

JANUARY 22, 2018

The Special Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, January 22, 2018 at 5:00 P.M. in the Heritage Center/City Office. Mayor Bob Worth presided. Trustees Mark Dunn, David Enke and Daryl Schlapkohl were present. City Attorney Mike Cable and Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw were absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Police Chief Tony Sievert, EDA Chair Karen Lichtsinn, EDA members Tony Schwing and Brooks Bennett, Vince Robinson-LCEDC, Tom Kampmann-Owner of the Center Post, Roger Rudebusch, Jenny Nordmeyer, Jim Roggenbuck, Cora Lee Rochel, Don and Diane Evers, Jim Sorensen, Don Hughes, Lisa Willert, Gerry Rochel, 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 welcomed and thanked the citizens of the community for attending the meeting to discuss the potential purchase of The Center Post. Mayor Bob Worth then handed the floor over to Trustee and EDA Council Liaison Dave Enke.

Dave Enke explained the happenings that transpired in the last couple weeks in regards to The Center Post. The EDA met at their regular meeting of January 10, 2018 and Tom Kampmann, owner of The Center Post, was present. Tom shared with the EDA that he is planning to sell the building to an individual to be completed March 1, 2018, and that the building will not be used as a bar/restaurant.

The events previously scheduled to use The Center Post will not be honored. Tom wanted to give the City the opportunity to commit to purchase The Center Post with a deadline of February 1, 2018. Discussion among the EDA board took place regarding Tom's proposal, and the consensus of the board was the loss of The Center Post in its present form would not be a viable outcome for the City.

The EDA's plan of action was to proceed and meet with the City Attorney on January 18, 2018 to determine the legalities of the City purchasing The Center Post. City Attorney Mike Cable reviewed the file on the bar sale and confirmed there were no restrictions preventing the City from purchasing the building. The City would need to determine the overall integrity of the building such as upgrades, meeting code requirements with the assistance of the Minnesota Department of Health, and paying the monthly bills. Ideas were discussed for the City to manage the back as a community center, and possibly lease out the front of the building. The City does not have an interest in running it as a bar.

It was felt that if the City purchased The Center Post, operated the back, and increased marketing of the space, it would be a viable purchase. If a motion to commit to the purchase is approved, a purchase agreement would need to be approved contingent on a walk-thru, etc.

Mayor Bob Worth then requested Council discussion. Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl talked with quite a few taxpayers around the City and felt it would be a definite benefit for the community. The Lions Club sponsored benefits at The Center Post for several years and there is a large need to continue these benefits. The taxpayers were not against the City having to increase taxes in order to purchase the building. The City is not here to make money and the community is here to support the City.

Trustee Mark Dunn was unsure at first and didn't understand why the City would purchase a building. Then after some consideration, he realized that the use of the building brings a lot of events and people into town. Mark thanked Tom Kampmann for giving the City an opportunity to purchase The Center Post before selling to someone else.

Mayor Bob Worth explained the City owns the Library, the Opera House, and the current Community Center and these buildings are not money making items for the City. Since the current Community Center is not large enough to hold 100 plus people, events such as the Gala, Pheasants Forever, Lions Club, and the Sportsman's Club would not be here without a facility large enough to hold more than 100 people. These events bring people and money to the community.

The citizens in the audience were then given an opportunity to speak. They thanked the Council for their time and effort put into this, they expressed their appreciation, and they have not heard any negative comments about purchasing The Center Post.

EDA Chair Karen Lichtsinn explained the discussion between the EDA and Tom Kampmann on a purchase price of \$115,000.00 was not approved at this point. This is a great opportunity for this community to have a facility in which the City needs. If the City were to build a new facility it could cost \$300,000.00.

Tom Kampmann, owner of The Center Post, has done a lot of upgrades to the building. He felt he had to give the City the first opportunity to purchase the building because that is what the City had done for him.

Mayor Bob Worth then requested the Council members vote for or against the City purchasing The Center Post via ballot. Since Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw could not be at this evening's meeting, she had already given her vote to City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen tallied the votes and informed the Mayor and Council the vote was four in favor to purchase the Center Post. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to grant approval to the commitment of purchasing The Center Post from Tom Kampmann.

Tom Kampmann expressed that he would like to have this completed before the Annual Foundation/LBVE Gala and Annual Lake Benton Sportsman's Club Game Feed. The Council informed Tom that it may take some time to get the purchase agreement completed and requested Tom open the building for the events if the purchase is not complete. Tom Kampmann agreed, and will talk with his insurance agent regarding the liability, and work with the Lake Benton Bar to get alcohol. Tom also stated the food being served at the events are catered and the Foundation and Sportsman's Club should get their approval from the Department of Health. Motion carried.

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

MAYOR

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK