

**Regular Meeting Ely City Council – City Hall, Council Chambers
March 12, 2024 Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER

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

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 20, 2024 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously.

ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA: None

MAYOR'S REPORT:

2024 Sexual Assault Awareness Month Mayor Proclamation – Mayor Omerza read the proclamation.

Mayor Omerza congratulated the Prospector ATV for the National Award they received for the Beaver Bridge Project.

Executive Director Cindy Smyka of Visit Ely, MN received the 2024 Explore Minnesota Emerging Leader Award.

Mayor Omerza indicated that she was in St. Paul this last week and attended hearings for the International Wolf Center Bonding Bill and for EMS. One thing she stated was that our EMS service area is the size of Rhode Island with approximately 5000 people.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Motion to waive readings in entirety of all ordinances and resolutions on tonight's agenda.
- B. Approve Council and Staff to attend the Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting on April 17, 2024 and Celebrate Ely Event on April 11, 2024 at the Grand Ely Lodge.
- C. Local Board of Appeal and Equalization Meeting on April 11, 2024 from 5-6pm at Ely City Hall Council Chambers.

Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the Consent Agenda items A-C. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Debeltz/Campbell moved to make the Chamber Annual Meeting on April 17, 2024 a Special Council meeting so all council members can attend if they choose. Motion Carried Unanimously.

REQUESTS TO APPEAR: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Standing/Special

Tree Board

Bisbee/Kess moved to approve the recommendation from the Tree Board to display the Tree City USA flag somewhere in City Hall. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Bisbee indicated that it will be the 10th year of Tree City USA, and the tree board is planning a celebration to state the proclamation and displaying the Tree City Flag.

Bisbee/Kess moved to approve the recommendation from the Tree Board to provide financial support for travel expenses of not more than \$270 to send Claudia McBride to the Shade Tree Short Course in the Twin Cities.

Langowski suggested that the budget for this comes from the Council Travel and Training budget since committees do not have a travel and training line item in the budget.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Planning and Zoning Commission

Campbell/Debeltz moved to approve the recommendation from Planning & Zoning to proceed with the Miners Lake East Parking Area Project and to have a portable restroom.

Kess asked if there is money in the budget for a portable restroom. Langowski indicated that we have several around town and can move one from another spot. Langowski also indicated that we will install a light for the parking lot and trash can.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Recommendation from Planning & Zoning for Attorney Klun to review the State noise and lighting requirements.

Langowski stated that there is state statute concerning noise and light pollution on developments. When a project is developed, they are required to follow the building code, zoning code, our local ordinances and state and federal laws. Langowski indicated that he's not sure if there is a reason to add additional ordinances concerning noise or light when we follow the MPCA guidelines on it.

Attorney Klun indicated if there is a specific request, we can look at to what changes need to be made.

Campbell stated she will take it back to Planning and Zoning for more discussion.

Heritage Preservation Commission

Telecommunications Advisory Board (TAB)

Debeltz/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from TAB to authorize additional filming to be authorized at the proposed rate of \$25 per hour for events and meetings authorized by TAB on a monthly basis. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Employee Relations

Debeltz/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from Employee Relations to offer the position of Water/Wastewater Operator to Destin Anderson. Motion Carried Unanimously

Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from Employee Relations to approve the budgeted pay increases for the Fire Department. Motion Carried 6-0-1 with Callen Abstaining since he is on the Fire Department.

Budget Committee

A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from Budget Committee to approve Invoice #2024 for \$7,500 to the Senior Center. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Recommendation from Budget Committee to approve the Firefighter and Officer pay amounts as presented. – Approved under Employee Relations

Park and Recreation Board

Bisbee/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from Park & Rec to move forward with the Parking lot by Miners Lake. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Bisbee/Debeltz moved to approve the recommendation from Park & Rec to allow Jeremy Kershaw with the Heck of the North Bike Race to camp at Semers Beach on July 19-July 20th. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Ely Utilities Commission (EUC)

A.Forsman/Kess moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to purchase 48 load management relays for \$9,984.00. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to hire Destin Anderson for the Water/Wastewater Operator II position, as he is eligible and meets the job description requirements. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve Langowski to attend the 2024 Type IV Land Application Refresher in St. Cloud, MN on March 26, 2024. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Debeltz moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to purchase 2 mechanical seal kits for \$3,268.00 each for a total of \$6,536 from Tri State Pump & Control. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve \$853,479.66 payment of the EUC December Bills. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve payment to AE2S for Invoice #92687 for the WWTF Improvements Project for \$10,105.00, Invoice #92688 for the WTP Improvements for \$7,191.00, and Invoice #92689 for General Consulting Services for \$473.74. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve \$850 payment to Mick Shusta for A Operator Services and additional consulting services. Motion Carried Unanimously

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Clerk-Treasurer

Update on Housing Project

Langowski stated that working with the HRA we were able to get a developer for the Housing Project, DW Jones. The housing study has been updated to look at a market rate apartment building, and the demand for that came back with an additional 215 units could be utilized in Ely. The project is now looking at an apartment building with 37 units, 3 stories, with about 20 garage stall covered parking stalls. The units will consist of studio size all the way up to 3 bedrooms, 2 bath and 1200 square feet. Our market study looked at what the affordable rates are and right now the project is taking those numbers and trying to get the project at rents below what the market is saying right now. By the end of April, we will need to complete an application to the Minnesota Housing and Finance for the workforce piece. DW Jones is putting together all the documentation for that. Langowski submitted an application to the IRRR for their housing program, we applied for \$1 Million for the project and it is looking like we might get \$850,000. We should know by August what the award will be for the Minnesota Housing and Finance part. We will hopefully get some preliminary utility and site work done this fall of 2024 and the construction will start in 2025. The cost of the project is around \$8.4 Million for a 37-unit Apartment Building and will possibly have around \$3.4 Million in bonded debt. We would have to use St Louis County's debt capacity, so we have been talking with them as to how that will work out. The HRA will be the owner of the apartment complex, and EW Jones is the developer. The construction would take about a year, so looking at occupancy around 2 years from now. At the next council meeting we will discuss the zoning for the area.

Fire Chief

Chief Marshall thanked the council for approving the fire department wage increases. Chief Marshall discussed the current fire and medical calls for the Fire Department. Marshall indicated that new firefighter Erin Kelly passed her Firefighter 1 exam and tests.

Library Director

2023 MN Public Library Annual Report and Ely Library Usage Groups by Circulation
Library Director Heinrich discussed the current programming for the Ely Library which can be found on the library website.

Police Chief

Chief Houde indicated that Calendar Parking is still in effect, the even though the snow is gone the city still needs to street sweep the streets and cannot do that until it is above freezing.

City Attorney

Debeltz/Campbell moved to approve the Second Reading of Ordinance 375 2nd Series- An Ordinance of the City of Ely, Minnesota adding to the Ely City Code, Chapter 2, section 2.66, Ely Housing Fund. Roll Called: Council Members A.Forsman – Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – Yes, Callen – Yes, Campbell – Yes, Bisbee – Yes, and Mayor Omerza – Yes. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Bisbee/Debeltz moved to approve the Note and mortgage for the Residential Rehab Loan for Charlotte Ackerley for \$9,000 at 226 E Conan St. to upgrade to a propane furnace. Motion Carried Unanimously

City Engineer

COMMUNICATIONS: Matter of Information
Correspondence from ATV Association of Minnesota

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:

A. City and EUC Claims for March 12, 2024 for \$364,385.46
B. Ely Community Resource Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 payments of \$5125 each.
Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Claims for Payment items A & B. Motion Carried Unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Campbell/Kess moved to approve the Letter of resignation from the Planning and Zoning Commission from Mike Banovetz and to post for the open position.

A.Forsman thanked Mike for his years of service to the Planning and Zoning Board, he donated a lot of time to our community on this board.

Campbell also thanked Mike for his time and service on this committee.

Motion Carried Unanimously

NEW BUSINESS:

Debeltz/Callen moved to approve Resolution 2024-011 Resolution Authorizing Application for Ely Area Senior Citizens 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/Campbell moved to approve Resolution 2024-012 Resolution Authorizing City of Ely to Make Application to and Accept Funds from FY24 Housing Grant Program for the Construction of Workforce Housing. 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/Bisbee moved to approve the letter request from Ely Events Group for 4th of July Parade, 2 Rock the Park Events and Ely All Class Reunion Activities. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Invitation to the City Council, Ely Police Department, and Ely Fire Department to participate in the 2024 4th of July Events

Kess/Debeltz moved to approve Resolution 2024-013 Resolution Authorizing Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) for Qualifying Part-Time Police Officers. 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:

Joe Prioreschi – 1325 N 19th Ave

Prioreschi asked about the parking lot on Miners Drive and the portable toilet freezing in the winter months.

Langowski indicated that they still get cleaned in the winter, even if they are frozen.

ADJOURN:

Mayor Omerza adjourned the meeting at 6:28pm without objection.

Casey Velcheff
Deputy Clerk