

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF BIG FALLS, COUNTY OF KOOCHICHING, STATE OF MINNESOTA, INCLUDING ALL ACCOUNTS SUBMITTED BY SAID COUNCIL.

April 13, 2015

The regular meeting of the Big Falls City Council was called to order at 7 p.m. by Mayor Marta Lindemanis. Members present were Shawn Pritchard, Ken Warner, Ken Kennedy and Jeff Oehlerking.

Additions. Resolution 2015-02 was added to the consent agenda. A playground discussion was also added to the agenda.

Commissioner's Report. Wayne Skoe was present. The council discussed selection of a proposed site to submit for the RECAP project. A possible land exchange with the State of MN for land adjacent to the sewer ponds will most likely not work out for several reasons. The council concluded that pursuing land currently owned by Minnkota Power along Highway 71 north of the river would be the best option. The progress on the peat project was discussed. A road is being built this summer, with the earliest possible harvest date to begin in 2016.

Bigfork Valley Hospital. Aaron Saude of Bigfork Valley Hospital introduced himself as the new CEO. He offered brief information about the facility, and asked for any questions the council may have.

Consent Agenda. The consent agenda was presented with the following items.

- Approval of March Regular Meeting Minutes
- Approval of March Financials
- Adopt Resolution 2015-01, A Resolution Accepting Donations from Big Falls American Legion and Legion Auxiliary.
- Adopt Resolution 2015-02, A Resolution Requesting Free Conveyance of Tax Forfeit Land for Authorized Public Use.

*There was a motion to approve the consent agenda by Pritchard. Second by Warner. Motion carried.*

Disbursements. The disbursements were reviewed. *There was a motion by Warner to approve disbursements in the amount of \$50,331.09, check numbers 14683 to 14741 and ACH 14166E – 14188E. Second by Kennedy. Motion carried.*

Liquor Report. Linda Dey gave a liquor report. Danya Troutt and Heidi Watson have resigned. A new part time bartender is to be hired as soon as possible. A new slushy machine has been installed. The horse shoe pits are ready. There was a discussion about advertising for events, with it being noted that posters in neighboring towns would be a good idea. Customer appreciation night generated \$308.50 in tips, which the council designated as funds for playground equipment. *There was a motion by Warner to approve the liquor report. Second by Pritchard. Motion carried.*

Fire/EMS. Brent Arnold was present for a Fire/EMS report. The pagers have been reprogrammed to fix the recent technical problems with receiving pages. It was reported that MN Dept. of Human Services has excess 800 portable radios to purchase. The cost would be \$800 each and it includes the radio, charger and antenna. Each radio would need to be programmed and have a battery purchased separately. The cost new would be \$1600 for the same radio. These radios are compatible nationwide with other emergency response systems, and provide better reception. It was noted that these are the new radios that most all departments are changing over to, including International Falls and Littlefork. *There was a motion by Pritchard to approve the purchase of five 800 portable radios at a cost of \$800 each. Second by Kennedy. Motion carried with all in favor. There was a motion to approve the fire report by Warner. Second by Oehlerking. Motion carried.*

Maintenance Report. Terry Baird reported that the campground entrance sign is in poor condition – the council would like him to look into options and costs for a new sign. The council approved changing the sign lighting to LED. Terry reported that the shower house doors are rotting out. The council approved replacing and repairing the doors as needed. There was also a discussion about possibly insulating the walls. A pine tree was removed by site 14, which created room for an additional small site, and there is a hookup available. The council discussed whether to rent or purchase a port-a-potty for the playground. - the clerk will get quotes for the next meeting. Terry mentioned that last winter while plowing, the corner of Shirley Nelson's shop porch was damaged. The mayor will talk to Ms. Nelson about

having the city take down the damaged porch, and restoring the structure to just a roof over the sidewalk. The water project is expected to start up again around the 1<sup>st</sup> of May. There are still a few pump reading issues that Terry is working on with the contractor. *There was a motion to approve the maintenance report by Pritchard. Second by Oehlerking. Motion carried.*

Clerk's Report. The clerk reported on the conference attended in March. The council discussed developing a Capital Improvement Plan for the city. Any needed projects and funding options would have to be identified to be included in the CIP. The council reviewed the annual receipt of tourism funding from Koochiching County Tax Forfeited Apportionment Promotion Account in the amount of \$6,591.98. The LMC tax rebate program was discussed. The clerk is to send out notices to out of town taxpayers affected by the rebate. *There was a motion to approve the clerk's report by Pritchard. Second by Warner. Motion carried.*

Playground. The council discussed needed improvements at the playground. The tornado slide is to be removed. The need to start up the playground committee was discussed. The committee would be in charge of suggesting needed changes, and researching and applying for funding. Laura Wicklund and Miranda Gustafson are very interested in the project and the council approved for them to take over the committee.

Tax Abatement Request. The council reviewed a letter from Stanley Baird requesting abatement of real estate taxes on the café property. The council reviewed relevant State Statutes (M.S. 469.1813) and information provided by the League of MN Cities. After discussion, the council concluded that there was no statutory authority for an abatement to be granted in this situation. The clerk is to send a letter along with a copy of the statutes to Mr. Baird, explaining the council's decision. No further action was taken.

Highway Speed. The clerk reported on a meeting with MN DOT representatives concerning highway speeds on 71 through Big Falls. DOT agreed to place portable "Your speed is..." signs on highway 71 this summer for a period of time. The council can request a speed study from MN DOT if they feel that the speed needs to be changed. No further action was taken.

Nuisance Policy. The clerk presented a draft nuisance policy for the council to consider, which would provide for guidance to staff for enforcing nuisance complaints between council meetings. The council received copies of the nuisance ordinance to review before the next regular meeting. A nuisance property violation from last fall was discussed. The clerk will follow up with law enforcement for more information on this complaint.

Fair Housing. The council reviewed information about the Fair Housing Act that prohibits discrimination in housing issues. The information gave a brief overview of the goals of the Fair Housing Act, and the transactions it covers.

Loans. The council reviewed loans outstanding to the City of Big Falls, and noted past due accounts.

Campground. Cynthia Broad asked the council to consider an increase in the volunteer host stipend, from \$14 to \$20 per day. *There was a motion by Warner to increase the host stipend to \$20 per day. Second by Oehlerking. Motion carried.* The council talked about the possibility of having the pavilion screened in. Shawn Pritchard will look into this issue. It was noted that due to the closing of Page & Hill, the city will not be able to provide firewood this year.

The next meeting is set for Monday, May 11, 2015 at 7 p.m. *There was a motion to adjourn by Pritchard. Second by Warner. Motion carried.*

Adjourned.