

**APRIL 17, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, April 17, 2023 at 5:30 PM in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor Michael Carpenter presided. Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Karen Lichtsinn, Patrick Haynes, and Scott Christensen were present. City Attorney Mike Cable was absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Sheriff Chad Meester, EDA Chair Curtis Rethwisch, Jess Gums, Kaitlyn Petersen, and Caren Petersen were also present.

Mayor Michael Carpenter called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then asked if anyone in attendance had an item, not on the agenda, to bring up during the Open Forum part of the meeting. If so they had two minutes to state their concern. Curtis Rethwisch informed the Council the Federal Express driver entered his store and was upset that the downtown business buildings are not properly marked with a number and all businesses should have a number on their building.

Caren Petersen appeared before the Council to inquire about the possibility of installing a solar light on the cross on the hill. Caren is aware she will need to get permission from The Nature Conservancy because the cross is located on their property and would need to follow their stipulations. Mayor Michael Carpenter reminded the Council and audience, the churches in town put the cross on the hill several years ago. Caren said she has a call into The Nature Conservancy and when she hears back from them, she will let the City know.

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 3, 2023 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 3, 2023. Motion carried.

The minutes of the Special Board of Review Meeting of April 11, 2023 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Review Meeting of April 11, 2023. Motion carried.

**CLAIMS PRESENTED AGAINST THE CITY OF LAKE BENTON:**

VADIM	\$ 2,787.33	M & H COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 195.00
L-P RURAL WATER	\$ 3,674.08	RETHWISCH & SON	\$ 209.45
STATION ONE	\$ 278.45	RICK'S WELDING	\$ 178.00
CITY OF LAKE BENTON	\$ 179.63	POSTMASTER	\$ 154.56
MN POLLUTION CONTROL	\$ 23.00	SW SANITATION	\$ 3,703.29
AMERIFORMS	\$ 400.62	TITAN MACHINERY	\$ 217.15
CARDMEMBER SERVICES	\$ 648.04	LONNIE WILLERT	\$ 247.50
MN FIRE CERT BOARD	\$ 504.00	ONE OFFICE SOLUTIONS	\$ 120.08
COUNTRY HOUSE	\$ 115.00	BUFFALO RIDGE NEWS	\$ 251.20
CHRISTIANSON FARM	\$ 96.14	MICAELA BRADKE	\$ 506.25

**MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve payment of the claims presented against the City of Lake Benton. Motion carried and the Mayor authorized the City Administrator/Clerk to make payment.

The next item of business was to meet with EDA Chair Curtis Rethwisch to present a recommendation to the City Council regarding Johnson Commercial Park and Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water (LPRW) running water to their new facility. Curtis Rethwisch, Mayor Michael Carpenter, Todd Draper and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen met with LPRW last week regarding running water only to LPRW's new facility or running it to a water shed to then serve potential buyers of lots in the Park. Currently, the City doesn't have the funds to build a water shed and add the infrastructure needed.

When Allete was built north of Highway 14 in the City limits and Rick's Welding was annexed into the City on the east side of the City, the City granted LPRW the rights to service water to both businesses. Infrastructure for the water at Johnson Commercial Park could run \$26,000.00 to \$50,000.00 to serve all the potential lots. In addition, the ongoing maintenance of the water services is costly and if the area doesn't get developed, the City may not recover its investment. LPRW is now preparing to bring water into their new facility and inquired if the City wants to be involved or abdicate the water infrastructure to LPRW. Jason Overby will need to check with his attorney, since once the City gives them the right, they cannot take that service back from LPRW.

The EDA board agreed it would be in the City's best interest to let LPRW supply water to themselves and the remaining potential tenants. The negative side to this scenario is LPRW charges \$18,000.00 for a water connection fee, increasing the cost to potential buyers. The EDA board discussed offering the lots at a reasonable price and creating a TIF district to assist with offsetting the tax base.

The Council then discussed that there is no assurance of future development in the Park, and LPRW can manage the infrastructure with no return to the City. It was then discussed to set aside revenue from the farm rent when preparing the 2024 budget to include a separate line item to include a percentage of the rent or a flat fee to use moving forward with the development of the Park.

**MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Scott Christensen to authorize the Mayor and Administrator/Clerk talk with Legal Counsel to draw up an agreement and bring it back to the Council at a later date. Motion carried. Mayor Michael Carpenter thanked the EDA board for the good job they did to get this accomplished.

The next item of business was to meet with Jess Gums regarding the At Home in Lincoln County MN website. Jess briefly introduced the At Home in Lincoln County initiative and what they are doing on behalf of Lake Benton and the other Lincoln County communities. Jess has been the Lake Benton Connector for the past six months. There is a Connector in each City in the County. This project received a grant through the Blandin Foundation in the amount of \$35,000.00 for the first year. Jess provided handouts for the Council that showed the metrics and analytics for the traffic coming and going on both the Facebook page and the website. Jess urged the Council and audience to contact her for any events in the community to be advertised on the At Home in Lincoln MN website and Facebook page, and like and share this information with everyone and let people know what the City of Lake Benton has to offer.

#### **LAW ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

Sheriff Chad Meester reviewed the March calls for service in Lake Benton with the Council. The calls are comparable to last year. Now that the weather is nice and everyone will see more activity in the summer months. The last few months included routine calls. Sheriff Chad Meester then reminded the Council and audience to be aware of scams. Sheriff Chad Meester was reminded the Saddle Horse Holiday parade has been changed to Saturday. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the law enforcement update. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a building permit for Lisa and Lonnie Willert to build a 111' x 60' duplex in the Mork & Giles Addition on Harrison Street North and West Benton Street. Lisa and Lonnie purchased Lots 7 and 8 in Block 3 in the Mork & Giles Addition and were given the setbacks on which they can build their new duplex. Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield will confirm there are no setback concerns and everything will be in compliance with the ordinance when building begins. The \$25.00 application fee has been paid. **MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn to approve the building permit for Lisa and Lonnie Willert to build a 111' x 60' duplex in the Mork & Giles Addition on Harrison Street North and West Benton Street. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a building permit for Kaitlyn Petersen to install a 75' x 50' chain link fence around the playground equipment for an in-home daycare facility on the property east of Ken Johansen on Lakeview Street. Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield will confirm the setbacks are in compliance with the ordinance when the area has been staked. The \$25.00 application fee has been paid. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the building permit for Kaitlyn Petersen to install a 75' x 50' chain link fence on the property east of Ken Johansen on Lakeview Street for her in-home daycare. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a building permit for Curtis Rethwisch to install a 27.5' fence on the west end of his property and a 35' fence on the east end of his property between his property at 104 N. Center Street and Pluto Boes Legal building at 108 N. Center Street. Curtis was given the setbacks from the property lines on which he can install the fence. Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield will confirm the setbacks are in compliance with the Ordinance when the area has been staked. The \$25.00 application fee has been paid. **MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn to approve the building permit for Curtis Rethwisch to install a 27.5' fence on the west end of his property and a 35' fence on the east end of his property between his property at 104 N. Center Street and Pluto Boes Legal building at 108 N. Center Street. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on city licenses for May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen provided the Council with information on the liquor and tobacco licenses for the City as well as an On-Sale Liquor License for a Community Festival for the Lake Benton Resort during the Car Show at Lakeside Park from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM on June 17, 2023, and the temporary liquor and dance licenses for the Fireman's Dance from 8:00 PM on June 17, 2023 through 1:00 AM June 18, 2023. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen also stated the Sheriff needs to sign the Liquor applications so she can get them sent into the state before May 1, 2023. Sheriff Chad Meester performed a background check and signed the necessary applications. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the following City Licenses for May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024 with proof of liability insurance from those with On Sale Liquor Licenses: **Cigarette:** Station One; **Off Sale Beer:** Station One; **On Sale Liquor:** Country House Supper Club, Homer's, LLC, and Lake Benton Resort; **On Sale Liquor (Sunday):** Country House Supper Club, Homer's, LLC and Lake Benton Resort; **Off Sale Liquor:** Homer's, LLC and the Lake Benton Resort; and to approve the On-Sale Liquor License to the Lake Benton Resort for a Community Festival at Lakeside Park from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM on June 17, 2023, and the Temporary Liquor and Dance Licenses to the Lake Benton Fire Department at 110 Benton Street for the Fireman's Dance from 8:00 PM on June 17, 2023 through 1:00 AM on June 18, 2023. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on the 2023 contract for mowing the north ditch at cemetery hill for \$328.60 per time not to exceed seven (7) times or \$2,300.20. Mike Otto mowed the hill last year at the same cost. If the ditch needs to be mowed more often Mike will contact the Mayor for approval. Mike also provided proof of liability insurance. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the 2023 contract with Mike Otto to mow the north ditch at cemetery hill at \$328.60 per time not to exceed seven (7) times or \$2,300.20. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to provide an update on Ordinance No. 214 – Reduction of Clear Water in the Sanitary Sewer System. Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen informed the Council that City staff mailed letters and the ordinance to two residents informing them to have their property inspected by a licensed plumber to confirm that there is not prohibited discharge into the municipal sanitary sewer system. The two residents have contacted City staff and are working to get the property inspected and repair their line if need be. Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield has worked diligently to review the videos and has put together a list of Major Issues and Sewer Issues. He is in the process of reviewing this information with Todd Draper and will present his findings at the May 1, 2023 Council meeting. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the update on Ordinance No. 214 – Reduction of Clear Water in the Sanitary

Sewer System. Motion carried.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – The Chamber met and the Business of the Month for April is Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water. The Tyler Hospital continues to provide the meals for the Diner’s Club. They are hoping they can use the café when it opens. The Opera House production was well attended even with the bad weather. Plans continue for Saddle Horse Holiday. The City-wide rummage sales are scheduled for May 26-27. Connie resigned her position with the Chamber and they are advertising for the position.

Trustee Karen Lichtsinn – No report.

Trustee Scott Christensen – No report.

Trustee Patrick Haynes – The EDA met regarding Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water discussed earlier in the meeting. Trustee Patrick Haynes informed the Council he attended two Opera House meetings but one was cancelled and the board changed the date of the second meeting without informing Patrick of either meeting. **MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Scott Christensen to authorize Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen send the Opera House board a letter requesting them include Trustee Patrick Haynes on their distribution list. Motion carried.

**MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the Committee Reports. Motion carried.

**ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:**

Clean up week is scheduled for the first week of May (May 1-5), and appliance pick-up is scheduled for Tuesday, May 2, 2023. The rabies clinic is scheduled for Tuesday, May 9, 2023 from 4:00-6:00 PM at the Fire Hall. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the Administrator/Clerk report. Motion carried.

**MAYORAL REPORT:**

Mayor Michael Carpenter informed the Council and audience Travis Lustfield, Troy Nordmeyer and Todd Draper were picking up branches today. Homeowners are asked to place their branches parallel with the curb for the Maintenance Department to pick up. Thank you to Travis, Troy and Todd for a job well done.

The next regular Council meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2023 at 5:30 PM.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, a **MOTION** was made by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Scott Christensen and carried, the meeting adjourned.

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MAYOR

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ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK