

**Regular Meeting Ely City Council – City Hall, Council Chambers  
January 16, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Omerza called the City Council meeting to order at 5:33pm.

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

ABSENT: None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Debeltz/Callen moved to approve minutes from the January 2, 2024 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA:**

- A. Addition 6.F. Make the Joint Powers Ambulance Meeting on January 22, 2024 at 4pm at the Winton Community Center a Special Council Meeting so all Council Members can attend if they choose.
- B. Addition 9.D Police Department Sign On Bonus Agreement
- C. Addition 9.E. Purchase Agreement for Lot 6, Block 4 East Spaulding between Gregory Paul Demarce and the City of Ely.
- D. Addition 9.E. Purchase Agreement for Lot 8, Block 1 East Spaulding First Addition between Kevin Fred Decker & Debbie Lynn Decker and the City of Ely.
- E. Addition 13.F. Resolution 2024-007 Resolution Authorizing Application for Ely Events Group to Apply for Raffle Permit
- F. Addition 13.G. Resolution 2024-008 Resolution Authorizing the Application of the Knights of Columbus Council 3238 to Conduct Bingo
- G. Addition 13.H. In-Kind Services for the Ely Winter Festival February 1-11, 2024

**Kess/Bisbee moved to approve additions A-G. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mike Popesh's recognition of 43 Years of Service to the City of Ely

Mayor Omerza presented Mike Popesh with a plaque for his service to the city of Ely and congratulated him on his retirement.

Council Committee Representatives

**Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the 2024 Council Committee Representatives as follows: Acting Mayor – Callen, Airport- Bisbee, Budget – A.Forsman, Omerza, Kess, Cemetery – Debeltz, Insurance- Omerza, Gardner Trust- Campbell, Employee Relations – Omerza, Debeltz, Callen, Fire – Callen, HRA – Campbell, HPC – Campbell, Library – Omerza, Park & Rec – Bisbee, Planning & Zoning – Campbell, Police – Debeltz, Projects – Omerza, Callen, Sanitation- A.Forsman, Kess, Callen, TAB – Debeltz, Utilities – A.Forsman, Utilities Alternate – Callen, RAMS – Kess, RAMS Alternate – Campbell, Mesabi Trails – R. Skraba, Community Joint Powers – Omerza, Community Joint Powers Alternate – A.Forsman, CGMC – Omerza, Hwy #169 Task Force – Callen, Lodging Tax Board – Kess, Ely Area Ambulance Service – Novak, Ely Area Ambulance Service Joint Powers Board – A.Forsman, Ely Area Ambulance Service Joint Powers Board Alternate – Kess, Tree Board - Bisbee. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- A. Motion to waive readings in entirety of all ordinances and resolutions on tonight's agenda.
- B. Approve City Staff and Council to attend the League of Minnesota Cities City Day on the Hill on March 7, 2024.
- C. Approve City Staff and Council to attend the 2024 Safety and Loss Control Workshops
- D. Approve City Staff and Council to attend the CGMC 2024 Legislative Action Day on March 20, 2024.
- E. Approve City Staff and Council to attend the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Duluth & St. Louis County at the Capitol Days on March 6, 2024
- F. Make the Joint Powers Ambulance Meeting on January 22, 2024 at 4pm at the Winton Community Center a Special Council Meeting so all Council Members can attend if they choose.

**Debeltz/Campbell moved to accept the Consent Agenda items A-F. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**REQUESTS TO APPEAR:** None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Standing/Special

Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC): Minutes included in the Council Packet.

Library Board: Minutes included in the Council Packet.

Projects Committee

**Callen/Kess moved to approve the recommendation from Projects Committee that the City Council support the efforts of the HRA in partnering with Minnesota Housing Partnership. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Callen/Debeltz moved to approve the recommendation from Projects Committee to submit the Culture and Tourism Grant for the completion of the pocket park.**

Langowski indicated that this will be a scale model of a Forest Service Float Plane and the wall of the old theater will have a mural of beaver planes. The estimated cost is \$44,000 and we are applying for a \$22,000 grant and the Ott's will pay the remainder.

**Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Recommendation from Projects Committee to pass a resolution supporting application for a trail groomer for the Tomahawk Trail.

**Callen/Debeltz moved to approve Resolution 2024-005 Resolution Supporting Grant Application to the MN DNR Federal Recreational Trail Program to Purchase a Groomer for Grooming Snowmobile Trails. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Recommendation from Projects Committee to pass a resolution supporting application for funds to build additional Mountain Bike Trails.

**Callen/A.Forsman moved to approve Resolution 2024-006 Resolution Supporting the Grant Application to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Federal Recreation Trail Program.**

Langowski indicated that he has been working with Scott Anderson and the Ely Nordic Ski and Bike Club to put this project together. We are working on tying in other facilities with the trails, the location of these 7.7 miles of Mountain Bike Trails will be at the Hidden Valley Ski Area, and on public land near Minnesota North College and the United States Forest Service Ranger Station.

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

**Callen/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from Projects Committee to table Invoice: GRADING for the Ely 2022 Streets/Spaulding from Mesabi Bituminous for \$10,360.00 until JPJ can review and report back.**

Langowski indicated that the invoice should be sent to the general contractor for this project.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

#### Clerk-Treasurer

Rich Posey transferring to Infrastructure Department – Langowski indicated that Posey is taking a voluntary transfer starting January 17, 2024.

#### Fire Chief

Chief Marshall discussed the recent calls for the fire department

#### Library Director

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

#### Police Chief

##### 2023 Incident Statistics

Chief Houde discussed the 2023 Incident Statistics. The incidents/calls that the Ely Police Department received were 2483 calls for service in 2023, which is 257 more calls than the calendar year of 2022 and 91 more calls than the calendar year of 2021. The top 6 highest calls were Traffic Stops at 363 (an increase of 94), Medical Assists at 221 (an increase of 14), Public Assists at 142 (an increase of 8), Check Welfare at 112 (an increase of 35), Animal Disturbances at 97 (an increase of 22), and Disturbances at 85 (an increase of 22). The full list of calls/incidents is listed in the council packet.

**Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the Ely Police Department One Time Sign On Bonus Agreement. Motion Carried Unanimously**

#### City Attorney

**Callen/Campbell moved to approve the Mortgage Satisfaction for Derek Jensen recorded on August 27, 2019 as Document No. 01361931 for their Residential Rehab Loan. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Campbell/Debeltz moved to approve the Purchase Agreement for Lot 1, Block 1, East Spaulding First Addition between Isaac Olson & Sonya Olson and the City of Ely. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Callen/A.Forsman moved to approve the Purchase Agreement for Lot 6, Block 4 East Spaulding between Gregory Paul Demarce and the City of Ely. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Bisbee/Callen moved to approve the Purchase Agreement for Lot 8, Block 1 East Spaulding First Addition between Kevin Fred Decker & Debbie Lynn Decker and the City of Ely.**

A.Forsman stated that it is great to see these selling.

Langowski stated that we have 3 lots in all of Spaulding Development that are owned by the City of Ely, there might be some that are privately being sold.

**Motion Carried Unanimously.**

City Engineer

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Matter of Information

2023 Passport Sales

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Progress Report from Ely Community Resource, Inc

**CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:**

**A.Forsman/Debeltz moved to approve the City and EUC Claims for January 16, 2024 for \$410,710.18. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Debeltz/Bisbee moved Change Order No. 2 that decreases the contract amount by \$106,784.66 and Final Pay Estimate No. 6 for \$10,892.11 to Utility Systems of America for the 2022 Street Improvements/ Spaulding Phase III project. Motion Carried Unanimously**

