

**Regular Meeting Ely City Council – City Hall, Council Chambers  
July 11, 2023**

**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:**

**Kess/Debeltz moved to approve the minutes from the June 20<sup>th</sup> 2023 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA:**

- A. Addition 8. A. Projects Committee
- B. Addition 13. D. Surplus Damaged Bleachers
- C. Addition 13. E. Authorization for Professional Services with TKDA for the Triggering Event Airport Master Plan
- D. Addition 13. F. Resolution 2023-017 Resolution Authorizing to Execute Minnesota Department of Transportation Airport Maintenance and Operations Grant Contract

**Bisbee/Callen moved to approve the additions A-D. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Omerza indicated that she and other council members attended ribbon cuttings at the Hidden Valley Bike Trails and for the Midco Fiber being completed in Ely which has been a long standing goal of the council.

Mayor Omerza thanked the City of Ely for hosting all the people in town for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, the City Crew did a great job making sure the parks were cleaned and all the garbage was picked up.

Mayor Omerza indicated that herself, Clerk Langowski, and Council Members Campbell and Bisbee attended the League of Minnesota Cities Summer Conference in Duluth.

Campbell indicated that over 900 people from different cities attended the conference. An important aspect of the conference for her was the housing and redevelopment portion.

Bisbee indicated that he enjoyed networking with the other officials, the conference was very informational and he walked away with a lot of information.

Mayor Omerza stated that she had the opportunity to have breakfast with Senator Hauschild and was able to discuss some Ely's issues with him. She also indicated that they had to say good bye to three officials from the league that are retiring.

Mayor Omerza recognized the Ely Events Group for their efforts with organizing the 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities including the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rock the Park Event in Whiteside Park, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade, Flag Raising Ceremony at the Veterans Memorial Park, amongst other things. Omerza indicated that there are only 10 people on this Committee. She thanked the group by giving them each Certificates for their hard work and dedication to the City of Ely and presented them with a key to the City.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Callen/Debeltz moved to waive readings in entirety of all ordinances and resolutions on tonight's agenda. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**REQUESTS TO APPEAR:**

Frederica Musgrave- Ely Community and 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade

Musgrave thanked everyone for what they do for the city. Musgrave indicated that she personally enjoyed the pre-parade and parade 4<sup>th</sup> of July Activities. She said she walked in the parade and handed out mini American Flags and gave out candy, she said she is proud of American Freedom. She always remembers Ely as having kind and courteous people. Musgrave referenced Betty Firth's article in the Timberjay, the last sentence of the article about being joyful to be an American. Musgrave thanked the organizers of the events for planning and putting in the time for these events. Musgrave indicated that certain things need to be addressed, after the parade she noticed several things. There was inappropriate language and banners at a couple points along the parade route. One of the side x sides in the parade was throwing water balloons and she got hit with icy cold water. Musgrave requests the council to work with parade organizers to be for parade participants to be better behaved and not to throw water balloons into the crowd. The young teens in the parade need to be supervised. Musgrave did not appreciate the vulgar signs that were present during the parade. Musgrave would like the council and organizers to work with the Ely Echo to educate parade participants and watchers to promote Ely nice.

Lynn Evenson- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade

Evenson thanked the committee for organizing the parade, it sounded fun. Evenson indicated that she did not watch or participate in the parade as she was busy weeding her garden. Evenson said she thanks for working towards putting policies and procedures in place for the future. Evenson had several questions: How will parade participants be advised of policies and procedures? Must people stay on/in vehicles? What are they allowed to throw? Are parade participants allowed to throw overhand? Who are the responsible parties? Will parade route staff be taught de-escalation strategies? How will the public be informed of behaviors not tolerated? When will all information become publicly available and where?

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Standing/Special

Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)

**Campbell/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from the Heritage Preservation Commission to approve the application for Legacy funding to complete a video to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the Ely High School from 1924-2024.**

Campbell indicated that this will celebrate and preserve community life through the stories of a diverse group of graduates who will share their personal experiences and reflections on how their high school years shaped their lives. The City of Ely will be the applicant for the MN Legacy Grant since the City is an eligible entity per the Legacy guidelines.

**Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Cemetery Committee: Minutes included in the Council Packet

Ely Utilities Commission

**A.Forsman/Kess moved to approve the recommendation from the Ely Utilities Commission to move forward with a rate study by Dave Berg Consulting, LLC(DBC,LLC).**

Bisbee asked how much the study is and what they are examining.

Langowski indicated that the study will be on our entire electrical rate structure, and he believes the cost is around \$12,000. DBC,LLC had assisted us with our wholesale rate contract negotiations with MN Power. We are looking at not only car charging rates, bur our whole rate structure.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**A.Forsman/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from the Ely Utilities Commission to approve the quote from Qualus in the amount of \$91,856.00 for substation upgrades. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**A.Forsman/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from Ely Utilities Commission to approve \$797,134.00 for the May EUC Bills. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from Ely Utilities Commission to approve payment of \$175.00 to Butch Gornik for consulting services and \$500 to Mick Shusta for A Operator Services. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

RAMS: Minutes included in the Council Packet

Kess indicated that Jeff Anderson recapped the Legislative session during their meeting.

Projects Committee

**Callen/Debeltz moved to approve the recommendation from Projects Committee to direct the Police Department and Public Works to install a two way stop sign on Washington St at the 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue East Intersection.**

Langowski indicated that Chief Houde is putting together a map of our existing uncontrolled intersections, t intersections and 4-way intersections. The first recommendation is for 11<sup>th</sup> Ave and Washington St; this is going to the Rec Center. There have been a couple of accidents in this intersection in the last couple of years. The recommendation is for the Stop Signs to be on Washington St.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Callen/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from Projects Committee to direct the Clerk to order and install address signs along Pioneer Road for \$1030.03.**

A.Forsman indicated that we do not provide address signs for any other part of the city.

Forsman indicated that with technology these days with mapping, to find a reflective sign these days is hardly necessary, you can put an address in your phone and it will tell you when to turn.

Langowski stated that this will just be along Pioneer Road where a lot of the houses are set back from the road. We have had requests from homeowners as to where to get signs, what the requirements are, etc. Langowski indicated that it would be helpful for emergency responders to see the signs as they are coming up. Langowski indicated that we could charge the resident for the installation if that is something the council is interested in.

Bisbee indicated that the city footing the bill for these signs is reasonable. When the County sends signs to the homeowner, who installs the signs? Forsman indicated that it is the homeowner.

Langowski stated that a Gopher One Call would be required to install each sign to make sure fiber, electric, etc is located ahead of time. This is the reasoning behind thinking the City would install them, to make sure no wires are hit by installing a sign, and the signs would be consistent.

Kess was concerned in other parts of the city the homeowners are required to post their address number, it is considered to be the homeowners' responsibility.

Langowski indicated that we would like to have consistent, visible addressing on the homes, we do not have that in this area since a lot of the home are not located directly along the road. We also need these signs to be reflective, since there are not many street lights in this area.

Bisbee asked how long it would take to install one sign. Langowski indicated approximately 15 minutes.

Campbell indicated that it is clear as to what needs to get done for these homeowners.

Bisbee indicated that he is satisfied with the information presented that it would be a half a day of work from the city to install these signs and the cost is minimal, and the immediacy to identify these lots in case of an emergency.

Chief Marshall indicated that from a first responder stand point that part of the city is the most difficult to locate addresses.

**Motion Carried 6-1 with Forsman voting no.**

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

### Clerk-Treasurer

#### Recycling Center Trash

Langowski stated that it is that time of year again when we get lots of garbage and cardboard boxes left at the Recycling Center. City of Ely residents do a good job, but in the summer we have to pick up trash at the Recycling Center constantly. Cardboard and trash need to go to the Transfer Station on Highway 21 or in Soudan.

A.Forsman indicated that the Lake County Transfer Station on Kawishiwi Trail also takes Cardboard.

### Fire Chief

Chief Marshal discussed the recent calls for the fire department. Marshall indicated that the fire department participated in the Rock the Park event on July 1<sup>st</sup> by serving beverages and at the Little League Fundraiser by making a Splash Pad with a fire truck. Marshall indicated that they completed the annual fire hose testing this last week. The new trucks are in service and were in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade.

Chief Marshall indicated that Ladder 1 the 1983 Seagrave has been retired and is a viable apparatus that another department could use. Marshall suggested putting the truck up for sale.

**Debeltz/A.Forsman moved to start the process to sell the 1983 Seagrave Ladder Truck.**

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

### Library Director

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

### Police Chief

Assistant Chief Lorenz stated that Police Department had very few calls with all the events that we had in town over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July week. Thanks to the event organizers.

### City Attorney

City Engineer

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Matter of Information  
Family Resource Center-Community Survey  
Medical Assistance Renewals

**CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:**

- A. City of EUC Claims for July 11<sup>th</sup> 2023 for \$139,666.28
- B. Partial Pay Estimate #1 to Low Impact Excavators for \$137,942.28 for East End Development
- C. Invoice #447572 for \$3,740.00 and Invoice #448462 for \$12,025.00 for the Prospector ATV Trail to Short Elliot Hendrickson, Inc.

**Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the Claims for Payment items A-C. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Callen/Debeltz moved to approve the Residential Rehab Loan for Alex Povhe at 403 E James St for \$10,000 for a new propane furnace and new windows pending proper paperwork and fees and to direct Attorney Klun to work with applicant and proceed with the loan application. Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Callen/A.Forsman moved to approve Resolution 2023-015 Resolution Authorizing the City of Ely to Make Application to and Accept Funds from IRRR Residential Redevelopment Grant Program. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Campbell/Bisbee moved to approve Resolution 2023-016 Resolution Authorizing the City of Ely to Make Application to and Accept Funds from the IRRR Culture and Tourism Grant Program. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Surplus Damaged Bleachers

Langowski indicated that we have a scrap set of bleachers in the yard that were replaced by insurance from one of the bad storms we had in 2016. These were the bleachers that ended up in the middle of the little league field from the storm. The estimate we received to repair the bleachers was higher than the value of the bleachers. The Ely Watercross Association would like to repair and sue them for their event and offers to have them available for other City events as well.

**A.Forsman/Bisbee moved to give the Ely Watercross Association the scrap bleachers. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Bisbee/Debeltz moved to approve the Authorization for Professional Services with TKDA for the Triggering Event Airport Master Plan. Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Callen/Campbell moved to approve Resolution 2023-017 Resolution Authorizing to Execute Minnesota Department of Transportation Airport Maintenance and Operations Grant Contract. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**OPEN FORUM:**

Kess stated that in the projects minutes they discussed that the Housing Study draft has been completed.

**ADJOURN:**

Mayor Omerza adjourned the meeting at 6:46 without objection.

Casey Velcheff  
Deputy Clerk