

Ely City Council Regular Meeting Minutes, March 3, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Ely City Council Regular Meeting was called to order by Mayor Novak at 5:30 pm on March 3, 2015 at the City Hall Council Chambers.

2. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Council members A.Forsman, Kess, Debeltz, Omerza, Polyner, D.Forsman, Mayor Novak (7)

ABSENT: None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Debeltz/D.Forsman moved to approve the minutes from February 17, 2015 Regular Meeting and February 24, 2015 Study Session. Motion carried unanimously.

4. ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA:

A. Addition: 6.B. – St. Louis County & City of Ely Agreement

B. Addition: 6.C. – St. Louis County Drainage & Temporary Easements

C. Addition: 6.D. – Airport Commission member appointment

Debeltz/Omerza moved to approve the additions to the agenda A-C. Motion carried unanimously.

5. MAYOR'S REPORT

- The Mayor encouraged animal owners to get their animal licensed through the City of Ely. He noted that so far this year only 37 licenses have been issued. Having your pet licensed, enables that pet to be returned to the owner if lost and it ensures that the animals that are licensed have been properly vaccinated against rabies.
- He also reminded all pet owners to be responsible by picking up after their animal and by not letting them sit out in the cold over extended periods.
- The Mayor commended the HPC members for refinishing the council member's chairs in the council chambers and for working hard to maintain the historical perspective of City Hall.

6. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Motion to waive readings in entirety of all ordinances and resolutions on tonight's agenda.

B. Approve for Mayor and Clerk to sign the Agreement between St. Louis County and the City of Ely for installation of Sewer & Water System on 8th Ave between James St and Camp St.

C. Approve Mayor and Clerk to sign both the Drainage Easement and the Temporary Easement requests by St. Louis County across the Whiteside Park property for the 8th Ave Project.

D. Approve appointment of Warren Nikkola to the Airport Commission.

Debeltz/D.Forsman moved to approve the consent agenda items A-D. Motion carried unanimously.

7. REQUESTS TO APPEAR: None

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Debeltz/A.Forsman moved approval for the City to pay the annual membership fee of \$400 for 2015 to the Community Economic Joint Powers Board which was an increase of \$200 from last year. Motion carried unanimously.**

Council member A.Forsman stated that the Budget committee chose their officers for the year: Chair-Mayor Novak; Vice-Chair-Albert Forsman; Secretary/Treasurer-Paul Kess.

Council member Kess presented the highlights from the RAMS meeting on February 26, 2015. He stated there was an attendance of 31 people. Tim Riordan was elected to be the interim office manager until a new Executive Director is in place.

Council member Omerza mentioned the Library Annual Report was in the agenda packet for review and if there were any questions Library Director Heinrich would be happy to answer them. The discussion at the Park & Rec meeting last night was about forming an Ely Dog Park as well as a Skate Park. She presented the CGMC Action Alert which encouraged everyone to reach out and contact the legislators regarding the two water quality bills that the CGMC has been working on and let them know that we do care about clean water and that water quality regulations are based on good science. Omerza also stated she will be in the cities tomorrow for a Legislative Conference.

Council member Polynier stated that through the HPC, a MN Historical & Cultural Heritage Grant in the amount of \$7,000 was awarded to the City of Ely for the Ely Community Center National Register Nomination project. There will be a presentation at Vermilion Community College on "How to protect our natural resources." She also stated that the Steering Committee met last week and they are welcoming any input regarding the City's Comprehensive Plan.

9. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

A. Clerk-Treasurer

- i. EUC Consent Agenda Items: The following items of business were recommended for approval at the regular EUC meeting of Wednesday, February 25, 2015:
1. Approved an LED Lighting Rebate for St. Louis County for \$239.76.
 2. Approved the purchase of a high lift pump for \$10,900.00 and an under drain pump for \$6,200.00 from General Repair Service for the WWTF.
 3. Approved payment of the EUC January Bills List for \$796,821.69.
- Debeltz/D.Forsman moved to approve the EUC consent agenda items 1-3. Motion carried unanimously.**

B. Fire Chief

C. Library Director Heinrich updated everyone on this week's programs at the Library and welcomed any questions anyone may have regarding the Annual Report.

D. Police Chief

E. City Attorney:

- i. Attorney Klun gave a brief update to the council regarding the Reed Road litigation.
- ii. Attorney Klun is working on issues and zoning concerns regarding the Hospital refinance which need to be resolved before the refinance can go through. This will be brought forward for approval through the EEDA.
- iii. Attorney Klun stated that she is working on the revisions of the Sign Ordinance and the Board of Adjustment code language from Planning and Zoning recommendations.

