

City of Bigfork
Regular City Council Meeting
March 11, 2021
5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Bryan Boone, Paul Gustafson, Ben Maxa, David Mann, and Drew Francisco

Members Absent: none

Also Present: Joe Sutherland, Gene & Nin Madsen, Gary Erickson, Jim Lepinski
Via Zoom: Cre Larson, Pam Lepinski, Randy Costley, Kevin & Andrea Hovila and Sally Sedgwick

Mayor Boone called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the Public Forum was opened. Pam Lepinski informed the Council that in discussions with Minnesota Department of Transportation representatives related to the 2023 Main Street improvement project, she has found that MnDOT claims right of way much further east than was her understanding when she bought the property. She is now being asked to remove her canopy and not use the property shown as being in MnDOT's right of way. She requested that the Council support Main Street businesses in avoiding any adverse impacts due to this project. Mayor Boone noted that he and the clerk have also been in contact with MnDOT and are committed to working to find a resolution to the issue that will be agreeable to all parties. Gene Madsen inquired as to why MnDOT sees this as an issue now when it has been this way for so many years.

As no one else wished to address the Council, the public forum was closed.

Boone added Bids for Ash Street/Rajala Mill Road project, VFW request, and Relocation of the Veteran's monument to the agenda. ***Motion by Mann to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Gustafson motion carried unanimously (MCU).***

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

- 1. Minutes of the February 11, 2021 regular Council meeting***
- 2. City Clerk's office report for February 2021,***
- 3. financial report for February 2021,***
- 4. Public Works Department report for February 2021,***
- 5. payroll and timecards for February 22 and March 5, 2021 regular payrolls in the amount of \$6,853.42***
- 6. claims paid in the amount of \$10,848.69 and claims for payment in the amount of \$88,650.38***
- 7. Resolution 2021-03 – authorizing certain ACH payments***

First Call for Help Presentation: Cre Larson from First Call for Help in Grand Rapids was present via Zoom to explain the services they provide. She reviewed the scope of these services, including connection to resources for transportation, financial assistance, housing, and mental health. Bigfork residents used First Call 71 times last year. In addition to financial support, First Call is looking for input on how best to get the word out about the services they offer to our residents. After discussion and a generous offer from resident Gary Erickson to contribute \$50 toward the cause, ***a motion was made by Boone to approve a contract for services with First Call for Help in the amount of \$500, seconded by Maxa, MCU.***

Direct mail postcards and Facebook posts were suggested as the best methods of getting the word out.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ash Street/Rajala Mill Road Project Bids: Joe Sutherland of Widseth informed the Council that bids were opened for this project on Tuesday of this week. Itasca County is the owner of this project, but the City will make a recommendation to the County on the bid award. There were three bidders with the low bid coming from Casper Construction in the amount of \$731,743.65. Sutherland noted that this amount represented a base bid including all aspects of the project. He reminded the Council that four bid alternates had been identified as optional removals from the project. Since the base bid came in lower than the engineer's estimate, the Council did not feel it was necessary to utilize any of the alternates. ***Motion by Boone to recommend the bid from Casper Construction in the amount of \$731,743.65 be accepted, seconded by Gustafson, MCU.*** Boone asked about access for residents and whether either of the roads would be completely closed at any point. Sutherland noted the plans include requirements to have one road or the other open at any given time and the contractor would work to keep disruptions to a minimum.

Francisco Washer: Boone reviewed that the Council had previously approved reimbursement of up to \$6,000 for a specific list of items that were lost due to water damage to Francisco's basement when the water main on his street broke. One item that was not on the original list but ended up not being salvageable was a washing machine. The cost to replace it was \$480. \$400 remains before the \$6,000 cap is reached. ***Motion by Mann to reimburse the full cost for the washer, increasing the total reimbursement amount allowed to \$6,080, seconded by Gustafson, motion carried 4-0 with Francisco abstaining.***

Resolution 2021-04: This Resolution authorizes the Clerk to apply for matching grant funds from Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board for the next phase of the softball field development. ***Motion by Mann to approve Resolution 2021-04, seconded by Francisco, MCU.***

Resolution 2021-05: This Resolution creates a graduated investment fund as discussed at previous meetings. This was drafted by Mann and he offered an explanation that it was done in an effort to be responsible with the 30% tax levy increase approved for 2021. Mann stated that the goal is to move the City in a fiscally stable direction and these guidelines will encourage this and future Councils to use this fund wisely.

Boone suggested two additions to the Resolution, the first being that the Resolution number be added to the title of the fund so that future Councils and staff will be aware of its existence, the second was a requirement that a 4/5ths vote be required to rescind the resolution.

Motion by Maxa to approve Resolution 2021-05 with the amendments suggested, seconded by Francisco, MCU.

Investment Policy Update: This amendment updates the investment policy as it relates to the graduated investment fund. ***Motion by Mann, seconded by Maxa to approve the policy update as presented, MCU.***

NEW BUSINESS

Sign Profanity: Boone informed the Council that letters had been sent to everyone the City was aware of who still had a campaign sign up. Minnesota Statutes requires such signs to be removed within 10 days after the general election. One such sign contains profanity and so violates the City's sign ordinance as well as State Statute. The City was contacted by the property owner stating that the sign owner is out of town and will resolve the violation as soon as they are back.

Itasca County Dust Control Contract: A resident on E Ottum Avenue has requested dust control application on that half-mile stretch of dirt road. The cost to have Itasca County provide this is \$1,050. The Council had concerns about the unbudgeted cost and the cost of providing this service on all dirt roads in the City, if requested. No action was taken.

Bigfork Valley Hospital Contract for Traffic Control: The terms of this contract have been worked out between the Fire Department and hospital. The Fire Department will be providing traffic control services for helicopter landings during nighttime hours. ***Motion to approve the contract by Mann, seconded by Gustafson, MCU.***

VFW Request: The local VFW Post is disbanding but a group of members will still take care of the Main Street flags and they have requested continued use of the downstairs room at City Hall for storage. The Council was agreeable to their continued use of this space at no charge.

Relocation of Veteran's Monument: Boone noted that the rock monument is within the MnDOT right of way for State Hwy 38 and will need to be moved. A quote is being obtained for this work.

Motion to adjourn by Mann at 6:48 p.m., seconded by Francisco, MCU.

Angela L. Storlie
City Clerk/Treasurer

Approved at the regular meeting held on
April 8, 2021

Mayor