

CITY OF BEULAH

September 28, 2022, 6:00 pm

Beulah City Hall Council Chambers

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The regular meeting of the Beulah City Council was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Jeff Gooss with Council Members Gary Miller, Ben Lenzen, Auston Biles, Jason Isaak, Amanda Mohl and David Czywczynski present. Eric Hoffer, Sean Cheatley absent.

Also Present: City Attorney Scott Solem, City Engineer Charlie Hankins, Economic Development Beaver Brinkman, Police Chief Frank Senn, Water Superintendent Gary Bovkoon, City Assessor Heidi Hamelton, City Auditor Heather Ferebee, Jerry Isaak, Nathan Richter, James Ternes, Keith Bohn, Kevin Flaagan, Editor Bill Schmalfeldt.

Pledge of Allegiance

Lenzen moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last regular meeting on September 14 and the special meeting on September 15 and approve as furnished to the Council by email. Biles seconded. Roll call vote found Lenzen, Biles, Miller, Isaak, Mohl and Czywczynski in favor.

HEARING

2023 Final Budget Hearing. The following changes were recommended:

EXPENSES:

Decreases in the General fund: \$3,500 for P&Z iPads, \$75,000 P&Z project, \$105,000 7th police officer, \$50,000 annexations since there is not a plan yet, \$100,000 transfer to dilapidated buildings, \$10,000 municipal code revision (decrease from \$20,000 to \$10,000).

Decrease in Dilapidated Building fund of \$190,000 for the nursing home demolition.

Decrease in Airport of \$4,800.

Decrease in JDA of \$14,940.

Increase of \$1,000 to the General fund for West River Transportation for added cost of a new vehicle.

REVENUE:

Increases in the General fund: \$19,740 in property taxes and \$150,000 in lot sales.

Increase in Specialty Equipment fund of \$6,000.

Decrease in Dilapidated Building fund of \$100,000 since it is not transferred from the General Fund.

Decrease in Airport of \$4,800.

Decrease in JDA of \$14,940.

Isaak moved to approve the 2023 final budget as presented. Lenzen seconded. Miller stated he would like to have the two mills reinstated to the Airport and JDA and to keep the funds in for the

nursing home. It was stated that a USDA loan will be applied for regarding the old nursing home. It would be for a library and daycare and would help cover the cost of demolition.

Gooss set out his position on the two mills that were removed from JDA and the Airport. He stated he is hearing that it's the principle of taking funds from the Airport and JDA. Gooss commented that he believes that money is moving from one area that is not as productive as it could be to an area that is productive and does help, for instance Public Works and Law Enforcement. These funds could go towards law enforcement equipment that could potentially protect children and families. Gooss stated he spoke with the owner of Dakota Helicopters. The owner has been here for 40 years and does not intend to leave the airport. Miller requested that council members be allowed to speak. Gooss ruled Miller out of order. There was a back-and-forth disagreement between Gooss and Miller. Gooss requested it be on the record that Miller stated "screw you" to the mayor. Gooss stated if Miller doesn't like this, he will take his resignation. Miller stated he will not resign.

Isaak commented on recommendations from Eric Hoffer. The pickup sander for \$5,800 and PD vehicle leases for \$10,000 could be cut. Isaak believes that the JDA and Airport both have a very good net benefit for the community and the cuts are too much. Biles commented he was on JDA for three years and it has moved forward a lot this last year. JDA has restructured programs to help new businesses coming down the pipeline and the direction is clear. Czywczynski commented that cutting the budget is responsible but not to go to war for \$5,000. The Airport will need to resurface in a couple years.

Isaak moved to amend the motion to remove the pickup box sander for \$5,800, remove the additional \$10,000 for PD vehicle leases, and to reinstate the two mills to the Airport and JDA. Czywczynski seconded. Gooss stated this has proved that the business leaders run the purse strings of the city. Miller called for question. Nathan Richter, Chairman of JDA, commented on the future and how we can help our community. If businesses are to grow, there needs to be funds available. It is the worst time to remove funding assistance from JDA. Mohl commented that she was on JDA but is in favor of allocating money towards equipment that helps the city operate. Kevin Flaagan commented he appreciates everyone's support of the airport. He clarified that he did not say that Dakota Helicopters would leave if the mills were cut. Lenzen commented on his past with JDA. He stated the JDA has money right now. The council is trying to balance the budget and this was one thing as a group they decided to do. This change is for one year. The goal is to keep taxes low. Gooss stated he is not anti-JDA or anti-Airport. Roll call vote on the amendment to the motion found Biles, Isaak, Miller and Czywczynski in favor. Lenzen and Mohl opposed. Motion carries.

Gooss requests that the 5% increase in mills be removed. The 5% mill levy increase is \$32,500 to the General fund. The wage increase also needs to be decided on. The additional increase to wages would raise General fund expenses by \$10,000 and enterprise funds by \$7,500. Discussion followed.

Keith Bohn commented on tax increases to his property. JDA has not come to him at his business. He is not happy the value of his business has increased. It's not just taxation, it's the value of the property being assessed. Hamelton stated the City of Beulah did not make any increases to property values at the Equalization meeting this year. The county may have increased the land

value of commercial property. Property values are based on mass assessment, so it may have increased because of the cost to replace.

Lenzen moved to approve the wage increase to 5% as included in the salary schedule presented. Biles seconded. Roll call vote found Lenzen, Biles, Isaak, Miller, Czywczynski and Mohl in favor.

Roll call vote on the main motion as amended found Isaak, Lenzen, Biles, Czywczynski, Miller and Mohl in favor.

Listed below are the changes from the preliminary budget.

EXPENSES:

Decreases in the General fund: \$3,500 for P&Z iPads, \$75,000 P&Z project, \$105,000 7th police officer, \$50,000 annexations, \$100,000 transfer to dilapidated buildings, \$10,000 municipal code revision, \$10,000 police vehicle leases (decrease from \$30,000 to \$20,000).

Decrease in Dilapidated Building fund of \$190,000 for the nursing home demolition.

Decrease in Equipment fund of \$5,800.

Addition of \$1,000 to General fund for West River Transportation (increase from \$15,000 to \$16,000 for van match).

Addition of \$10,000 in General fund for wages.

Addition of \$7,500 in Enterprise funds for wages.

REVENUE:

Increase in the General fund \$150,000 for lot sales.

Increase in Specialty Equipment fund of \$6,000.

Decrease in Dilapidated Building fund of \$100,000.

PUBLIC INPUT

Updated Mercer County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan: Carmen Reed will attend the next meeting. A resolution is needed, and it will be sent to legal for review.

Mohl left the meeting.

COUNCIL PORTFOLIOS

Council Member Isaak

Removal of four trees on the city lot located at 109 2nd Ave NW. There is one quote for \$4,000 for removal and \$550 to grind stumps. Isaak moved to have the trees cut down for \$4,550 or less depending on quotes received. Biles seconded. Roll call vote found Isaak, Biles, Lenzen, Miller and Czywczynski in favor.

Council Member Czywczynski

Employee Relations has a recommendation for the Public Works Laborer position. Employee Relations is a four-person board, and it was recommended to move it to a five-person board. Gooss

stated the board would then have over 50% of the council, so the votes would always be in favor of the recommendation of the board. Senn commented that there could be an employee representative on the board. Discussion followed on whether the hiring of the employee should come to council for approval. It was discussed law enforcement and executive staff be approved by council and other employees be hired by approval of Employee Relations. It was also stated that Employee Relations could go through the hiring process as they always do and make the determination and make the hire. Then it can be announced at the council meeting. Solem will check if executive session can be used to discuss details of the hiring of employees.

Miller moved to approve hiring the recommended Public Works employee and if that applicant declines the job to then offer the position to the next recommended applicant. Czywczynski seconded. Roll call vote found Miller, Czywczynski, Isaak, Biles and Lenzen in favor.

CITY PERSONNEL

City Assessor

There was missing information from the application for the Murphy Garage Variance and the information has not been received. P&Z denied the application for being incomplete. Miller moved to the deny the application due to a lack of information. Isaak seconded. Roll call vote found Miller, Isaak, Biles, Lenzen and Czywczynski in favor.

It is determined that the extraterritorial limit does not extend beyond Hwy. 200. It is under County jurisdiction.

Police Chief

The Police Department has been working with BCI. There is an interest in assisting with crimes against children through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). It is a Multi-Agency Law Enforcement Agreement for Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. Czywczynski moved to approve the MOU with BCI. Biles seconded. Biles questioned if this would allow for the education of students or parents regarding this issue. Senn stated yes, he would try to educate the public as well. Roll call vote found Czywczynski, Biles, Lenzen, Miller and Isaak in favor.

Burlington Northern police were contacted regarding the idling of trains. Senn will prepare some maps with a proposal to move the trains farther from town.

Youth Works requests the city enter into a juvenile detention MOU. The expense of \$4,000 was added to the budget. It would need to be signed by the mayor. Isaak moved to approve the MOU as presented. Miller seconded. Roll call vote found Isaak, Miller, Biles, Lenzen and Czywczynski in favor.

City Engineer

They are still looking for a contractor for the sewer issue on 2nd Ave SE. Roadwork will be completed on Hwy. 49 from Front Street to Hwy. 200 by the DOT. Discussion followed on whether the shared use path could be included.

Water/Wastewater Superintendent

Water production is down, and the plant is running well. Water Plant interviews will take place October 7. Employees who live out of town will not be paid for travel time to come to work. There is a concern that living out of town in this position will be an issue for being on call.

City Auditor

Biles moved to approve the special event permit for Molco LLC to serve alcohol for the Adult Prom at the Beulah Civic Center on October 15, 2022. Lenzen seconded. Roll call vote found Biles, Lenzen, Isaak, Miller and Czywczynski in favor.

Biles moved to approve the following three site authorizations: CVB site authorization at Alibis on October 21-23, 2022 for the poker tournament, CVB site authorization at the Beulah Civic Center on November 18, 2022 for Chili Bingo, CVB site authorization at the Beulah Civic Center on January 21, 2023 for the Big Buck Contest. Miller seconded. Roll call vote found Biles, Miller, Lenzen, Isaak and Czywczynski in favor.

Economic Development Director

The CVB has a management agreement with the city for improvements to Sun Valley RV Park. CVB would like to install a new sign at the RV Park. Isaak moved to approve the new sign at Sun Valley RV Park. Miller seconded. Roll call vote found Isaak, Miller, Biles, Lenzen and Czywczynski in favor. CVB had an open house at the Pfenning Museum last week.


Gooss commented he will be absent from the next council meeting.

Gooss stated if the city does not have a working contract for the year for appointments, such as engineering and attorneys, the city will be sending those positions out for bid. It will be from now moving forward. Gooss will require a contract before each appointment, otherwise the position will be put out for bid.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.



Jeff Gooss, Mayor



Heather Ferebee, City Auditor