

JANUARY 3, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, January 3, 2023 at 5:30 P.M. in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor-Elect Michael Carpenter, Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Trustee-Elect Patrick Haynes, Trustee-Elect Karen Lichtsinn, and Trustee-Elect Scott Christensen were present. City Attorney Mike Cable was absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen was also present.

City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

The 'Oath of Office' was administered to incoming Mayor Michael Carpenter, and incoming Trustees Patrick Haynes, Karen Lichtsinn and Scott Christensen by City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then presided over the meeting and welcomed the incoming Trustees. 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 December 19, 2022 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 19, 2022. Motion carried.

CLAIMS PRESENTED AGAINST THE CITY OF LAKE BENTON:

ECOLAB	\$ 105.00	OTTERTAIL	\$ 2,334.67
ITC	\$ 327.37	QUARNSTROM/DOERING	\$ 687.00
MN WEST	\$ 3,000.00	TODD DRAPER	\$ 32.00
PAT HAYNES	\$ 250.00	BANNER	\$ 1,940.50
BIOAG ENERGY	\$ 1,960.86	TROY NORDMEYER	\$ 32.00
ALEX AIR	\$ 107.03	KYLIE ROCHEL	\$ 95.00
A & C EXCAVATING	\$ 47,183.05	JON WORTH	\$ 100.00
BUFFALO RIDGE NEWS	\$ 100.00	CENTER POINT	\$ 49.14
DANNY/MEGAN KROTZER	\$ 250.00		

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.

The next item of business was to review/act on an internal transfer from the sewer fund to the water fund. Mayor Michael Carpenter informed the Council the citizens pay a monthly \$20.00 base fee for water and a monthly \$20.00 base fee for sewer which has been in existence since 2010. The Council will look at addressing the need to adjust the monthly base fee for water to \$25.00 and adjust the monthly base fee for sewer to \$15.00 at the first meeting in February. As indicated in the Council packet, the cost of operating the water fund is higher than the sewer fund. Currently the water fund has approximately \$18,000.00 and the sewer fund has approximately \$352,000.00. Mayor Michael Carpenter informed the Council that Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen indicated the Council consider an internal transfer of \$100,000.00 from the sewer fund to the water fund. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Patrick Haynes to perform an internal transfer of \$100,000.00 from the sewer fund to the water fund. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on the 2023 annual lease between the City and the Historical Society for the Heritage Center building. The City allocated \$6,500.00 to the Historical Society for 2023 for the operation of the museum. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the 2023 annual lease between the City and the Historical Society for the Heritage Center and authorize the Mayor and Administrator/Clerk to sign the annual lease. Trustee Karen Lichtsinn abstained from voting. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a Resolution Accepting Donations to the Library. The Library received a donation from Ethel Anderson for \$100.00 in memory of Ken Anderson. This donation will be designated for collections. Minnesota Statutes state the Library can accept donations for the benefit of recreational services. The Council needs to pass the resolution accepting the donation to the Library. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the Resolution Accepting the Donation from Ethel Anderson for \$100.00 in memory of Ken Anderson. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on the Proposed Mayoral and Council Appointments for 2023. Mayor Michael Carpenter will be replaced on the EDA board with Trustees Patrick Haynes and Karen Lichtsinn. The Council questioned if a Council Trustee can be an officer on the Board (Treasurer on the EDA board), and it was stated, yes, they can be due to the small community and lack of individuals applying for boards and commissions. **MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the 2023 Mayoral Appointments as follows: Acting Mayor-Rosie DeZeeuw; Street Commission-Michael Carpenter and Karen Lichtsinn; Heritage Center/Community Center/Opera House-Rosie DeZeeuw and Patrick Haynes; Water/Sewer/Refuse-Michael Carpenter and Karen Lichtsinn; Library-Rosie DeZeeuw; Recreation/City Parks-Michael Carpenter and Patrick Haynes; Chamber of Commerce-CVB-Tourism-LIFE-Rosie DeZeeuw and Michael Carpenter; Weeds-Scott Christensen; Fire Department-Scott Christensen; First Responders-Patrick Haynes; Cable TV-Rosie DeZeeuw; EDA Representatives-Patrick Haynes and Karen Lichtsinn; Personnel/Human Resources-Karen Lichtsinn and Michael Carpenter; and Fire Relief Association Trustees-Scott Christensen and Patrick Haynes. The Ad-Hoc committee will include members of the City as well as Council members which will be determined when needed. Motion carried.

MOTION by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn to approve the 2023 Council Appointments as follows: City Administrator/Clerk-Eileen Christensen; Tree Inspector-Jim Roggenbuck; Library Director-Lynn Carpenter; Fire Chief-Scott Christensen; Civil Defense-First Responders; Law Firm-Quarnstrom, Doering at \$150.00 per hour not to exceed \$150.00 per meeting; Official Newspaper-Lake Benton Valley Journal; Official Depository for City Funds-First Security Bank, Lake Benton. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Patrick Haynes – The EDA met and discussed additional advertising for the 4-Plex unit vacancy. The board also discussed the Daycare Enhancement Assistance Program and Matt Schreurs will draw up a document for the repayment process. Tony Schwing and Karen Lichtsinn purchased the building on Mork Street from Central Minnesota Senior Care.

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – The Library board met and the patrons in the door for November were down from the previous year due to being closed for a couple days, however, circulation was up from the previous year. Fifty (50) people attended the Open House on December 3, 2022 which was also up from last year. The Winter Reading Program (WRP) starts in January with requirements to read 12 books in three months for ages 16 and older.

Trustee Karen Lichtsinn – No report.

Trustee Scott Christensen – No report.

MOTION by Scott Christensen, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn to approve the Committee Reports. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:

The 2022 City Archery Hunt ended December 31, 2022 with a total of 18 deer harvested.

MAYORAL REPORT:

Mayor Michael Carpenter extended a thank you to Todd Draper, Troy Nordmeyer and Travis Lustfield who have worked tirelessly with three snow storms in the past three weeks.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then informed the Council the owners of the house on East Benton Street (east of Station One) have not excavated the house as they had previously communicated to City staff. The property owners had issues with asbestos and confirmed with City staff they have a contractor to excavate the building before winter. Mayor Michael Carpenter requested the Council consider authorizing Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen to write a letter to the owners and request an update on the status of the structure to bring to the Council. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Patrick Haynes to authorize Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen write a letter to the owners and request an update on the status of the structure to bring to the Council. Motion carried.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then informed the Council MnDOT is on schedule to resurface Highway 75 on the south end of the City north to 14 and add sidewalks, etc. in 2027. This project was to begin in 2024 but was suspended until 2027. The City will need to look at funding to assist with the water and sewer infrastructure needs prior to MnDOT overlaying the highway. Mayor Michael Carpenter requested permission from the Council for him, Trustee Karen Lichtsinn and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen to meet with Vince Robinson to review options to cover the funding of the infrastructure. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Scott Christensen to authorize Mayor Michael Carpenter, Trustee Karen Lichtsinn and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen meet with Vince Robinson to begin the process of funding for the 2027 Highway 75 project and report back to the Council. Motion carried.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then informed the Council that 15 acres of land in the Johnson Commercial Park has been transferred to Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water and the EDA has additional requests for building on this property. Banner Associates created a preliminary plan to include water, sewer and street. Mayor Michael Carpenter requested authorization from the Council for him, Trustee Karen Lichtsinn and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen to meet with Vince Robinson to review development of the land and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) options and report back to the Council with their findings. Trustee Karen Lichtsinn is not available to meet with Vince on the fourth Thursday of the month. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to authorize Mayor Michael Carpenter, Trustee Karen Lichtsinn and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen to meet with Vince Robinson to review development and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) options in Johnson Commercial Park. Motion carried.

Mayor Michael Carpenter requested Trustee Patrick Haynes meet with the First Responders to discuss ideas on promoting the First Responders and get additional people involved in this much needed service. Mayor Michael Carpenter agreed to meet with them as well if needed or asked Patrick to invite them to a Council meeting.

Mayor Michael Carpenter inquired if the Agricultural land transferred to Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water has been zoned for Commercial. Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen informed the Mayor it has been done but she will confirm.

A special meeting to review the televising of the sewer lines will be Monday, January 9, 2023 at 2:00 PM. The next regular Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 17, 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.

MAYOR

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK