

JANUARY 17, 2017

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 at 5:30 P.M. in the Heritage Center/City Office. Mayor Bob Worth presided. Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Mark Dunn, David Enke and Daryl Schlapkohl were present. City Attorney Mike Cable was absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, Interim Police Chief Tony Sievert, Arlyn Petersen, Lynn Carpenter, Dave Norgaard, Scott Christensen, Sandy Dahl, and Shelly Finzen 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.

Arlyn Petersen informed the Council he would like to get a building permit to add on to the north side of his house. Arlyn can stop in the City office to get a building permit and pay the \$25.00 fee. Arlyn then asked the Council what the set backs are for a fence. The Ordinance for fences was not included in the updated Ordinance Book and therefore is still part of the Zoning Ordinance No. 150 that states a fence is a structure and must meet the side yard set-backs of three (3) feet and the rear yard set-back of fifteen (15) feet. Arlyn was concerned his neighbor put a fence on the lot line, then took the post out and filled it with cement. The Council informed Arlyn that Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper will look at the area in question after the snow is gone. The Council will contact Arlyn and his neighbor when they address the fence issue in April 2017.

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 3, 2017 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Mark Dunn to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 3, 2017. Motion carried.

CLAIMS PRESENTED AGAINST THE CITY OF LAKE BENTON:

ITC	\$ 292.34	USTI	\$ 11.12
QUARNSTROM/DOERING	\$ 1,468.38	LAKE BENTON PARTS	\$ 893.22
LB HARDWARE	\$ 106.27	EXPRESS WAY-LB	\$ 1,076.12
RICK'S WELDING	\$ 191.00	GOPHER STATE	\$ 2.70
CITY OF LAKE BENTON	\$ 131.49	POSTMASTER	\$ 163.62
UTILITY CONSULTANTS	\$ 57.62	LAKE BENTON EDA	\$ 9,655.00
LB CHAMBER-CVB	\$ 8,011.88	LB HISTORICAL SOCIETY	\$ 6,500.00
KINNER & COMPANY	\$ 93.00	SOUTHWEST SANITATION	\$ 3,454.04
PROACTION UNIFORMS	\$ 98.90	CARDMEMBER	\$ 904.93
ALEX AIR APPARATUS	\$ 665.00	VERIZON	\$ 35.01
ONE OFFICE SOLUTION	\$ 18.00	BUFFALO RIDGE NEWS	\$ 247.00
LINCOLN CTY HRA	\$ 1,951.82	MARCO	\$ 373.42

MOTION by Dave Enke, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw 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.

Lynn Carpenter addressed the Council regarding the structural issues of the Kimball Building/Opera House. The west side was tuck-pointed a couple years ago. However, the southeast corner of the building has now developed a pyramid crack and the bricks will begin to fall out. The back of the Kimball Building has not been tuck-pointed at all and is worse than the sides.

The balcony on the front of the building has become unsafe for the last several years. The boards on the floor of the balcony are worn and breaking. The Opera House Board has started evaluating these problems with no cost yet determined. Lynn went on to inform the Council that in 2014 the Opera House Board put their financials on a website in order to be considered for grant funding. However, as of this year, the following question was asked of them, "Do you own the building?" Last year when the Opera House Board applied for grant funding for items within the building and the building itself, they received funding to replace/update the things inside the building but not the outside of the building because they do not own the building. The Lease states the Lessee (Opera House) keeps the premises in good order and free of snow, ice, and all obstructions and the Lessor (City of Lake Benton) shall maintain and keep in good repair the roof, outside walls, foundations, sidewalks and drainage of the leased premises.

Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper met with Milo Downs last week and Mike Weets was to get back to Todd with an estimate to fix the structural part which could be anywhere from \$5,000.00 to \$34,000.00. The southeast corner of the building needs to be taken care of as soon as possible, and the balcony is something that needs to be taken care of before it falls apart. The west wall of the Kimball Building also needs to be repaired at a later date. The Opera House is on the national registry and needs to be restored. It was also explained that the Opera House is as much a tour attraction for the City as the lake.

The Opera House Board will work to get actual figures and bring them back to the Council to assist with the costs of restoration. The Opera House Board is taking care of the side window that needs to be fixed and suggested sponsoring a fundraiser to recoup some of the costs.

It was questioned if the City can write a grant to qualify for the same funding the Opera House got for the items inside the building. The Lease between the Opera House and the City states the Lessee (Opera House) is responsible for the items inside the building and the Lessor (City of Lake Benton) shall maintain and keep in good repair the roof, outside walls, foundations, sidewalks and drainage of the leased premises.

Library Director Shelly Finzen mentioned to the Council that she will be willing to look at grants for legacy funds specific to restoration of national registry buildings.

Lynn then informed the Council and audience that they are welcome to attend the Opera House Board meetings the second Thursday of the month at 5:30 PM. The Council will look into funding available to help with the restoration of the building, read the lease, and wait for the figures from the Opera House Board when they are available.

The next item of business was to review/act on the Service Contract for the Local Access Channel and the Electronic Sign between the City and Pat Haynes from February 1, 2017 through January 31, 2018. Pat was unable to attend tonight's meeting and stated if there are any questions for him he would like the Administrator/Clerk to let him know. The agreement states Pat will spend eight (8) hours a month to service and update the Local Access Channel and spend four (4) hours a month to service and update the Electronic Sign. The agreement states the City will pay Pat Haynes \$240.00 a month. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to approve the Service Contract for the Local Access Channel and Electronic Sign between the City and Pat Haynes from February 1, 2017 through January 31, 2018 for \$240.00 a month. Motion carried.

LIBRARY UPDATE:

The Library Update was given by Library Director Shelly Finzen. Shelly presented the Council with the 2016 annual report for the Library and stated that everything looked good. There are more patrons visiting the Library in conjunction with their continuous programs. It was questioned what age groups visit the Library. Shelly explained all age groups visit the Library; parents bring their 2 to 3 years olds for an hour before they go to day care, teenagers, young adults, adults, and the elderly. The Library has two (2) volunteers that deliver audio books to a couple residents at the Homestead. The residents give the Library a list of authors they like, and the books are delivered and picked up every two (2) weeks. The Library does their best to service anyone and everyone. Shelly then informed the Council the Library is hosting a Winter Wingding for the community to make and taste various cheesecakes. The cost of the ticket is \$5.00 and individuals get to taste five (5) samples of cheesecake and get their name put in for the drawing. The Winter Wingding is scheduled for February 11, 2017 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at the Community Center. Shelly explained a patron liked the Lake Benton and Ivanhoe Libraries and donated \$10,000.00 to both Libraries to be set up in an Endowment Fund. The Library will begin to receive money from these funds next year. However, when money is received from the Endowment Fund, money has to be put back into it. Therefore, the Library is hosting the Winter Wingding to have money to put back into the Endowment Fund when they begin receiving it.

Shelly then informed the Council the Library Board will be putting together their 2017 goals at their January 26, 2017 meeting and she will present them to the Council at one of the regular meetings in February.

The next item of business was to review/act on the Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) – Police Officer Resolutions. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen explained to the Council that Anthony Sievert began his duties as a part-time police officer for the City of Lake Benton on August 18, 2016. The former Council was provided resolutions to approve should any part-time officer(s) surpass the yearly earnings of \$5,100.00 making them eligible for PERA benefits, but voted not to pass the resolutions because the officers were not to go over the allotted earnings.

Effective December 31, 2016, Anthony Sievert surpassed the \$5,100.00. Per PERA requirements, the Council needs to pass a resolution declaring that the position meets the legal requirements for such coverage and requests the coverage for the named individual.

The membership fee per employee is 10.8% and the Employer contribution is 16.2%. Former part-time officers have been put in the PERA Police and Fire Plan in the past.

MOTION by Mark Dunn, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) – Police Officer Resolution for part-time police officer Tony Sievert. Motion carried.

The next item of business was discussion on power outage emergency protocol. The City of Lake Benton purchased generator for the Community Center in 2015 in the case of power outages for citizens to have a place to go in the winter and/or summer.

Mayor Bob Worth thanked the City the employees for keeping the City running during the outage in December. Due to their expertise, there were no sewer backups, and extra hours were put in on their time off. People need to be informed the Community Center is available to them. If this should happen again, the City Administrator/Clerk will contact the Police Chief to come on duty to check on the elderly residents in the community.

It was suggested to put something in the City and Chamber Snippets stating when there is an electrical outage and weather is favorable, please go the Community Center where it will keep

them warm or cool. It was also suggested that the Maintenance Department make sure they have enough generators to do their job in the case of electrical outages. Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper informed the Council he will have more actual figures in the spring or early summer for additional generators.

Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl said he will contact Amber with the Lincoln County Emergency Management and see what kind of assistance they can provide the City.

The next item of business was to review/act on the employee annual wage adjustment effective January 1, 2017. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen informed the Council the 2017 budget included a 2% wage increase for the City employees. She explained the comparable positions to the City of Lake Benton and the difference in wages.

The Council had some questions about the Personnel Policy Ordinance before they decided on any wage increase. Do any employees carry up to 240 hours of compensatory times in a calendar year? Maintenance Todd Draper clarified that was put in the Ordinance when he was working by himself. Overtime is paid for weekends and holidays only, and compensation time is paid at time and a half over any 8 hour day. The Council discussed they should consider looking into updating the Ordinance with the correct information and clarifications.

The Council realizes the City of Lake Benton's employees are below the midpoint of the comparisons. If we have good people working for the City, they should be compensated for it. It was requested to give the three full-time City employees a 3% wage increase for 2017 which is not even close to midpoint. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Mark Dunn to approve a 3% wage increase for Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, Maintenance Worker Troy Nordmeyer, and City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen. Motion carried.

Mayor Bob Worth made the suggestion to compensate Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper and City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen an hour of compensation time per month for attending the City Council meetings.

Mayor Bob Worth then explained that in the past the Council members didn't have any Committee reports to give because they didn't attend any of the meetings. Perhaps the Council would attend the Committee meetings if they were compensated \$30.00 for each Committee meeting they attend and report on. It is an incentive to attend the meetings and if a report is given, it proves you were there and will be reimbursed \$30.00 per meeting.

The Council members understood what Mayor Bob Worth was saying, but they as Council members were not appointed to their positions and wanted to be a part of the Council. A Council member's job is to attend meetings and fulfill their duties. The thought was appreciated, but the majority of the Council stated they do not need money to attend committee meetings.

The next item of business was to review/act on a Resolution for the Coteau Street Improvement Project and set a date for the bid opening. Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper first thanked the Council for the 3% wage increase, and then informed the new Council how the City obtained the funding for the Coteau Street Improvement Project. The City has an assessment policy and an assessment account (which has approximately \$269,000.00) used for any major improvements. The property owners are assessed 20% of the total costs and they are given the option to pay the full amount upfront or pay it over ten (10) years which is assessed to the property owner's property taxes. This money goes into the assessment account to be used for only street improvements. The cost estimates were completed last fall and the property owners were sent letters of what they owe. The street is badly deteriorated and the water main is old and needs to be replaced. There are some freeze ups on that street as well and will be addressed when the project is being worked on.

The potential cost of the project is \$185,300.00. Lincoln County is contributing \$4,000.00 for the ADA curb ramps and \$2,375.00 for the County right-of-way. The total cost, after excluding the funding Lincoln County is putting towards the project, and adding the Engineering and Construction Observation fees of \$32,500.00 is estimated at \$211,425.00.

Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper then informed the Council they need to set the date for bid openings in March. The City will advertise in the official newspaper on March 8 and March 15, 2017, and Banner and Associates, Inc. will advertise on their website and send bid proposals to former contractors. The bids must be received by 1:00 PM on March 20, 2017 and must be accompanied with a 5% bid bond or certified check which will be reviewed by Legal Counsel. After the contractors have been approved and the work is completed, the City will have another public hearing for the property owners to evaluate their portion of the assessment. When that is complete, the City Administrator/Clerk will put the assessments on the tax roll for the next ten (10) years.

The Street Committee made up of Mark Dunn and Daryl Schlapkohl will be available for the bid opening on Monday, March 20, 2017 at 1:00 PM. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to approve the resolution approving plans and specifications and ordering advertisement for bids. Motion carried.

The Council questioned Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper what will be the next street improvement project and Todd informed the Council that Harrison Street would be the next improvement due to the water main and the freeze up issues on that street.

PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE:

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw reported on the Chamber meeting. The Visitor Guides will be delivered to the Heritage Center before the Lake Benton Sportsman's Fishing Tournament on January 28, 2017. Benton Fremont Days/Te Tonka Ha Days is scheduled for the first weekend in August, which is August 4-6, 2017. The Chamber-CVB received four applications for the Marketing Coordinator position and the interviewing panel is getting together later this week to review the applications and set the interview dates.

Trustee Dave Enke reports on the EDA meeting. The EDA Board discussed the two 4-Plexes and replacing windows and updating appliances. The board will have the expenditure amounts at the February meeting. There is a Housing Study Evaluation meeting in Ivanhoe on Thursday, January 19, 2017.

Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl will be attending the Opera House Board meeting and will be going to the First Responder meeting later this week.

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:

City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen reminded the Council of the New Elected Official's Conference on January 20-21, 2017.

City Administrator/Clerk informed the Council that the Annual Fire/Township Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 16, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. at the Community Center. Mayor Bob Worth asked the Council to plan to attend, but it is not mandatory.

MAYORAL REPORT:

Mayor Bob Worth asked the Council is anyone had any changes to make to the 2017 Appointments. It was suggested if a member is unable to attend a meeting they are appointed to, contact another Council member to see if they can attend for you.

Mayor Bob Worth informed the Council he has received questions on the deer situation. There is not much the City can do except talk to the DNR or Nature Conservancy. Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl said he will talk with the DNR or Nature Conservancy.

Mayor Bob Worth wanted to stress the importance of attending the committee meetings, and reiterated the Council is not here to make money.

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

MAYOR

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK