

OCTOBER 3, 2022

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, October 3, 2022 at 5:30 P.M. in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor Michael Carpenter presided. Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Mark Dunn, Patrick Haynes, and Daryl Schlapkohl were present. City Attorney Michael Cable, City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen and Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper 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 September 19, 2022 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 19, 2022. Motion carried.

The minutes of the Special Joint City Council-EDA Meeting of September 28, 2022 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Mark Dunn to approve the minutes of the Special Joint City Council-EDA Meeting of September 28, 2022. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to approve Pay Request Number Three (3) to A & C Excavating for the Mork & Giles Infrastructure Project. The General Contractor has provided Pay Request Number Three (3) in the amount of \$86,669.55 which is justified in the work that has been completed. Banner Associates approved the pay request and have presented it to the Council for approval. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Mark Dunn to approve Pay Request Number Three (3) for \$86,669.55 to A & C Excavating for the Mork & Giles Infrastructure Project. Motion carried. Mayor Michael Carpenter then asked for a motion to authorize the Administrator/Clerk to pay for Pay Request Number Three (3) with \$57,000.00 from the TIF account and \$27,000.00 from the Assessment account. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to authorize the Administrator/Clerk to pay for Pay Request Number Three (3) with \$57,000.00 from the TIF account and \$27,000.00 from the Assessment account. Motion carried.

CLAIMS PRESENTED AGAINST THE CITY OF LAKE BENTON:

ECOLAB	\$	105.00	BOLT'S LB GROCERY	\$	9.27
OTTER TAIL	\$	978.26	ITC	\$	315.57
QUARNSTROM/DOERING	\$	1,214.13	RETHWISCH & SON	\$	2.68
STATION ONE	\$	430.75	UTILITY CONSULTANTS	\$	464.51
TODD DRAPER	\$	32.00	PAT HAYNES	\$	270.00
MARSHALL INDEPENDENT	\$	210.60	TROY NORDMEYER	\$	32.00
READERS DIGEST	\$	35.00	LINCOLN CTY AUDITOR	\$	50.00
KYLIE ROCHEL	\$	110.00	BOOKPAGE	\$	390.00
CENTER POINT	\$	49.14	DANNY/MEGAN KROTZER	\$	250.00

MOTION by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Patrick Haynes 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 rehab grant requests. Three payment requests were received for the Rehab Grant Program: Contractor DK Construction in the amount of \$12,840.00, Lincoln County Recorder in the amount of \$46.00, and Administration fees of \$2,100.00 to DSI. The total funds of \$14,986.00 were requested to be deposited into the account. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve payment of the rehab grant checks presented. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on sealed bids for farm land for rent. Mayor Michael Carpenter reminded the Council the current lease is due to expire the last day of February 2023 and the tillable acres are down from 130.9 to 115.9 after transferring 15 acres to Lincoln-Pipestone Rural Water. At the Joint City Council/EDA meeting the Council was informed of potential development at Johnson Commercial Park and would like to begin developing next spring. Should the potential tenant purchase five (5) acres, the City will need to adjust the contract and reimburse the bid. One bid was received to lease 115.9 tillable acres from Tom and Mary Gunnink in the amount of \$24,000.00 per year for three years – 2023, 2024 and 2025.

MOTION by Mark Dunn, seconded by Patrick Haynes to award the bid to Tom and Mary Gunnink to rent the 130 acres north of town (115.19 tillable acres) for a period of three years at \$24,000.00 per year; and authorize the Administrator/Clerk to work with Legal Counsel to draw up the lease with Tom and Mary Gunnink. Motion carried.

The next item of business was an update on the Law Enforcement Contract between the City of Lake Benton and Lincoln County. Mayor Michael Carpenter informed the Council that the Police Committee consisting of the Mayor and Trustee Mark Dunn, Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen and Sheriff Chad Meester met in September to review the contract that needs to be renewed January 1, 2023. The group worked together on a three year contract with a 6.3% increase in 2023, a 3% increase in 2024, and a 3% increase in 2025. The City budgeted \$47.82/hour for 1,248 hours a year. The Police Committee and the Administrator/Clerk negotiated with Sheriff Meester and all parties agreed to lower the first year amount approximately \$300.00 to meet the City's 2023 budget. Mayor Michael Carpenter then opened the floor to discussion if they wanted to continue working with Lincoln County on their law enforcement or go with someone else and reminded the Council that the contract needs to be approved on or before the December 5, 2022 regular meeting. **MOTION** by Daryl Schlapkohl, seconded by Patrick Haynes to move forward with the Law Enforcement Contract between the City of Lake Benton and Lincoln County; and authorize the Administrator/Clerk get the contract reviewed by Legal Council so the Council can approve the contract on or before the first regular meeting in December 2022. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on Personnel. Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper handed in his letter of full-time resignation dated September 30, 2022, effective January 31, 2023. Mayor Michael Carpenter reminded the Council that Todd has been with the City of Lake Benton since January 1981 and we wish Todd the best of luck. Mayor Michael Carpenter also stated we can replace Todd's position, but we cannot replace Todd. **MOTION** by Mark Dunn, seconded by Daryl Schlapkohl to accept Todd Draper's full-time resignation effective January 31, 2023. Motion carried.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then informed the Council the Administrator/Clerk has prepared the Phased Retirement Option which is an option that allows members to transition into retirement and employers can provide the necessary knowledge transfer. Todd will continue to work for the City on limited hours (1,044 per year). Mayor Michael Carpenter explained this is a benefit to the City and is a solution where everyone benefits. Todd will continue to work for the City with limited hours for 18 months (February 1, 2023 through July 31, 2024). Legal Counsel is in the process of drawing up an agreement between the City of Lake Benton and Todd Draper.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then stated after Todd's full-time retirement, there is only one individual in the Maintenance Department. The City will need to fill the Maintenance Supervisor position as quickly as possible. Should Maintenance Worker Troy Nordmeyer be interested, he can apply. The advantage of this is that Todd Draper will still be available on a limited basis to pass on his expertise and has obtained his water and wastewater certifications. The new employee will need to take the training to get their certifications in water and wastewater and continue with continuing education units. Todd Draper has a lot of knowledge to pass on to Troy Nordmeyer and the new employee as he knows individuals from MPCA, D & G Excavating, and several other contractors.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then passed the floor over to Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen and City Attorney Michael Cable. City Attorney Michael Cable informed the Council that he would like to submit the paperwork to PERA after the City Council approves the Post Retirement Option and the Agreement between the City of Lake Benton and Todd Draper. The Agreement states the City of Lake Benton will pay

Todd Draper's medical benefits for single coverage out of his accumulated severance pay for 18 months commencing February 1, 2023; and the City of Lake Benton will also pay into Todd Draper's Health Savings Plan in 2023 out of his accumulated severance pay. After the 18 months, any remaining severance payment owed Todd Draper will be paid to a Retirement Plan of his choice or pay Todd Draper directly, whichever he prefers. Also included is a statement that if Todd is no longer living, the remaining severance money will be paid to his wife to a Retirement Plan of her choice or pay his wife directly, whichever she chooses. City Attorney Michael Cable will complete the documents for the next Council meeting so he can get the applications submitted to PERA after Council approval.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then stated once the documents are approved, the City will begin looking for either a Maintenance Supervisor or Maintenance Worker and have someone hired by January 1, 2023. It is also the intent of the City to meet with the present Maintenance Worker to see if he is interested in applying for the Maintenance Supervisor position or not, and the City can use Todd's certifications until the new or current employee obtain their certifications. **MOTION** by Patrick Haynes, seconded by Mark Dunn to authorize Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen to work with Legal Counsel to draw up the documents for the next regular meeting of October 17, 2022. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Mark Dunn – No report.

Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – The Library Board met and the activity for September is comparable to the previous year. The board is still in process of looking for a new member to replace Lynn Carpenter. Director Lynn Carpenter reported she and the assistant librarian are learning more daily, and scheduling between everyone seems to be working well.

Trustee Patrick Haynes – The Council was provided the minutes from the Joint City Council/EDA meeting.

Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl – No report.

MOTION by Mark Dunn, seconded by Patrick Haynes to approve the Committee Reports. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:

No report.

MAYORAL REPORT:

Mayor Michael Carpenter asked Trustee Daryl Schlapkohl if he has heard from Mike Weets on fixing the outside front of the Opera House. Daryl has not heard back from Mike but will attempt to speak with him again.

Mayor Michael Carpenter then reminded the Council that at the Special Joint Meeting between the City Council and EDA board, Mayor Michael Carpenter, EDA Board member Curtis Rethwisch, and Vince Robinson were appointed to the Concept Plan Committee to meet with Banner Associates regarding the development of Johnson Commercial Park. Michael Carpenter, Curtis Rethwisch, Vince Robinson, Maintenance Supervisor Todd Draper, and Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen will be meeting with Scot Leddy with Banner Associates on Wednesday, October 5, 2022.

The next regular Council meeting is scheduled for October 17, 2022 at 5:30 PM.

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

MAYOR

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK