

**MARCH 1, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, March 1, 2021 at 5:30 P.M. in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor Michael Carpenter, Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Mark Dunn, Dave Enke, and Daryl Schlapkohl were present. City Attorney Mike Cable was absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, Vince Robinson, Karen Lichtsinn, John Arens, and Miranda Deutz and Leslie Willert from the Lake Benton Valley Journal 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 February 16, 2021 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 16, 2021. Motion carried.

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

BOLT'S LB GROCERY	\$	2.83	OTTERTAIL	\$	2,243.02
VADIM	\$	136.27	RETHWISCH & SON	\$	12.98
TODD DRAPER	\$	32.00	PAT HAYNES	\$	250.00
MN LIFE	\$	5.10	HEIMAN	\$	2,524.90
LIBRARY JOURNAL	\$	99.00	TROY NORDMEYER	\$	32.00
ALEX AIR	\$	5,072.38	KYLIE ROCHEL	\$	60.00
ONE OFFIC SOLUTION	\$	286.99	MAGAZINE LINE	\$	123.66
BUFFALO RIDGE NEWS	\$	76.00	AMAZON	\$	552.12
PLUM CREEK	\$	4,160.18	CENTER POINT	\$	44.34
DEMCO	\$	151.10	MN DOT	\$	10,000.00

**MOTION** by Mark Dunn, 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.

The next item of business was to review/act on a Resolution Accepting Donations to the Library. The Library received donations from the following: The Fiber Guild for \$72.00, Brent and Connie Bressler - \$10.00 in memory of Alice Kern, and Anthony Kern - \$500.00 in memory of Alice Kern. These donations 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 donations to the Library. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Mark Dunn to approve the Resolution Accepting Donations from The Fiber Guild for \$72.00, Connie and Brent Bressler for \$10.00, and Anthony Kern for \$500.00 to the Library. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on City on-sale and off-sale liquor licenses for May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022. The Lake Benton Waterfront Resort, LLC has applied for an on-sale and an off-sale liquor license effective May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022. The reason for requesting these licenses for this establishment at this time is because it is a new application and it takes longer to process due to COVID. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Mark Dunn to approve the new application for an on-sale and off-sale liquor license for the Lake Benton Waterfront Resort, LLC from May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022. Motion carried.

## **PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE**

Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper informed the Council of the main sewer lift stations located at Highway 75, Parkview Drive and by the Lake Benton Resort. The lift station at the Resort is starting to fail and will need to be replaced. That particular pump was installed in 1994. Todd contacted Dave Buchet who gave him an estimated price of \$14,300.00 for submersible pumps, control panel, mobilization and labor. Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper recommended the Council act on this as soon as possible. The installation and labor will take one full day to bypass the Resort and replace the submersible pumps and control panel. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Mark Dunn to authorize Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper to order the submersible pumps, control panel, mobilization and labor at the lift station by the Resort for \$14,300.00 as soon as possible. Motion carried.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Trustee Mark Dunn – No report.

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – No report.

Daryl Schlapkohl – No report.

Trustee Dave Enke – The Library Board met last week as a routine meeting. The Friends of the Library are donating \$250.00 to the Library to support the Summer Reading Program (SRP). The annual report has been completed and submitted to the State. Plum Creek is offering Hot Spots and they can be checked out at the Library. However, these Hot Spots are not working well in the southwest region because they are using AT & T. The Hot Spots will be changing over to Verizon to make it easier and more user-friendly for the patrons to utilize.

## **5:45 PM PUBLIC HEARING**

At 5:45 PM Mayor Michael Carpenter called for a motion to go into the Public Hearing on the Proposed Assessment for the Fremont Street Improvement Project. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to go into the Public Hearing on the Proposed Assessment for Fremont Street. Motion carried.

Mayor Michael Carpenter updated the Council that in the past, the City has experienced multiple water breaks from the mini-mart to the southwest corner of the playground. It has cost the City between \$4,000.00 and \$6,000.00 each time to fix these breaks. The City is following their Assessment Policy that began in 1998 that a certain amount of the project will be assessed to the homeowners. The project costs approximately \$178,000.00 in which \$139,000.00 will be the assessable amount. If the Council approves the resolution, this will authorize the City to get more firm numbers. When the City gets firm dollar amounts from the engineering firm and contractor(s), the assessments will be finalized at that time.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then invited anyone from the general public to speak regarding the assessment. John Arens inquired if the state offers grants to assist cities doing this type of work. John was informed this is an emergency and the City has the funds to take care of it now. The City is working with the State for a scheduled 2027 Fremont Street Improvement Project, and the City will look into programs to assist the City and homeowners for this improvement at that time. John felt this should be done at the same time the state is doing their overlay. John also felt the City is trying to run him out of town.

Legal Counsel approved the Resolution Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans which can be adopted this evening or anytime within six (6) months after the Improvement Hearing on March 1, 2021. The City can reduce the project, but cannot increase the extent of the improvement. This resolution takes a 4/5 vote so a roll call vote will need to be taken by the Mayor and four trustees.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then read the Resolution aloud. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Dave Enke to approve the Resolution Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans. Roll Call Vote: Trustee Dave Enke – Yea, Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl – Yea, Trustee Mark Dunn – Yea, Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – Yea, Mayor Michael Carpenter – Yea. The motion carried unanimously to approve the Resolution Ordering the Preparation of Plans.

**MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to close the Public Hearing at 6:01 PM and return to the regular meeting. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on developing infrastructure at Johnson's Commercial Park/160 acres. Vince Robinson with the LCEDC was in attendance and informed the Council a business came to the EDA and has shown interest in building on the City's property north of town, also known as Johnson's Commercial Park. The EDA met and discussed the issues of the infrastructure, and Vince researched assistance programs for the City to enhance economic development for businesses wanting to build but are not able. There is a Public Infrastructure Assistance grant program that involves a 50%-50% match. The process involves submitting a letter to the Federal Economic Development Administration that outlines the infrastructure enhancement project to extend the sewer line. Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water has a water line located in that area and may need to add an additional meter system. The City will need to get the sanitary sewer line from the lift station by the church to that area, and preliminary engineering plans were done on this project 15 years ago.

Should the City choose to move forward, they should send a letter of interest to the EDA to request costs associated with the project. The Southwest Regional Development Commission is willing to assist with the letter and application process, and as a community, we will need to supply the information to them. As of now, Banner Associates stated they will provide a preliminary estimate for the sewer line expansion for the cost of \$5,000.00. It was stated a cost projection for 5,652 linear feet of sewer line could be roughly \$236,000.00 plus engineering of \$70,000.00 for a total of \$306,000.00. Time is of the essence, and the state has the funds right now but only for a limited time. If the City is interested in applying, you should engage Banner Associates for \$5,000.00 to get the preliminary cost estimates. The estimates will be used in the letter of interest as well as the significant impact it will have on the community and surrounding area with employment, etc.

The Council inquired if they extend the sewer line, does the City need to get easements. If they stay in the right-of-way, there will not be any easements required. It was brought up that when applying for this grant, the City may have to apply for a permit from Minnesota Pollution Control, which can be a concern. The sewer ponds were built in 1968 and at some point they will require the City extend their ponds. It was then discussed putting in a mound system instead. The water line is 8" and the line goes under the road and can easily be connected to the pipe. The City has a franchise agreement with Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water that when water is needed outside the City limits and the City deems it too much for the City, the City will give permission to Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water to serve water to those individuals.

The Council then discussed if it is worth going through all this for just one business; if it is just one potential business at this time, perhaps the City would be better off putting in a mound system if Banner Associates will provide that cost estimate as well. Vince informed the Council the Southwest Regional Commission will write the two to three page letter of interest explaining the City's infrastructure needs and the need for enhancing property for business growth.

After a lengthy discussion on the potential of more businesses wanting to build, and if the City agrees to proceed with paying \$5,000.00 for preliminary estimates, what type of agreement do we have the business won't back out. Vince explained if the project moves forward, both parties will sign a development agreement, then you know the business has agreed to move forward. Vince also offered to provide assistance to the City through the LCEDC and DSI. If the City opts

to contract with DSI, they will provide the proposal and complete the necessary paperwork that accompanies the applications for \$3,500.00 to \$4,000.00. The approximate timeline can take up to four weeks for a determination and provided comments to add to the application. The Southwest Regional Commission has experienced staff to assist and is very excited to work with the City. Right now, we need firm numbers. It was suggested the City ask the EDA to cost share on the project, as a partnership such as this can be very beneficial for both entities. The EDA will discuss this at their next meeting and if the board shows interest, the EDA can authorize the City to engage with an engineering firm to get preliminary cost estimates and request the services of the Southwest Regional Commission to work with the City to send a letter of interest.

**MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Dave Enke to authorize Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper to contact and request a design and preliminary cost estimate from Banner Associates at no more than \$5,000.00 to install a sewer line up to the northwest corner of the City's farm land north of town. The Water/Sewer/Refuse Committee (Mayor Michael Carpenter and Trustee Dave Enke), Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen and Vince Robinson will meet after the preliminary paperwork has been submitted and report back to the City and the EDA Board. Motion carried.

**ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:**

The 2021 Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 7:00 PM at the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center.

**MAYORAL REPORT:**

Mayor Michael Carpenter gave an update on the Mork and Giles Addition to the Council. The City sold two lots in January and the paperwork is still being completed. As discussed previously, there is an interested party that would like to purchase two more lots. These lots have sewer but do not have water. Mayor Michael Carpenter requested authorization from the Council for the Water/Sewer/Refuse Committee (Mayor Michael Carpenter and Trustee Dave Enke), Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen to meet with Banner Associates to get a preliminary cost estimate for the Mork & Giles Addition project, along with the Johnson's Commercial Property. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to authorize the Water/Sewer/Refuse Committee (Mayor Michael Carpenter and Trustee Dave Enke), Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen meet with Banner Associates to get a preliminary cost estimate for the Mork & Giles Addition project, along with the Johnson's Commercial Property. Motion carried.

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.

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MAYOR

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ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK