

CITY OF BEULAH

December 21, 2020, 6:30 pm

Remote Meeting using GoToMeeting

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Beulah City Council was called to order at 6:30 pm by Mayor Travis Frey with Council Members Eric Hoffer, Ben Lenzen, Sean Cheatley, Jason Isaak and David Czywczynski present. Dave Ripplinger, Kathy Kelsch, Gary Miller absent.

Also Present: City Attorney Scott Solem, Assistant City Attorney Jennifer Gooss, City Engineer Charlie Hankins, Economic Development Beaver Brinkman, Police Chief Frank Senn, Water Plant Superintendent Gary Bovkoon, City Auditor Heather Ferebee, Editor Jerick Tafoya.

Cheatley moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last regular meeting on December 7 and approve as furnished to the Council by email. Isaak seconded. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

COUNCIL PORTFOLIOS

P&Z Variance

Variance Request for a fence at 500 Central Ave N. Hoffer moved to approve the variance request as presented. Cheatley seconded. It was stated a petition of signatures from the neighbors was received. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor. P&Z will attend Council in January to amend the zoning code regarding fences.

Council Member Hoffer

Lime Removal Project change order. Hoffer moved to approve the change order to reduce the project cost by the amount of \$34,524.50 for LS Enterprises, LLC dba Pace for the South Lagoon Lime Removal Project. Isaak seconded. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

Employee Personnel Policy update

Hoffer moved to approve the updated Personnel Policy with changes as presented. Lenzen seconded. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor. Changes in the Personnel Policy include the new health insurance, which is available to employees who work 30 hours or more. Other benefits are available to employees working 30 hours or more per week, with the exception of retirement. Retirement will remain at 20 hours or more as it's a NDPERS requirement. The percentage employees pay for health insurance was increased by 1% for both family and single policies. The spouse's grandparent was added to the bereavement section so sick leave can be used. The vacation accruals were changed so that employees are able to receive the increase in vacation accrual sooner in their years of employment. The notice needed for vacation leave requests was increased.

Council Member Cheatley

The Fire Department is requesting assistance with new radios. It was discussed that it is not in the City's budget for next year so there would need to be a budget amendment if the City assisted. A quote was requested from the Fire Department. The Police Department is also in need of new radios to use the SORN system and they have been in contact with the Fire Department. It will be an expensive process. The Fire Department may need to have more portable radios if they can't keep their current pagers. There is a state reimbursement available. The City will need to be proactive and purchase now in order to apply for the money while it's available.

Mayor Frey

The \$500,000 of Prairie Dog Funding was received. Authorization was requested to invest the revenue in a CD. Czywczynski moved to approve purchasing a CD with the \$500,000 Prairie Dog Funding. Lenzen seconded. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

JDA met last week and three terms have expired. Frey appointed Nathan Richter and Auston Biles as members to the JDA Board. Lenzen moved to approve the appointments as presented. Cheatley seconded. There are still seats open. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

Hoffer moved to accept the municipal court report. Cheatley seconded. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

The Police Department has money available in the 2020 budget for a radio. The cost of one radio is \$5,970.37. Hoffer moved to approve the purchase of one radio out of the police budget. Czywczynski seconded. It was questioned if one radio is enough. It was questioned if the bid is a state rate and if the old radios have trade-in value. It was stated it is a contract rate from the state. The trade-in value would be minimal. The life expectancy of a radio is roughly ten years. Hoffer moved to amend the motion to purchase two radios, using funding from the Equipment fund to purchase the second radio. Lenzen seconded. Roll call vote on the amendment found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor. Roll call vote on the motion found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

Upgrades to the wireless internet and video conferencing capabilities in the Council room was recommended using the revenue received from the COVID Relief Fund. The roof and doors will also be repaired at City Hall.

CITY PERSONNEL

City Engineer

Sweeney provided a quote on Lift #1 for surge protection. This entails moving the PLC to a separate panel. The PLC has had issues and it is needed to help the system run. The quote is \$3,950 to relocate the PLC. It would include a backup system. The budget will be reviewed.

Contact was finally made with BNSF and they were in agreement that the crossings are in rough shape. One crossing at 1st Ave SW will be replaced with concrete next summer.

City Attorney

Proposed Retainer Contract regarding the Purdue Pharma Bankruptcy Case. Beulah was contacted regarding this case in July. Purdue Pharma is a manufacturer of amphetamines. The NDLC recommended cities and counties to participate as a claimant. If a settlement is reached, the law firm representing the City would receive 25%. In the event they are unsuccessful, the City does not owe any of the costs. The suit involves manufacturers and distributors of opioids. Hoffer moved to approve the retainer agreement as presented. Cheatley seconded. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

Police Chief

The status of the asset forfeiture will be received soon and the City may receive a portion of the forfeiture money. The revenue is being considered for purchasing a K-9 for the department and funding of the fifth police vehicle.

Water/Wastewater Superintendent

OpWorks arrived and the software is running. Information is being entered and they are creating a trend. They are completing 30 tests per day to create this trend. That is up from 4 tests per day. Employees have signed up for certification testing this spring and Marlin Block will be testing tomorrow.

A letter was received from NDDEQ. There were fines associated with the tests that were missed in May, but the fines will be suspended and eventually eliminated.

Economic Development Director

Update on the purchase of a lot by MDU for \$1 per square foot which will amount to \$24,700. Bronson's and MDU have approached the City to install a double head light on two of the light poles in the parking lot. Bronson's would pay for the cost of the light heads, but the City would pay the electricity as there is no way to separate out the cost. Hoffer moved to approve paying the electricity for the two street lights in the Bronson Marketplace parking lot if the double light heads are purchased by Bronson's. Isaak seconded. It was stated that Bronson's would pay the \$2,300 for both lights. According to MDU, the cost would be approximately \$2.00-\$2.50 per month for the electricity of one LED light. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

The house at 424 E Main was removed and Public Works starting filling in the basement today.

The City Infrastructure Project that was presented at the last Council meeting was discussed. It would be a water, sewer, and street project for 7th Street and south. Czywczynski moved to allow the City to move forward on this project. Isaak seconded. Roll call vote found Hoffer, Czywczynski, Isaak, Cheatley and Lenzen in favor.

The Storm Shelter contractor is not completing the project. The City will send a letter to the contractor notifying them that the City will hire an electrician and finish anything else that needs to be done to complete the project.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.


Travis Frey, Mayor
Heather Ferebee, City Auditor