

City of Bigfork

Emergency City Council Meeting

June 26, 2014

6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Amy Pifher, Dave Evensen, Krista Lane and Randy Nei

Members Absent: Peter Johnson

Also Present: Jeff Keys and City Attorney John Licke

Mayor Amy Pifher called the emergency meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and stated the purpose was to discuss the situation with well #5. Jeff Keys of Keys Well Drilling reported that, as was directed at the emergency meeting held on June 11th, a pump test was conducted on well #5 at its current depth of 213' to see if it would meet the water demands of the City. The test failed as the test pump broke suction while pumping 20 gallons per minute. A meeting was immediately held with the Mayor and Public Works Department during which a determination was made that two options should be investigated: 1) the possibility that well #5 may still be salvageable, and 2) the cost to abandon well #5 and drill a new well. Keys consulted with officials from the Minnesota Department of Health, Johnson Screens, and the Minnesota Geological Survey for input and then provided quotes for both options.

Option #1 would include retrofitting well #5, pulling back the well casing to expose the sand layer at around 130', installing a well screen, and test pumping to determine its capacity. The quote for this work is \$15,600. If the test fails, it would cost \$7,200 to remove the remaining well casing and seal the well per MDH code. If it is necessary to drill a new well, the cost to do so using the mud rotary drilling method would be \$41,950. To use the cable method, as was used on well #5, would cost \$53,218. Evensen asked why the cable method was used on well #5 and Keys responded that it was the engineer's decision and that he was a proponent of it because it produces a better quality well, especially in areas such as this where there is not a lot of pre-existing geological data. It is a more precise, cleaner, straighter method, and produces better samples because you aren't introducing drilling fluids into the well. Pifher added that with well #5, we were trying to mimic well #3, which is a good producer and was drilled using the cable method.

Keys continued that Johnson Screens stated that the samples for well #5 between 130' and 140' were sufficient to screen but they can't tell us what the yield might be without testing. The MN Geological Survey representatives are also unable to give us any guaranteed information because of the lack of high capacity drilling data in this area. They have commented that the geology here appears to be different lines that might follow the Big Fork River, but there are some changes in the lines which is why, even just 15' away from a productive well, you might not find sufficient water supply.

Lane felt that since none of the experts can give us guaranteed information on either scenario, it is best to exhaust all possibility of using well #5 before we try drilling in a new location, as we could very likely end up in the same scenario with the next well. Evensen agreed and asked Keys what all could be re-used from well #5. Keys responded that if option #1 works, there will be extra pipe and they will purchase this back from the City.

A motion was made by Pifher to pursue option #1 and to rope off the well drilling area with “Authorized Personnel Only” signs, seconded by Lane, motion carried unanimously (MCU).

Keys noted that it will take about two weeks to complete the work and have an answer as to whether or not well #5 will produce a sufficient amount of water at 130’.

Motion to adjourn at 6:34 p.m. by Evensen seconded by Nei, MCU.

Angela L. Storlie
City Clerk/Treasurer