

Council Minutes - March 7, 2023

Regular Meeting Ely City Council – City Hall, Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Ely City Council was called to order by Mayor Omerza at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers

PRESENT: Council members A.Forsman, Kess, Debeltz, Callen, Campbell, Bisbee, and Mayor Omerza

ABSENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Debeltz/Callen moved to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2023 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously

ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA:

A.Forsman/Campbell moved to Add 13.D. Letter of Support for 2024 Federal CDS application for TH 169 Spot Safety and Mobility Improvements Reconstruction Projects. Motion Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Omerza stated that she announced the teams and mushers at the Wolf Track Classic Dog Sled Race.

Mayor Omerza thanked the Ely Police Department and neighboring agencies for the help during the school lockdown.

CONSENT AGENDA: None

REQUESTS TO APPEAR: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Standing/Special

Sanitation Committee:

A.Forsman indicated that they reviewed the Residential Sanitation Contract at the meeting and it is being sent to Attorney Klun to consolidate with the recommendations. Once the changes are made the Sanitation Committee will meet again to review and decide on the RFP requirements, then it will come to the Council.

Ely Utilities Commission

A.Forsman/Debeltz moved to approve the recommendation from the EUC to schedule one EUC meeting per month on the 4th Wednesday. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve payment to Ferguson for 14" water main repair parts for \$3252.58. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve a one year contract extension for Mick Shusta at the continued rate of \$500 per month.

A.Forsman stated that Mick Shusta retired about a year ago and has stayed on as an A Operator and continues to check in until our current operators receive their licensing. Langowski indicated that our current operators are working towards their A licensing. Langowski stated that we very much appreciate Mick continuing to do this for us.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve \$1,437,392.51 payment of EUC January bills. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve payment of \$1,021.29 to Anthony Gornik for installation of LCR Units. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve CIP rebate of \$368.81 to St. Louis County for LED light upgrade.

A.Forsman reminded everyone that these are available for Commercial and Residential properties.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Langowski indicated that we have had a couple freeze ups, and 2 water main lines frozen in the street. Keep an eye on your water temperature, if it gets to be 37° and falling you should run your water a pencil lead size in one of your sinks. If your water freezes during business hours you can call the Utility office if it is after hours or on the weekend you can call the Utility Emergency Number which is on your utility bill and on the city website, the city will thaw the water line for \$100 during business hours or \$200 on weekends or evenings.

Joint Powers Ambulance Board: Minutes included in the Council Agenda Packet

Campbell/Debeltz moved to make the Joint Powers Ambulance Board Meeting on March 28, 2023 at 4pm Ely City Hall, Council Chambers a Special Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Range Association of Municipalities & Schools (RAMS): Minutes Included in the Council Agenda Packet

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Clerk-Treasurer

FY24 General Community Project Form to Peter Stauber for the Burntside water main replacement project.

Langowski indicated that this is continued efforts to get assistance for the water main replacement project. Langowski stated that he received a call from Stauber's office in Washington yesterday regarding this project. We will also be submitting this to both Senator Smith and Senator Klobuchar. This is estimated to be a \$4.5 million project. We currently have city staff out on the bridge repairing the pilings. We are hoping with this project within the next year or two we can have everything underground.

A.Forsman/Debeltz moved to approve the application for the Burntside water main replacement project and to send to Representative Stauber, Senator Smith, and Senator Klobuchar. Motion Carried Unanimously.

USDA Rural Development Application

This application is for the Ely Ambulance Facility and the EMS/Fire Storage Facility. This is a grant to the City of Ely for the Ambulance Facility and the EMS/Fire Storage Facility for \$1.3 Million. The Senators office indicated that 1 out of 600 applications were approved, we are very fortunate to get this funding. This money will be split in half each getting \$650,000, we will continue to work on this and work with the Ambulance Joint Powers Board.

Fire Chief

Fire Chief Marshall discussed the recent calls for the fire department.

The 2nd Assistant Chief Interviews are tonight after the council meeting. Marshall stated he is hoping to bring a recommendation to the next council meeting.

Library Director

Library Usage Groups by Circulation

Library Director Heinrich indicated that this is a matter of information for the council and if anyone has any questions to let her know. The numbers are starting to rise since Covid.

ALA Annual Conference

Director Heinrich indicated that she was scheduled to go to this conference in early 2020, but Covid made it impossible at that point. The travel, lodging, and conference costs associated with attending would come from a donation that was made in 2020.

Debeltz/A.Forsman moved to approve Library Director Heinrich to attend to the American Library Association annual conference from June 22-27, 2023 in Chicago, IL. Motion Carried Unanimously.

2022 Public Library Annual Report

Library Director Heinrich indicated that this is a matter of information for the council and if anyone has any questions to let her know, the library board approved this last week.

Director Heinrich discussed the current programming at the Library which can be found on the Library website.

Police Chief

Chief Houde stated that they had a call at the school last week which was determined to be a swatting call which is a prank call to a business or school. Three schools including Ely School received this call last week which was determined to come from out of state. Thanks to Babbitt, St. Louis County Sheriff, the US Border Control and the school. The school did an excellent job during the lockdown. The BCA is working on the case.

City Attorney

Kess/Debeltz moved to approve the Note and Mortgage for the Residential Rehab Loan for John and Susan Leonard for \$10,000 at 127 W Chapman St to fix the sewer line. Motion Carried Unanimously.

City Engineer

COMMUNICATIONS: Matter of Information

Thank you from the Ely Nordic Ski Team

Ely Bloomenson Community Hospital Member Update – February 2023

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:

A. City and EUC claims for March 7, 2023 for \$637,634.33

B. Invoice #262108 to St Louis County for the 2022 City of Ely Storm and Sanitary Sewer Cleaning and Televising for \$14,770.08

Langowski indicated that this is planning for the 2024 Harvey Street Reconstruction.

Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the Claims for Payment items A and B. Motion Carried Unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Committee Seat Applications

Campbell/Kess moved to approve Lucy Soderstrom for the Heritage Preservation Commission with Term expiring 1/31/2026. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Debeltz/Bisbee moved to approve Jen Westlund to the Park and Recreation Board as the ISD 696 Representative. Motion Carried Unanimously

Kess/Bisbee moved to approve Scott Kochendorfer to the Police Commission with a term expiring 1/31/2026. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Campbell/Kess moved to approve Abby Dare to the Park and Recreation Board with a term expiring 1/31/2026. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman indicated that he is thankful for the people that have volunteered and hopes others will volunteer for the other open seats on committees.

NEW BUSINESS:

Callen/Campbell moved to approve Change orders No. 3, 4, and 5 for the Ely WWTF Improvements Project. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Kess/Debeltz moved to approve the Authorization for Professional Services for the 2023 Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) for Phase 1 at the Ely Airport. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Callen Moved to approve the Notice of Call for bids for the 2023 Taxilane Reconstruction Project. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Debeltz/Callen moved to approve the Letter of Support for 2024 Federal CDS application for TH 169 Spot Safety and Mobility Improvements Reconstruction Projects.

Bill Erzar Chair of the HWY 169 North Task Force indicated that this project is a locally led project on Highway 169 from Robinson Lake to the Ely side of Wolf Lake Road. These are MnDot projects but they cannot apply for this kind of funding it has to come from a non-profit so the HWY 169 Task Force applies for funds. The cost of this project is 14.3 Million.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

OPEN FORUM:

Frederica Musgrave at 30 W Shagawa Rd

Musgrave discussed the City Website, under the committees area she was wondering what committees were broadcasted or streamed and what channels they are on and at what times. Musgrave also asked for the rebroadcast schedule for the meetings. Musgrave also asked how she can get DVDs of the meetings. Musgrave asked why on the TV guide for Midco you cannot see what programming is coming up or being seen it just says local programming.

ADJOURN:

Mayor Omerza adjourned the meeting without objection at 6:29pm.

Casey Velcheff
Deputy Clerk