

OCTOBER 19, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, October 19, 2020 at 5:30 P.M. in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor Bob Worth, Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Mark Dunn, Daryl Schlapkohl, and Dave Enke were present. City Attorney Mike Cable was absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen and Sheriff Chad Meester were also present.

Mayor Bob Worth called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Mayor Bob Worth 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. There items were brought forward at this time.

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 5, 2020 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 5, 2020. Motion carried.

CLAIMS PRESENTED AGAINST THE CITY OF LAKE BENTON:

ITC	\$ 464.72	LMC INSURANCE	\$ 11,785.00
VADIM MUNICIPAL SFTWR	\$ 1.44	QUARNSTROM/DOERING	\$ 584.95
SANITATION PRODUCTS	\$ 250.00	L-P RURAL WATER	\$ 5,828.87
EXPRESSWAY	\$ 201.83	POSTMASTER	\$ 117.25
THOMAS ELECTRIC	\$ 3,725.00	CITY OF LAKE BENTON	\$ 174.57
S & E AUTO	\$ 95.85	FIRST SECURITY BANK	\$ 24,248.35
LB FIRE RELIEF ASSOC	\$ 23,391.44	MIKE OTTO	\$ 1,714.50
XION	\$ 5,000.00	BANNER ASSOCIATES	\$ 2,600.00
BIOAG ENERGY	\$ 339.80	CARDMEMBER SRVCS	\$ 168.79
HYDRO TECH SERVICES	\$ 3,775.00	ONE OFFICE SOLUTIONS	\$ 183.97
TIM RUSTAD CONSTRUCT	\$ 1,750.00	BUFFALO RIDGE NEWS	\$ 151.60
THOMAS PLUMBING	\$ 14,160.00	PRIDE NEON SIGN	\$ 145.00
CLIFTONLARSONALLEN	\$ 78.75	ENVIRO PUMP PLUS	\$ 1,610.00

MOTION by Mark Dunn, seconded by Dave Enke to approve payment of the claims presented against the City of Lake Benton. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on rehab grant requests. Six payment requests were received for the Rehab Grant Program: Lead assessment request of \$900.00 to Scarcely, Contractor requests of \$13,800.00 to DK Construction, \$7,576.30 to Pipestone Interiors, \$469.70 to Thomas Electric, \$46.00 to Lincoln County Recorder, and \$6,000.00 to DSI for Administration fees. The total funds of \$28,792.00 were requested and deposited in the account. **MOTION** by Dave Enke, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve payment of the rehab grant checks presented. Motion carried.

LAW ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Sheriff Chad Meester provided an update on the third quarter calls for service in Lake Benton. There were 63 calls in July, 46 in August, and 48 in September. There were more traffic stops due to the fact the deputies are more visible in town. The Sheriff's office is averaging around 28 hours a month which exceeds the 24 hours in the contract. If the Council has any questions regarding the report, please do not hesitate to contact Sheriff Chad Meester to discuss. The Council thanked Sheriff Chad Meester and his deputies for the good job they are providing the City of Lake Benton. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Dave Enke to approve the law enforcement update. Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE

No report.

The next item of business was to review/act on a building permit for Sam Rohde to install a 4' x 7' deck at 234 S. Grant Street. Sam was given the setbacks on which he can put the deck and Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper confirmed there were no setback concerns. The fee of \$25.00 was paid. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the building permit for Sam Rohde to install a 4' x 7' deck at 234 S. Grant Street. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a building permit for Cheryl Holthe to install a 10' x 14' utility shed at 102 Harrison Street. Cheryl was given the setbacks on which she can put the shed and Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper confirmed there were no setback concerns. The fee of \$25.00 was paid. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Dave Enke to approve the building permit for Cheryl Holthe to install a 10' x 14' utility shed at 102 Harrison Street. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on forgiving the 2020 Library expenditures over their allotment. Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen reminded the Council that in an effort to assist the Library fund to correct the deficit cash balance that ended in 2019 at (\$82,068.00), the Council discussed at their 2021 budget meetings to attempt to forgive the 2020 Library expenditures over the City's allotment of \$28,000.00. In early 2020, the library repaid the general fund \$18,195.58 for expenses over the allotted amount which continues to affect the deficit cash balance. As of today, the Library's expenditures show \$8,610.00 over the allotment of \$28,000.00 with an estimate of \$18,315.00 for the entire year.

Discussion took place that the cash deficit is definitely not a reflection of poor management. The Library usually goes over \$8,000.00 to \$11,000.00 per year. The cash deficit deters the ability of the board and employees to move forward with programs. The Council felt that per the Auditor's request, it is in the best interest of the City to forgive the 2020 Library expenditures. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Dave Enke to forgive the 2020 Library expenditures of approximately \$18,315.00. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Mark Dunn – No report.

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – The Chamber met last week and they received a \$1,500.00 grant from Explore MN for marketing. The Diners Club is offering a sale on prepaid meal tickets thru December 31, 2020 with 10 meals for \$50.00, or \$5.00/meal, a savings of \$10.00. The Food Shelf is now open. The WW1 traveling exhibit was canceled this year and rescheduled for next year. The Chamber is not going to have the Halloween Trunk or Treat Open House, but Karen Lichtsinn will hand out treat bags and distribute them on Saturday, October 31 from 5:00-7:00 PM in front of the Heritage Center. The Tree Walk will be held December 1 thru December 31, and letters will be sent to businesses to inquire if they will hold an open house and if so, the Chamber will offer a free turkey to give away. There will not be a formal Coat Drive this year, but communities are encouraged to collect clean coats and bring them to the Divine Providence Thrift Store for distribution.

Trustee Dave Enke – The EDA met last week with several items on the agenda. The Tom Gow property has been sold. The owners plan for two businesses to be housed in that location which include an auto body shop and an appliance repair shop. The board discussed the lack of lots in the City for commercial businesses and there is a large demand for property. One business wants to expand to a larger site and want to stay in Lake Benton. Another business is a father and son wanting to open a meat processing plant, but there are issues with finding property. Vince Robinson will be contacting CHS again regarding the property by the railroad tracks. The Hole-in-the-Mountain Equipment property is for sale; however there are underground fuel tanks

and the liability with that are substantial and moving forward is a problem. The former Ridge property is also another piece of property that is being looked at. There may be a time the City will need to rezone properties to commercial.

The County received 42 CARES applications for grant funds and there are at least two more added. The County will be able to award \$10,000.00 to each of those requests. The County may not use all the funds and applicants may be awarded additional funds. This is proceeding very well.

Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl – No report.

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:

No report.

MAYORAL REPORT:

Mayor Bob Worth informed the Council the Johansen's contacted him and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen that they billed the wrong amount for snow removal for the past three years because they were paying off the wrong contract. They inquired if they can be compensated for the difference, and the Mayor told them it is a Council decision. After some discussion, it was the Council's unanimous decision to put this item on the next meeting's agenda and invite the Johansen's to attend.

Mayor Bob Worth then informed the Council that he talked with a couple trustees regarding former Police Chief Thor Tollefson. The work comp claim against the City by Thor Tollefson has been settled for \$26,250.00 over a three year period. Administrator/Clerk provided the Mayor with an itemized statement on what was paid out to Thor Tollefson for PERA and work comp. These claims cost the City taxpayers the following in legal fees. 2016 - \$7,530.87, 2017 - \$19,214.08, 2018 - \$6,302.95, 2019 - \$45.00, 2020 - \$150.00. The PERA health portion settlement cost the City and taxpayers \$40,000.00, and the work comp claim cost the City and taxpayers \$26,250.00 with a grand total of \$99,492.90. This amount of money could have paid off the Event Center and additional equipment needed for the maintenance department. The work comp claim could be higher due to legal fees associated with the settlement.

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

MAYOR

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK