

**JANUARY 17, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Tuesday, January 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, Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield, Sheriff Chad Meester, and Library Director Lynn Carpenter 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. No items were brought forward at this time.

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 3, 2023 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 3, 2023. Motion carried.

The minutes of the Special Meeting of January 9, 2023 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 9, 2023. Motion carried.

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

LEAGUE OF MN CITIES	\$ 13,786.00	L-P RURAL WATER	\$ 4,569.98
RETHWISCH & SON	\$ 1,938.71	STATION ONE	\$ 587.93
RICK'S WELDING	\$ 213.12	GOPHER ONE	\$ 4.05
CITY OF LAKE BENTON	\$ 184.13	POSTMASTER	\$ 202.56
S & E AUTO	\$ 177.60	LB EDA	\$ 7,500.00
LB CHAMBER-CVB	\$ 7,500.00	LB HISTORICAL SOCIETY	\$ 6,500.00
GOV OFFICE, LLC	\$ 90.00	LB DINER'S CLUB	\$ 1,500.00
KINNER & COMPANY	\$ 166.00	SW SANITATION	\$ 3,703.29
BIOAG ENERGY	\$ 1,049.76	CARDMEMBER SRVCS	\$ 333.71
LONNIE WILLERT	\$ 465.00	OFFICE ONE	\$ 87.34
TOWN & CTRY SHOPPER	\$ 16.50	KIBBLE EQUIPMENT	\$ 1,072.14
THOMAS PLUMBING	\$ 93.75	SW INITIATIVE FUND	\$ 350.00

**MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn 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.

**PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE**

Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield explained to the Council his first week on the job was learning to move snow. Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield and Maintenance Worker Troy Nordmeyer have been removing the piles of snow left from the previous three snow storms and preparing the equipment for the next snow storm. Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield thanked Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Todd Draper and Troy Nordmeyer for their assistance while learning his new position. Travis also appreciates the opportunity the Council has given him to work for the City of Lake Benton. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the Public Works Update. Motion carried.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

Sheriff Chad Meester was present to give the Council an update on the year's call for service in Lake Benton. Although there was an issue with the system in getting the December calls for service to the City, Sheriff Meester did get a copy of the 2022 calls for service emailed to

Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen late this afternoon and apologized for the inconvenience. Sheriff Meester provided the Council with a recap of the average hours per week of 29.65 for 2022 which includes patrol and office time. These numbers are consistent with 2021. Sheriff Meester is looking forward to working with Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield and the new Council. **MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the law enforcement update. Motion carried.

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, 2023 through January 31, 2024. 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. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the Service Contract for the Local Access Channel and Electronic Sign between the City and Pat Haynes from February 1, 2023 through January 31, 2024 for \$250.00 a month. Trustee Patrick Haynes abstained from voting. Motion carried.

### **LIBRARY UPDATE:**

The Library Update was given by Library Director Lynn Carpenter. Lynn stated the Lake Benton Public Library went through personnel changes last year, as Director Janine Schaap resigned in the spring due to health and personal issues. Assistant Director Corinne Crowe filled in to keep the library open for regular hours along with volunteer hours by members of the Board of Directors. A search was conducted and in September, Lynn Carpenter was hired as Director and Heidi Thomssen was hired as Assistant Director. Corinne Crowe has continued in her capacity of Assistant Director. With the addition of the second Assistant Director, there have been fewer conflicts with covering the library hours and no need for the Board members to volunteer their time.

The Lake Benton Public Library is a member of the Plum Creek Library System, with 26 member libraries in the nine (9) southwest counties of the state. We also have a large number of libraries in the State of Minnesota.

The library was busy in the past year. There were 4,544 patrons that entered the building and 162 logged onto the in-house computers. There were 7,357 instances of books being checked out by patrons, 1,677 books being ordered for the patrons from other libraries in the system, and 729 books loaned to patrons of other libraries in the system. There were also 304 audio books and 275 e-books from the Plum Creek Library systems read or listened to by patrons.

The Pre-School Story Time was held from January-May and September-December. The Children's Summer Reading Program was held from June-July, and the Adult Reading Program was held from January-March. The Book Club meets monthly, and the Fiber Guild meets weekly at the library. The library employees worked with the Lincoln County Extension Office with their 4-H Robotics program, there were two hands-on arts programs, two children's speakers, and one historical speaker as well as other programs.

Lynn reported the Library's Mission Statement, which is to enrich lives, build community, and foster success by bringing people, information, and ideas together in a respectful manner.

Lynn's report included the library's 2023 goals which included increasing patron usage through programming, offering new activities, promote services and activities through social media and monthly library column, use of advertising dollars to promote programs for people of all ages, invite clubs and organizations to meet at the library for a program on services offered, partner with the Chamber, Senior Citizens and 4-H groups, provide how-to workshops, cooking, baking, cell phone, life skills, budget, gardening and more, movie night, get video gam working and reorganize the outreach program.

The library employees will continue to weed books not checked out in the past five years, replace with current and more desirable items, and go through all areas to organize them efficiently. Lynn reported when looking at needs for the library, research grant possibilities are at the top of the list, the employees will train themselves in how to apply for grant funds, take advantage of grants offered through the Legacy program, take advantage of Prairieland grant opportunities and check local grant funds. The library will stay within the budget the City has set for them and manage fiscal responsibility, and expenses by only purchasing what is needed.

The library will take advantage of training opportunities through Plum Creek Library System and their affiliates, and honor and show appreciation for the Friends of the Library and the Fiber Guild.

Due to the shortage of staff with the illness and resignation of Janine Schaap and the resulting changeover, activities and programs at the library were severely curtailed. Programs in 2022 included: Winter Reading Program, Summer Reading Program, Story Time, Paul Bunyan, Bookaneer and other programs. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Scott Christensen to accept the Library update. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a resolution with the DNR for a City-Wide Hunt in 2023. The resolution authorizes the City of Lake Benton to work with the DNR to allow a special hunt in 2023. The City is aware there is a proficiency requirement for any new hunters applying, and the City will need to get the landowners permission (i.e. Lincoln County) prior to hunting on their property. The application with the DNR will need to be completed prior to May 2023. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn to authorize the Mayor and Administrator to sign the resolution with the DNR for a City-Wide Hunt in 2023. Motion carried.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – The Chamber met and the January business of the month is Buffalo Ridge State Agency. The Diner's Club continues to use the Tyler Hospital for Meals-on-Wheels. The Opera House production "Leaving Iowa" will begin March 24, 2023 and go through April 2, 2023. The First Dollars were presented to Homer's Bar and Integrated Power Services (IPS). The Saddle Horse Holiday schedule was discussed.

Trustee Karen Lichtsinn – No report.

Trustee Scott Christensen – No report.

Trustee Patrick Haynes – Patrick met with the First Responders and they are working on their annual report with 100 calls in 2022. Their equipment and vehicles are in good working condition, but they only have three full-time members. The First Responders need more members that must become EMT Certified, however, the classes do not begin until the fall. This pushes them back another year with no additional members. Mayor Michael Carpenter has some ideas he would like to share with the First Responders and requested Patrick Haynes schedule a time for himself, Patrick and Rich Riley to meet.

The EDA met and they had the election of the 2023 officers with one vacancy on the board. The board approved the draw request from Jared Rouge but will not release the funds until six lien waivers are collected. The board reviewed the change orders and provided recommendations for Craig Skorczewski to visit with Jared Rouge to consider revising. The board then discussed the impact on the City Maintenance Department with a payment of \$1.00/year for lawn mowing and snow removal. The board will revisit the agreement with the City. A new tenant will be moving into the vacant 4-Plex unit on February 1, 2023.

The Opera House is planning their 2023 season and selected a Director for the spring production. Advertising for the years events is still in the early marketing stages. The carpets have been cleaned and the board is going to hire Intek to clean the seats which has not been done in ten years. The furnace system continues to be in working order, and they are applying for a grant to update the lighting and sound system. **MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the Committee Reports. Motion carried.

**ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:**

The annual meeting of the City of Lake Benton, Lake Benton Fire Department and Townships will be held on Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Lake Benton Area Community & Event Center.

Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen sent a letter and spoke to the property owner on East Benton Street regarding the progress of demolishing the old house. Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen was informed the house will come down this spring. **MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the Administrator/Clerk Report. Motion carried.

**MAYORAL REPORT:**

Mayor Michael Carpenter reminded the Council of the celebration for Todd Draper's retirement and welcoming Travis Lustfield. This celebration is scheduled for Thursday, January 19, 2023 from 12:00 – 3:00 PM with a short program at 1:00 PM at the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then reminded the Council they approved himself, Trustee Karen Lichtsinn and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen to meet with Vince Robinson regarding the development and possible TIF options at Johnson Commercial Park, and funding for the 2027 MnDOT project. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at 9:00 AM. Mayor Michael Carpenter and Trustee Karen Lichtsinn will report back to the Council at the February 6, 2023 meeting.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then stated the next regular Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 6, 2023 at 5:30 PM with two hearings on the zoning change at Johnson Commercial Park. The first hearing is at 5:45 PM and the second hearing is at 6:15 PM.

**MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the Mayoral Report. Motion carried.

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

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MAYOR

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ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK