

**Regular Meeting Ely City Council – City Hall, Council Chambers
April 2, 2024 -Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Omerza called the 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/Campbell moved to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2024 Regular Council Meeting. Motion Carried Unanimously.

ADDITIONS OR OMISSIONS TO AGENDA: None

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Volunteer of the Year- Mayor Omerza indicated that she has received several inquiries for Volunteer of the Year. We will need a couple council members to be volunteers for the committee. Possibly by the first meeting in May we can have a process set then ask for applications and nominations for Volunteer of the Year.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Motion to waive readings in entirety of all ordinances and resolutions on tonight's agenda.
- B. Make the Housing & Redevelopment Authority meeting a Special Council Meeting on April 9, 2024 at 10am at the Pioneer Apartments at 114 N 8th Ave E so all council members can attend if they choose.

Kess/Campbell moved to approve the consent agenda items A and B. Motion Carried Unanimously.

REQUESTS TO APPEAR:

Bradley Roy – Emergency Management Update

Roy indicated that the City of Ely Evacuation Mapping Zone will be on the city website tomorrow after the Press Conference in Duluth. The evacuation zone is an interactive mapping system that will use the Ready (for potential evacuation), Set (to evacuate), Go (Evacuate Immediately) system. Currently this is just for City of Ely, but more information will be available after the Press Conference tomorrow with St Louis County Emergency Management, Forest Service Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), National Weather Service-Duluth and the cities of Duluth and Ely. Once an evacuation is determined the map will have the roads that will be closed, shelters available, etc. Northland Alert is available to sign up for to get notified of alerts for events and emergencies.

Roy indicated they have been working on updating the Mitigation Action Chart which was last updated in 2019, the current Chart is for 2024-2028. Roy asked the Council to approve the current Mitigation Action Chart.

Langowski indicated that with the Mitigation Action Chart we have been working on a fire break for the City of Ely. We have been working with the Forest Service, MN DNR and Gloria Erickson- St. Louis County Firewise Coordinator and others, to try to see how we can bring everyone to the table, private property owners, township governments to come up with a realistic plan as to what a fire break is as we move forward. Its not a matter of if we will have another fire, its when and how big will it be and how do we prepare for it. We always have to

think, how do each of us protect our personal property from forest fires, how to do fire wise improvements on properties, and make the firefighters jobs easier. Knowing your evacuation zone, knowing your plan if an evacuation is to occur is very important and should be more prevalent in peoples minds as we see more and more fires around the country.

Debeltz/Bisbee moved to approve the Mitigation Action Chart for the City of Ely. Motion Carried Unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Standing/Special

Library Board: Minutes included in the Council Packet

Park and Recreation Board

Bisbee/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from Park and Rec that both basketball and pickleball lines be allowed to be drawn on the rec center courts. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Bisbee/Kess moved to approve the recommendation from Park and Rec that the City Council direct City Staff to investigate joint powers when it comes to possible joint recreation type facility.

A.Forsman asked for an explanation and what the goal of this is.

Bisbee indicated it is to see if there is an interest in the surrounding communities to help fund a feasibility study for a possible multi use recreation facility within a Joint Powers. Once participation is ensured we would move forward with a feasibility study with the support of the various entities.

Langowski indicated that we have a joint powers organization as economic joint powers that meets once a year for legislative priorities. In some of these meetings there has been both Fall Lake and Town of Morse residents that are interested in proceeding with a project. If it were to proceed it would require other joint powers entities which has included the college, Chamber, Morse, Fall-Lake, Winton, the City of Ely and possibly St Louis County. Do we have an existing joint powers entity that could take this on and ask these entities to see if they could support the feasibility of project like this. This would be the first baby step to see this can move forward.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Board of Adjustment

Matter of Information: Board of Adjustment approved a variance for a zero feet setback on both the rear yard and corner side yard, to construct a building for vehicles and equipment related to All Phase Construction at 255 w Camp St, Parcel #030-0500-00050.

Planning and Zoning Commission

Campbell/A.Forsman moved to approve the recommendation from Planning & Zoning to appoint Mike Banovetz to the Sanitation Committee as the Planning & Zoning Representative. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Sanitation Committee

A.Forsman/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from Sanitation to renew the existing Commercial Waste Disposal Contract with GMen for an additional 4 years and to make an amendment to the contract for the renewal.

A.Forsman indicated that a lot of work has been done over the years on the contract and the committee has been unanimously renewed for another four years.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from Sanitation to approve the Spring Clean Up Days for April 26th and 27th.

A.Forsman indicated that this is open to City of Ely residents only and you will need proof of residency.

Langowski indicated that Kate Kalan with Incredible Ely is planning a City Clean Up on April 20th for roadside pick up around the city softball fields and recycling area and around the Trezona area. There are 2 separate events this year, the community clean up around town on April 20th and the Spring Clean Up Days at Whiteside Park on April 26th and 27th where city residents can bring their junk and debris to dumpsters that are provided by the GMen.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

Heritage Preservation Commission: Minutes included in the council packet.

Ely Utilities Commission (EUC)

A.Forsman/Debeltz moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to purchase a Polymer Pump for \$3,839.64 for the Waste Water Treatment Facility. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Callen moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to move forward with the contract for a full water system survey by Water Conservation Services for \$3,750.

A.Forsman indicated that these leak tests have been successful in the past to detect leaks throughout the system.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Bisbee moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve installation of VFD by Qualus for \$1,972.00. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Campbell moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to sell scrap metal, pipe fittings and valves to Bob Koschak for \$300.00. Motion Carried Unanimously.

A.Forsman/Kess moved to approve the recommendation from EUC to approve payment of January EUC Bills for \$494,422.77. Motion Carried Unanimously.

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Clerk-Treasurer

Langowski stated that Joe Shusta passed his B water exam and is continuing to work toward his A and B licensing for Water and Wastewater.

Langowski indicated that city crews were out plowing snow on Friday night and will continue to do some snow removal in the downtown area and on Sheridan and Central, but the weather looks nice so the snow should melt soon.

Fire Chief

Chief Marshall discussed the current fire and medical calls for the Fire Department. Marshall discussed the importance of Carbon Dioxide detectors in homes.

Library Director

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 the new Police Officer Christian Debrey started last Tuesday.

City Attorney

City Engineer

COMMUNICATIONS: Matter of Information

- A. Communications from the Ely Tourism Bureau regarding the Ely Lodging Tax
- B. Communications from the Ely Area Food Shelf
- C. Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting for the City of Ely will be on April 11, 2024 from 5pm-6pm in the Council Chambers at Ely City Hall.

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT:

- A. City and EUC Claims for April 2, 2024 for \$181,036.69
- B. Partial Pay Estimate #4 for the East End Development Project for \$23,589.51 to Low Impact Excavators.
- C. Short Elliott Hendrickson(SEH) Invoice#462635 for \$11,796.75 for the Prospector ATV Trail.
- D. AE2S Invoice #93333 for \$7018.35 for the Water Treatment Plant Improvements, Invoice #93334 for \$549.00 for General Consulting Services, and Invoice #93432 for \$5455.08 for Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements Project.

Callen/Debeltz moved to approve the Claims for Payment items A-D. Motion Carried Unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Committee Seats

A.Forsman/Campbell moved to appoint Catherine Helm-Clark as a At Large Resident to the Gardner Trust Board with the term expiring on 1/31/2027. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Campbell/Kess moved to appoint Joseph Pioreschi as a City Resident to the Planning & Zoning Commission with the midterm expiring 1/31/2025. Motion Carried Unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Debeltz/Callen moved to approve the Temporary Liquor License for the Ely Folk School for May 8, 2024 at Semer's Park Beach for there Spring Bonfire. Motion Carried Unanimously.

Callen/Campbell moved to approve Resolution 2024-014 Resolution Supporting Grant Application to the MN DNR Grant-In-Aid Off Highway Vehicle Trail Assistance Program for Maintenance. Roll Called: Council members A.Forsman-Yes, Kess- Yes, Debeltz – yes, Callen-Yes, Campbell- Yes, Bisbee-Yes, Mayor Omerza-Yes,. Motion Carried Unanimously.

OPEN FORUM:

Mel Heinrich – Duluth, MN

Discussed the Convention of States Action to propose term limits for federal officials, impose fiscal restraints – should not have free reign on spending and the massive growth of national debt, and reduce the size and power of the federal government. Heinrich encouraged everyone to join the Convention of States and to talk to their legislatures to pass a resolution.

ADJOURN:

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

Casey Velcheff
Deputy Clerk