F. City Engineer

10. COMMUNICATIONS:

- A. St. Louis County, Board of Appeal and Equalization training sessions – No one needs to attend at this time. Council member Debeltz is currently certified.
- B. Arrowhead Library System 2015 Budget
- C. Range Association of Municipalities and Schools, Official Ballot to be submitted to RAMS by the Clerk's office with the following votes:
Debeltz/Kess moved to approve for the City of Ely to vote for Charles Baribeau (City of Virginia Councilor) as RAMS President. Motion carried unanimously.

Debeltz/A.Forsman moved to approve for the City of Ely to vote for the following 5 candidates as RAMS Directors: Walt Hautala (Mesabi East Schools Director); Bob Berrini (Town of Morse Supervisor); Herb Sellars (Town of Great Scott Supervisor); Brad Hadrava (City of Eveleth Councilor); Paul Kess (City of Ely Councilor). Motion carried unanimously.
- D. Ely Community Resource quarterly progress report
- E. Letters (from Mayor Novak) to Commissioner Rukavina and the Town of Morse regarding Ely Economic Development

11. CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:

- A. City and EUC claims for March 3, 2015 - \$453,551.51
Debeltz/Omerza moved to approve claims for payment item A. Motion carried unanimously.

12. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Omerza/Debeltz moved approval to task the HPC members to revise and streamline Section 2.60 in the City Code regarding the Heritage Preservation Commission policies and purposes as most of the current language seems out of date and inapplicable to their current function. Motion carried unanimously.**

13. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **Debeltz/Omerza moved to approve Resolution #2015-006 supporting dedicated state funding for city streets. WHEREAS, Minnesota contains over 141,000 miles of roadway, and over 19,000 miles—or 13 percent—are owned and maintained by Minnesota's 852 cities; and WHEREAS, over 80 percent of municipal streets are ineligible for dedicated Highway User Tax Distribution Fund dollars; and**

WHEREAS, the more than 700 Minnesota cities with populations below 5,000 are ineligible for dedicated Highway User Tax Distribution Fund dollars; and **WHEREAS**, city streets are a separate but integral piece of the network of roads supporting movement of people and goods; and **WHEREAS**, existing funding mechanisms, such as Municipal State Aid (MSA), property taxes and special assessments, have limited applications, leaving cities under-equipped to address growing needs; and **WHEREAS**, city cost participation in state and county highway projects diverts resources from city-owned streets; and **WHEREAS**, maintenance costs increase as road systems age, and no city--large or small—is spending enough on roadway capital improvements to maintain a 50-year lifecycle; and **WHEREAS**, for every one dollar spent on maintenance, a road authority--and therefore taxpayers--save seven dollars in repairs; and **WHEREAS**, cities need greater resources, including an additional dedicated state funding source for transportation, and flexible policies in order to meet growing demands for street improvements and maintenance. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Ely, Minnesota, is hereby in support of the omnibus transportation funding bill that provides additional dedicated state funding for city streets including funding that can be used for non-MSA city street maintenance, construction and reconstruction. **Roll called: A.Forsman-yes, Kess-yes, Debeltz-yes, Omerza-yes, Polyner-yes, D.Forsman-yes and Mayor Novak-yes. Motion carried unanimously.**

- B. **Omerza/Debeltz moved to approve Resolution #2015-007 opposing the imposition of Levy Limits on MN Cities.** **WHEREAS**, the citizens of the City of Ely have elected the City Council and Mayor to make budget and levy decisions related to the City of Ely. **WHEREAS**, the City Council, Mayor, and city staff spend significant time understanding the unique needs of the residents and businesses. **WHEREAS**, local residents and businesses have input into budget and levy decisions of the City Council. **WHEREAS**, cities across Minnesota have less revenues per capita, counting inflation, to provide services to city residents and businesses than were available in 2002. **WHEREAS**, levy limits undercut local control of city budgets and hamper a city's ability to meet the unique needs of their residents and businesses. **WHEREAS**, levy limits are an ineffective means of providing property tax relief. **WHEREAS**, the imposition of levy limits often results in cities levying more than they may need to any given year in order to protect its revenue base for future years. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the City of Ely opposes the imposition of levy limits in any form on Minnesota cities. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, upon passage, this resolution be forwarded to the Governor, the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue, the Chairs of the House Committee on Taxes, the House Property Tax and Local Government Finance Division, the Senate Tax Committee, and the Senate Tax Reform Division, and to the members of the State Legislature representing the City of Ely. **Roll called: A.Forsman-yes, Kess-yes, Debeltz-yes, Omerza-yes, Polyner-yes, D.Forsman-yes and Mayor Novak-yes. Motion carried unanimously.**

14. OPEN FORUM: None

15. Mayor Novak adjourned the meeting at 6:17pm.

Claire Huisman, Deputy Clerk