

**DECEMBER 7, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, December 7, 2020 at 5:30 P.M. in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor Bob Worth, Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Dave Enke, and Daryl Schlapkohl were present. City Attorney Mike Cable and Trustee Mark Dunn were absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Michael Carpenter, and Miranda Deutz from the Lake Benton Valley Journal were also present.

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

Mayor Bob Worth 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. No items were brought forward at this time.

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 16, 2020 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Dave Enke to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 16, 2020. Motion carried.

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

BOLT'S LB GROCERY	\$ 3.70	OTTERTAIL	\$ 1,893.76
ITC	\$ 328.36	QUARNSTROM/DOERING	\$ 1,493.70
M & H COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 958.00	L-P RURAL WATER	\$ 6,502.91
RETHWISCH & SON	\$ 1,181.82	THOMAS ELECTRIC	\$ 8,268.54
GOPHER STATE	\$ 17.55	POSTMASTER	\$ 117.25
MN RURAL WATER ASSOC	\$ 8,800.00	TODD DRAPER	\$ 32.00
PAT HAYNES	\$ 458.98	MN LIFE	\$ 5.10
CORE & MAIN	\$ 615.10	MN DEPT OF HEALTH	\$ 789.00
SW SANITATION	\$ 3,681.18	CAREN PETERSEN	\$ 138.75
D & G EXCAVATING	\$ 90.00	TROY NORDMEYER	\$ 32.00
KYLIE ROCHEL	\$ 60.00	ONE OFFICE SOLUTION	\$ 52.93
MAGAZINE LINE	\$ 115.83	PERFORMANCE FOOD	\$ 55.55
AMAZON	\$ 746.54	PLUM CREEK LIBRARY	\$ 60.10
CENTER POINT (LIB)	\$ 44.34	DEMCO	\$ 214.97

**MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Dave Enke 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 review/act on a rehab repayable loan request. Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen informed the Council an individual that applied for the City's Rehab program expressed concern about obtaining an additional \$7,501.00 over the \$20,000.00 and was hoping a repayable loan of \$3,500.00 from the Lake Benton's Revolving Loan Fund would be able to help them out. This loan will be repayable over seven (7) years at \$44.69 per month contingent on the borrower coming up with the remaining \$4,001.00. A bid approval for financial breakdown of the project was presented for the Council's review.

The loan amount will be deposited into DSI's Escrow Account. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the loan of \$3,500.00 from the City's Revolving Loan fund contingent on the borrower coming up with the remaining \$4,001.00. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE**

Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl reported to the Council that a new overhead door is needed on the EMS building. Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper informed Daryl it would cost approximately \$1,600.00. The Council previously approved getting a new opener and now a new overhead door is needed. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Dave Enke to purchase a new overhead garage door for the EMS building. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a building permit for Bruce Kinner to install a 10' x 20' utility shed at 303 W. Benton Street. Bruce was given the setbacks on which he can put the shed and Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper confirmed there were no setback concerns. The fee of \$25.00 was paid. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the building permit for Bruce Kinner to install a 10' x 20' utility shed at 303 W. Benton Street. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on creating CDs for the City's General, Fire and Water funds. When the City Council worked on the 2021 budget, they approved creating several CDs in various funds if the money was not used in 2020. The list of 12-month CDs and the new Public Works Account totaling \$63,500.00 were reviewed: General Fund – \$1,000.00 for City Office Improvements, \$2,000.00 for Parks/Ballfield Fence, \$2,500.00 for Parks/Ballfields Lakeside Park Improvements, \$7,500.00 for Street Capital Outlay (Sidewalk), and \$2,000.00 for Opera House Capital Outlay; Fire Fund – \$3,000.00 for Fire Capital Outlay/Equipment, \$5,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Building Fund, and \$7,000.00 for Fire Capital Outlay/Personal Protective Equipment; Water Fund – \$1,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Water Meters, \$5,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Water Improvements, and \$5,000.00 for Water Tank Upkeep. A six-month CD for Street Repair/Sealcoating for \$10,000.00. The following amounts will be put in the new Public Works Account: \$2,500.00 for Public Works Heavy Equipment and \$10,000.00 for Capital Outlay Equipment. It was recommended the incoming Mayor sign the above mentioned CDs. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Dave Enke to approve the list of 6-month CD, 12-month CDs and the new Public Works Account totaling \$63,500.00: General Fund – \$1,000.00 for City Office Improvements, \$2,000.00 for Parks/Ballfield Fence, \$2,500.00 for Parks/Ballfields Lakeside Park Improvements, \$7,500.00 for Street Capital Outlay (Sidewalk), and \$2,000.00 for Opera House Capital Outlay; Fire Fund – \$3,000.00 for Fire Capital Outlay/Equipment, \$5,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Building Fund, and \$7,000.00 for Fire Capital Outlay/Personal Protective Equipment; Water Fund – \$1,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Water Meters, \$5,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Water Improvements, and \$5,000.00 for Water Tank Upkeep. A six-month CD for Street Repair/Sealcoating for \$10,000.00. The following amounts will be put in the new Public Works Account: \$2,500.00 for Public Works Heavy Equipment and \$10,000.00 for Capital Outlay Equipment. Incoming Mayor Michael Carpenter will sign the CDs. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on the delinquent utility bills at 514 W. Benton Street owing \$599.44, 303 Valley Street owing \$599.44, 217 Fremont Street owing \$195.58, and 109 W. Bluff Street owing \$599.44; and the lawn mowing bill at 106 S. Cottage Street owing \$900.00. The individuals will be mailed a letter on December 8, 2020 informing them if payment is not received by December 17, 2020, this amount will be certified as a property tax levy against their property on December 18, 2020. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to submit the delinquent water bills and lawn mowing bill to the County Auditor to be assessed to the properties if payment is not received by December 17, 2020. Motion carried.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – No report.

Trustee Dave Enke – The EDA met a couple weeks ago and discussion centered on the need for housing development in the City and the ability for the EDA to move ahead to build another 4-Plex like the ones we currently have. Discussion included the EDA needs to address the present rental rates which are way below market value. If the EDA builds similar units, there will be a discrepancy in rental rates which should have been raised in prior years. The rent is currently set at \$650.00 plus utilities and the rent for the new units could be \$800.00 plus utilities. The City and the EDA has done a good job maintaining the current units. Currently, the City is subsidizing the current units by maintaining the units, mowing, snow removal and paying for the audit. Dave did not know of any agreement between the City and the EDA for the maintenance, etc. Renters in similar communities pay for the grounds upkeep and maintenance of their units. After the new administration is seated, the EDA will create a joint meeting between the City and the EDA in late January.

The Library Board met and due to the COVID pandemic there are very few holiday open houses being held. The Library had their open house November 30 thru December 5, 2020 and had a drawing for a turkey and book bags. The Fiber Guild used to meet Tuesday evenings and they requested to meet Tuesday afternoons. The Library is sponsoring fundraisers which include selling fudge and t-shirts. Reviews are planned for January.

Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl – No report.

**ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:**

No report.

**MAYORAL REPORT:**

Mayor Bob Worth informed the Council that he and the incoming Mayor have received numerous complaints regarding a business on Benton Street. Mayor Bob Worth would like to set up an Ad-Hoc Committee to meet with the business owners, direct them on what needs to be done, and follow through continually. The committee can then bring the information back to the Council. Mayor Bob Worth appointed incoming Mayor Michael Carpenter, Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl, and the Sheriff's department – if needed – to the committee.

Mayor Bob Worth received cards from the 2nd grade class for being a great Mayor. Mayor Bob Worth was also invited to speak to the 5th grade class on City Government.

At 6:00 PM Mayor Bob Worth called for a motion to go into the Truth-in-Taxation Hearing. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to go into the Truth-in-Taxation Hearing. Motion carried.

The proposed 2021 levy that was approved at the September 21, 2020 meeting was \$258,592.00 (\$181,592.00 allocated to the General Fund and \$77,000.00 allocated to the USDA-RUS Improvement Fund). This is an approximate increase of six percent (6%) over the previous year for a total increase of \$10,279.00. Mayor Bob Worth then informed the Council the City can either approve the proposed tax levy of \$258,952.00 or decrease it – it cannot be increased at this time.

Discussion took place on funds needed for the several upcoming street projects in 2021 which includes the Fremont Street project, Oakwood/Lakewood project, and the Lakeside Park project. The Council then discussed the percentage increase they would like to see. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to certify the tax levy for the City of Lake Benton at 5% with an increase of \$8,566.00 in which \$179,879.00 is allocated to the General Fund. Motion carried.

**MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Dave Enke to certify the tax levy at \$77,000.00 for the USDA-RUS Improvement Fund. Motion carried.

The 2020 Budget amounts are as follows: General Fund: Income-\$502,069.00, Expense-\$490,117.00; Fire Fund: Income-\$77,100.00, Expense-\$74,363.00; Library Fund: Income-\$52,024.00, Expense-\$49,740.00; Utility Fund: Income-\$345,630.00, Expense-\$304,906; USDA-RUS Improvement Fund: Income-\$77,000.00, Expense-\$77,000.00. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to return to the regular meeting at 6:09 PM. Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, a **MOTION** was made by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw and carried, the meeting adjourned.

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MAYOR

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ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK