

**Council Minutes - December 17, 2019**  
**Regular Meeting Ely City Council – City Hall, Council Chambers**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Novak called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

2. PRESENT: Council members A.Forsman, Kess, Debeltz, Omerza, Callen, Campbell, and Mayor Novak  
ABSENT: None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the minutes from the December 3, 2019 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

4. ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA:

- A. Addition 6.B Approve Council to attend the 2020 Elected Leaders Institute: Foundation Program or the Advanced Program through the League of Minnesota Cities.
- B. Addition 8.A Budget Committee Minutes, motions and discussion on the Dump Truck bid/purchase and omit the approval of the 2020 levy since it will be discussed under New Business.
- C. Addition 11. D. Invoice #377916 to SEH for \$258.00 for the Prospector ATV Trail
- D. Addition 12. A. Sanitation Committee: Citizens at Large: Phillip Hegfors Jr, John Lahtonen and Mike Banovetz
- E. Addition 13. H. Resolution 2019-048 Resolution Approving the City of Ely Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020
- F. Addition 13. I Resolution 2019-049 Resolution Approving and Adopting Final Tax Levy Collectible in 2020
- G. Addition 13. J Resolution 2019-050 Resolution Approving a Modification to the Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Financing District No. 3.
- H. Addition 13. K. Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) Ballot for the Communities Under 10,000 Representative for St Louis County - Robert Quade from Rice Lake, MN or Steven B. Johnson from Virginia, MN

**Additions and Omissions A-H were added and omitted without objection.**

5. MAYOR'S REPORT

Thanks to the City Employees that have been busy with the snow removal and keeping our streets clean.

6. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Motion to waive readings in entirety of all ordinances and resolutions on tonight's agenda
- B. Approve Council to attend the 2020 Elected Leaders Institute: Foundation Program or the Advanced Program through the League of Minnesota Cities.

**Debeltz/Callen moved to approve the consent agenda items A and B. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

7. REQUESTS TO APPEAR: None

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Standing/Special

Heritage Preservation Committee: Minutes included in the council packet

Library Board: Minutes included in the council packet.

Planning and Zoning Commission: Minutes included in the council packet

Ely Utilities Commission: Minutes included in the council packet.

Community Economic Development Joint Powers Board: Minutes included in the council packet.

Housing & Redevelopment Authority of Ely: Minutes included in the council packet

Budget Committee

- i. Recommendation from the Budget Committee to approve the 2020 levy with an increase of 1% from 2019. – Omitted, discussion under New Business
- ii. **A.Forsman/Omerza moved to approve the recommendation from the Budget Committee to purchase a 32” commercial grade Toro Snow blower from J&L Hardware for \$1,611.75 for the Rec Center Ice Rink. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- iii. **A.Forsman/Omerza moved to approve advertising for sealed bids for a Plow/Dump Truck for the Public Works Department. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

9. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

A. Clerk-Treasurer

iv. The following items of business were recommended for approval at the regular EUC meeting on Wednesday, December 11, 2019:

1. Approved the utility account write offs for 2019.
2. Approved the 2020 EUC Budget.
3. Approved Warren Nikkola as the EUC delegate to the Sanitation Committee.
4. Approved payment of the EUC Bills List for November, 2019 for \$324,022.76.
5. Approved payment of CIP Rebates for Dollar General \$1,603.05 and Razor Edge Systems \$1,195.57.

**Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the EUC Consent agenda items 1-5.**

A.Forsman indicated that the CIP rebates are still going strong and available. Forsman encourages businesses to take advantage of this program.

Langowski indicated that he just had a meeting with Energy Insights and they are working on some rebates and energy options for 2020.

**Motion Carried Unanimously.**

B. Fire Chief

**Debeltz/Called moved to hire Louis Gerzin as a firefighter pending background check, drug test, and physical. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

C. Library Director

Library Director Heinrich gave an update on the upcoming events at the library and the holiday hours which can be located on the Library website.

D. Police Chief

Chief Lahtonen indicated that the new Police truck is on the road.

E. City Attorney

F. City Engineer

10. COMMUNICATIONS: Matter of Information

A. Thank you from Incredible Ely

B. Correspondence from the St Louis County Fair

C. Thank you from the Ely Chamber of Commerce for the Christmas Parade and tree lighting ceremony.

11. CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:

A. City and EUC claims for December 17, 2019 – \$321,011.23

B. Invoice 1912-09 to Benchmark Engineering, Inc for \$595.00 for the Bridge 601 Trail Improvements

C. Invoice 1912-12 to Benchmark Engineering, Inc for \$85.00 for the Quad Cities ATV Trails

D. Invoice #377916 to SEH for \$258.00 for the Prospector ATV Trail

**Callen/Omerza moved to approve the Claims for Payment A – D. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

12. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Forming a Sanitation Committee – 3- Council Members, 1 – EUC Member, 1- Planning & Zoning Member, and Advertising for 2 Citizens at large.

Planning and Zoning recommended Mauro Caruso

EUC recommended Warren Nikkola

**Kess/A.Forsman moved to approve Warren Nikkola as the EUC Representative and Mauro Caruso as the Planning and Zoning Representative on the Sanitation Committee. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

2 Citizens at Large – Phillip Hegfors Jr, John Lahtonen, and Mike Banovetz

**A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve Phillip Hegfors Jr. and John Lahtonen to be on the Sanitation Committee as Citizens at Large.**

Mayor Novak indicated that he will be voting no on this motion because one of the individuals on this motion, he believes has a personal agenda.

**Roll Called: A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-No, Omerza-No, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-No. Motion Carries 4-3 with Debeltz, Omerza and Mayor Novak voting No.**

3 Council Members –

Mayor Novak indicated he has heard from Omerza and Callen that they would like to be on the Sanitation Committee.

Kess indicated that he would like to be on the Sanitation Committee. He feels like the three people (A.Forsman, Callen and himself) that did the heavy lifting to this point should be on it.

A.Forsman indicated that he would like to be on the Sanitation Committee.

Omerza indicated that there would not have been any heavy lifting had we not gone this route in the first place. Omerza stated that she has stated her side of this issue from the start and she has heard from many people that have supported her; she feels that the people that have the same views as her need to be represented on the committee.

Callen indicated that he would like to be on the Sanitation Committee.

**Kess/Callen moved to have A.Forsman, Kess, and Callen on the Sanitation Committee as the Council representatives. Motion Carried 6-1 with Omerza voting No.**

**13. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Omerza/Debeltz moved to approve the Employment Agreement between the City of Ely, MN and AFSCME Local 1490 – Essential Unit January 1, 2020- December 31, 2022. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**B. Omerza/Debletz moved to approve the Employment Agreement between the City of Ely, MN and AFSCME Local 1490 – Base Unit January 1, 2020- December 31, 2022. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Kess indicated that he appreciates all the work the negotiating committee and AFSCME groups' puts into the negotiations.

**C. Omerza/Debeltz moved to approve the updated job descriptions for Meter Reader, Electric Lineman Foreman, and Electrical Line Worker 4. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**D. Debeltz/Callen moved to approve the in-kind services and the Obstruction in Public Right of Way Permit for the Wolf Track Classic Sled Dog Race on February 22 and 23, 2020. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Ellen Cashman the Event Coordinator for the Ely Chamber of Commerce indicated that this will be the 50<sup>th</sup> year that a Sled Dog Race has been held in Ely. They have a couple people that will be here from the 1<sup>st</sup> race that will be at the Musher's Dinner.

A.Forsman thanked the chamber for stepping forward and taking over this event.

**E. Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the Commercial renovation loan for 141 N Central Ave to replace floors, replace windows, apply 1” of foam insulation and fiberglass, etc for \$17,500, pending proper paperwork and fees and to direct Attorney Klun to work with the applicant and to proceed with loan processing. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**F. Omerza/Debeltz moved to approve the League of Minnesota Cities Liability Coverage Waiver Form with Does Not Waive checked. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**G. Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Resolution 2019-047 Resolution Authorizing Temporary Deputy Clerk for Election Purposes. Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously**

**H. Callen/Omerza moved to approve Resolution 2019-048 Resolution Approving the City of Ely Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020. Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously**

**I. Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Resolution 2019-049 Resolution Approving and Adopting Final Tax Levy Collectible in 2020.**

Mayor Novak stated that our preliminary levy was at 2.62% and the final levy is at 1%.

A.Forsman indicated that the City of Ely continues to do major infrastructure projects. In 2020 the major project is the James Street Project.

Omerza indicated that we have an excellent staff and employees that make sure the taxpayers money is spent properly.

Debeltz stated that the City of Ely has a good staff working in the field doing some of the things that used to be contracted out, that makes a big difference when doing these major projects.

**Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously**

**J. Omerza/Campbell moved to approve Resolution 2019-050 Resolution Approving a Modification to the Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Financing District No. 3.**

Langowski thanked to ISD 696, the County Board and Commissioners for signing the waiver.

**Roll Called: Council Member A.Forsman- Yes, Kess-Yes, Debeltz-Yes, Omerza-Yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell – Yes, and Mayor Novak-Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously**

**K. Kess/Campbell moved to approve the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) Ballot for the Communities Under 10,000 Representative for St Louis County Steven B. Johnson from Virginia, MN. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

14. OPEN FORUM

Mayor Novak wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

15. ADJOURN

Mayor Novak adjourned the meeting at 6:05pm without objection.

Casey Velcheff  
Deputy Clerk