported that he is on the executive board of RAMS (Regional Association of Municipalities and Schools), and is available to take school issues to that lobbying group.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 8:00 PM.

Submitted by: Terry Lowell, City Clerk/Treasurer