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Callen/Debeltz moved to designate the Assistant Treasurer as the designated person to oversee, monitor, accept responsibility and evaluate the “nonattest/nonaudit services, which include the preparation of the notes to the financial statements to be included in the audit of the City of Ely for the year ending December 31, 2023. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve Resolution 2024-003 Resolution Authorizing Temporary Deputy Clerk for Election Purposes. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Resolution 2024-004 Resolution Establishing an Absentee Ballot Board for the 2024 Elections. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

2024 Committee Seats

- **Kess/Bisbee moved to approve Ben Thomas, Jason Chopp, and Scott Richards as renewing members on the Airport Commission with term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously**
- **Bisbee/Kess moved to approve Jeremy Harmon as a new applicant for the Airport Commission with a term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.** Mayor Omerza encouraged Micah Larson to apply for other open committees or to apply again in the future.
- **Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Jeanie Zaverl and Mike Banovetz as renewing members and Valerie Myntti and Karl Kubiak as new members to the Cemetery Committee with terms expiring January 31, 2027 and Karl Kubiak taking Campbell's Mid-term expiring January 31, 2025.** Angela Campbell is resigning from the Cemetery Committee as a resident member so we have a total of four openings with her resignation.  
**Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **Campbell/Bisbee moved to approve David O'Donnell (Library Board Alternate) and Vince O'Connor (Arts Board) as renewing members of the Gardner Trust Board with a term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **Campbell/Debeltz moved to approve new applicant Cindy Gardner as an At Large Non-Resident to the Gardner Trust Board with a term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.** The Council encouraged Kristen Switajewski to apply for other open committees or apply again in the future.
- **Bisbee/Callen moved to approve John Dunn as a renewing member to the Heritage Preservation Commission with a term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **Debeltz/Kess moved to approve Scott Meland as a renewing member to the Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) with a term expiring December 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **Debeltz/Bisbee moved to approve Scott King as a renewing member and Madeline Olson and Tom Conaway as new members to the Library Board with terms expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **A.Forsman/Bisbee moved to approve A.Z. Eck, Todd Crego, and Alyssa Nelson-Richards (VCC Rep) as renewing members to the Park and Rec Board with a term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.** The Council encouraged Eva Sebesta to apply for other open committees or apply again in the future.
- **Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve David Hernesmaa and Emily Roose as renewing members and Scott Anderson as a new applicant to the Planning and Zoning Commission with terms expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **Callen/Bisbee moved to approve Lawrence Reedy and Jake Mather as renewing members to the Police Commission with terms expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **Callen/Campbell moved to approve Kris Winkelman as a renewing member and Mike Banovetz and Tommy Teigen as new members to the Projects Committee, Winkelman and Banovetz's terms expiring January 31, 2026 and Teigen's mid-term expiring January 31, 2025. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

- **Campbell/Bisbee moved to approve Scott Meland as a renewing member to the Telecommunications Advisory Board (TAB) with a term expiring January 31, 2026. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **A.Forsman/Debeltz moved to approve Anthony Colarich as a renewing member to the Ely Utilities Commission(EUC) with a term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- **A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve Todd Crego as a renewing member to the Tree Board with a term expiring January 31, 2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Angela Campbell resigning from the Cemetery Committee as a resident –  
Open Seat Mid Term Expiring 1/31/2025 – filled open seat under 2024 Committee Seats

**A.Forsman/Campbell moved to approve Resolution 2024-007 Resolution Authorizing Application for Ely Events Group to Apply for Raffle Permit. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Callen/A.Forsman moved to approve Resolution 2024-008 Resolution Authorizing the Application of the Knights of Columbus Council 3238 to Conduct Bingo. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**Callen/A.Forsman moved to approve the In-Kind Services for the Ely Winter Festival February 1-11, 2024. Motion Carried Unanimously.**

**OPEN FORUM:** None

**ADJOURN:**

Mayor Omerza adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm without objection.

Casey Velcheff  
Deputy Clerk