

**City of Bigfork**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**August 13, 2020**  
**5:30 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Drew Francisco, David Mann, and Paul Gustafson

**Members Absent:** Mayor Bryan Boone and Ben Maxa

**Also Present:** Tamara Lowney, Ben Denucci, Tim Johnson, Aaron Gould and Sally Sedgewick

Acting Mayor Francisco called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the Public Forum was opened. As no one wished to address the Council, the public forum was closed.

***Motion by Mann to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Gustafson, motion carried unanimously (MCU).***

***Consent Agenda: Motion by Mann seconded by Gustafson and carried unanimously to approve the consent agenda including:***

- 1. minutes of the July 9, 2020 regular City Council meeting,***
- 2. City Clerk's office report for July 2020,***
- 3. financial report for July 2020,***
- 4. Public Works Department report for July 2020,***
- 5. payroll and timecards for July 10 and 24 and August 7 regular payrolls in the amount of \$9,119.60***
- 6. claims paid in the amount of \$5,550.71 and claims for payment in the amount of \$35,856.85***

**Tamara Lowney – IEDC:** Itasca Economic Development Corporation President Tamara Lowney introduced herself and gave an update on IEDC's work over the past several months. Since the announcement of the future closure of the E2IP facility north of Bigfork, IEDC has been working with the Itasca County Board and Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board to prevent the loss of those jobs to the community. The initial effort was to prevent the relocation of the existing company. When it became clear that was not an option, the focus turned to recruiting another business to come into the facility. Significant time and funding have been dedicated to marketing the property, including the use of a third-party recruiter and site selectors. IEDC has reached out to small businesses as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response. They created a loan program with assistance from the Blandin Foundation and IRRRB. They will be kicking off a new small business and logger grant program next week with funding from Itasca County.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Engineering Update:** Tabled. Engineer not present.

**Junior Council Member Program:** The Clerk reviewed that no applications had been received for the 2020-2021 school year and the Council had discussed advertising again in the Fall. The consensus was to leave the position open this year and advertise again for the 2021-2022 school year.

**Comprehensive Plan Update:** Rural Community Coordinator Tim Johnson reported that a public survey had been created and advertised on the website, Facebook page and news releases. The survey is somewhat lengthy as it must replace some of the in-person public input that would normally be sought through this process. Johnson noted we would still like to have at least one in-person session and suggested the October Council meeting date as a potential option. Johnson has continued to work on the demographics and mapping portions of the plan and is coordinating with Arrowhead Regional Development Commission to facilitate the public input session.

**Bigfork School Project Update:** Johnson reported that the current funding stands at \$250,000 from Blandin Foundation and \$600,000 from School District #318. He is applying to IRRRB and have applied to the Minnesota Power Foundation and some smaller grant organizations. Johnson will continue to work on fundraising for this effort.

**CARES Act Funding Request:** The City received a request from School District #318 to considering contributing some of the City's CARES Act funding to the school. This request was tabled until exact amounts of the City's own costs and assistance to our local small businesses are known.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Union Negotiations:** *Motion by Francisco to appoint Mayor Bryan Boone and Ben Maxa to a committee for the purpose of union negotiations, seconded by Mann, MCU.*

**Resolution 2020-13:** This resolution sets the preliminary budget and tax levy for 2021. The Clerk reviewed the budget numbers. Councilman Mann added that the tax levy is a significant increase from last year but the removal of parcels from the Scenic Estates TIF District will help to offset this increase. The Budget Committee discussed their desire to begin putting money away for future projects instead of having to bond for them and that is reflected in the increase as well. *Motion to approve Resolution 2020-13 by Mann, seconded by Gustafson, MCU.*

## OTHER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ben Denucci introduced himself as Itasca County Board Chair and thanked the Council for hearing Tamara's presentation. He stated that the County Board fully supports IEDC and has designated the funds to demonstrate this. On behalf of District 2 Commissioner Terry Snyder, Denucci reported that the Board has been working very hard on CARES Act funding and the situation with

E2IP. He reported that Itasca County has around a 50% response rate to the 2020 Census and encouraged the Council to get the word out to community members that it's not too late to respond.

Acting Mayor Francisco closed the meeting at 6:14 p.m. for the purpose of conducting employee performance reviews.

Francisco reopened the meeting at 6:35.

***Motion to adjourn by Mann at 6:35 p.m., seconded by Gustafson, MCU.***

Angela L. Storlie  
*City Clerk/Treasurer*

Approved at the regular meeting held on  
September 10, 2020

---

Mayor