

## JANUARY 8, 2019

The Special Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at 5:30 P.M. in the Heritage Center/City Office. Mayor Bob Worth presided. Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Mark Dunn, Dave Enke, and Daryl Schlapkohl were present. City Attorney Mike Cable was absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Chuck DeBates, Pat McCarthy, Todd Dykstra, Rich Riley, and Shelly Finzen from the Lake Benton Valley Journal were also present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

The first item of business was to discuss the potential inconsistent service and/or possible disbandment of the Lake Benton First Responders. Mayor Bob Worth thanked the individuals for coming and reminded everyone this special Council meeting was called to discuss the situation and expressed his disappointment there were not more community members present.

Chuck DeBates informed the Council the First Responders met Monday, January 7, 2019. Two interested individuals were present and three others indicated their interest but were unable to attend the meeting. Chuck said a big thank you goes out to Jenny Nordmeyer for pounding the streets to get people interested. Without Jenny's work on this, they would not have five more individuals interested.

The interested individuals sat in on part of the meeting so they could understand what is involved in the job. The First Responders had 90 to 100 calls in 2018 which is up 20 to 30 more calls than the previous year. There are no classes available until this spring or maybe this fall, however new members can choose to take the classes on-line and go to Jackson for their test outs on two Saturdays. It will take the better part of a year before new members are completely certified.

The Fire Department took over the jaws-of-life because the First Responders could no longer take on that duty. They asked the firemen to become EMR's (Emergency Medical Responders), but committing 120 hours of training is a large obligation. Members of the First Responders need to get recertified every two years and are trained on a regular basis.

The Council asked if a Registered Nurse were to become a member, do they need to take the classes. Chuck informed them they can take a bridge course that could take 20 hours and not the required 120 hours.

Currently the First Responders have six (6) active members. They have eight (8) active members on the roster but Gary and Shirl Serie are gone through March. Chuck informed the Council that since his EMT license is expired, he checked with their insurance carrier to see if he can be a volunteer driver and not be an EMT/EMR. Chuck is willing to help out in any way he can if the insurance company authorizes him to do so. The firefighters have emergency vehicle driving certifications and can also assist if needed. The number one question now is how to get through this year until the five interested parties are completely certified.

There are not more First Responder classes available due to the lack of instructors. The First Responders get their training through Minnesota West in Jackson and they require ten (10) people before teaching the class. Chuck reminded the Council that new members will get trained, certified and recertified at no cost to them.

The Council inquired if the County is aware of the situation. Chuck affirmed they are, and they are dealing with new dispatchers that are not familiar with protocol yet. The First Responders and Fire Department are not getting correct information or not getting any information at all. The dispatchers are learning and it will take some time.

Mayor Bob Worth again expressed his disappointment with the poor turn-out at the meeting from the community. Without the First Responders and Fire Department, there is no one else to assist with medical emergencies and the community needs to be aware of that.

Chuck expressed his extreme gratefulness for all the community support. Tyler and Ivanhoe are also down in their First Responder members, and this is not only a County-wide problem – but a State-wide problem.

The Council asked firefighter Pat McCarthy if the Fire Department would be willing to assist with being a driver if the First Responders needed help. Pat said he would like to get a better understanding and additional information on what is needed. If a call comes out, the Fire Department would assist with driving as they have in the past with lift assists. Pat McCarthy will talk with the fire department to possibly set up a schedule for the Fire Department to assist with driving.

The First Responders will keep the Council informed of their status and will get on the agenda when needed. Mayor Bob Worth and the Council agreed the First Responders are a great asset to this community and thanked them for their time.

The next item of business was to review/act on a donation of a triple horizontal bar by Chris Robinson to be installed at the City's park by the football field or at the Lake Benton Public School's park and offered to help install the equipment. Chris Robinson was unable to attend this evening due to his work schedule.

Discussion took place regarding the height, space and surface requirements needed to meet the State's mandatory specifications to install playground equipment. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Mark Dunn to table this item until Daryl can evaluate the area and bring his findings back to the Council at the regular meeting on February 4, 2019. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on the 2019 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 2019 for the operation of the museum. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the 2019 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. 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 Glenn Krog for \$500.00. This donation will be designated for collections and the Summer Reading Program. Minnesota Statutes state the Library can accept donations for the benefit of recreational services. The Council needs to pass a resolution accepting the donations to the Library. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Mark Dunn to approve the Resolution Accepting Donations of \$500.00 from Glenn Krog. Motion carried.

The Council discussed the Memorial in front of the Community Center and knew there was talk of moving it. Highway 75 and 14 by Lakeside Park, near the electronic sign, would be a great location. However, the cost to move the Memorial would be a minimum of \$20,000.00.

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

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MAYOR

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ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK