

City of Bigfork  
Regular City Council Meeting  
May 14, 2024  
5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Bryan Boone, Sarah Scheff, Samantha Olson, Jerry Denny,  
Members Absent: Ben Maxa  
Also Present: Caleb Strandlie, Aaron Gould, Sally Sedgwick, Randy Collins

Mayor Boone called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Reverend Boone opened with a prayer.

The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Public Forum was opened.

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

**Add Mayor & Council Pay Increase under New Business. Motion by Scheff to approve the agenda, seconded by Olson, motion carried unanimously (MCU).**

**Consent Agenda: Motion by Denny seconded by Scheff, and MCU to approve the consent agenda including:**

1. Minutes of the April 9, 2024, Regular City Council meeting,
2. City Clerk's office report for April 2024,
3. Financial report for April 2024,
4. Public Works Department Report for April 2024,
5. Payroll and timecards for April 12, 2024, and April 26, 2024, regular payrolls, in the amount of \$8,349.96
6. Claims paid from April 2024, in the amount of \$6,726.79 and claims for payment in the amount of \$33,721.41

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Airport Security:** Denny gave the council his recommendation on a security camera system for the airport. **Motion to approve purchase of airport security camera system by Olson, seconded by Denny, and MCU.**

**Public Nuisance Blight- Update:** Melissa was able to contact all the landowners and create a plan to clean up the properties that is either in the works or has already been completed. Aaron will continue to monitor some of the properties to ensure that they stay up to ordinance compliance.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Proposals for Land Surveying-Widseth:** Widseth proved two proposals for surveying the parcels 85-430-0510 and 85-430-0430. The estimate provided was for \$3,100.00. This is to correct the issues presented by Sam's Place at the March & April meetings. **Motion to approve Proposal for Land Surveying for 85-430-0510 and 85-430-0430 in the amount of \$3,100.00 by Boone, seconded by Olson, and MCU.**

The second proposal is to vacate the alley way in Block 4 of the Third Addition to Bigfork and the north-south alleyway in Block 2 of Neveux's Addition to Bigfork, in Section 27, t.61N, R.26W., Itasca County, MN, in the amount of \$2,500.00. Tabled until the council can decide on vacations.

**1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Fire Chief Randy Collins asked to be added to the agenda. He apologized for getting to the meeting late. Motion to add Fire Department ARP Funds to Agenda After Land Surveying by Boone, seconded by Denny, and MCU.**

**Fire Department ARP Funds:** Randy Collins, the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Fire Chief attended the meeting and addressed the council regarding ARP funds the county has acquired that are to be disbursed to the City for the Fire Department. The fire department is asking for approval to purchase some equipment now, the city has not received the funds yet, but Itasca County Commissioner is working on getting the check sent to the city. The funds will replenish any amount that the Fire department spends before the funds arrive. **Motion to approve Fire Department Equipment Purchase with the Expectation that the funds will be reimbursed once the ARP Funds are received by Olson, seconded by Denny, MCU.**

**Airport Use- Wilderness Days Drag Racing:** The wilderness days committee is asking for permission from the city council to host a drag racing event at the city's airport. This event would be put on by Powerhouse Mobile Dyno & MN Outlaw Customs. Powerhouse Mobile Dyno has provided the city with their insurance policy which has been reviewed. The owner of the company has also spoken with Mayor Boone and Melissa the clerk, regarding their questions and concerns. The event would take place on Sunday, so the airport would need to be closed during the event. The Itasca County Sheriff's department would have deputies present, along with EMS & Fire Department members in the event of an emergency or the need to land a fixed wing. Melissa will reach out to the Wilderness Days Committee regarding whether approval has been granted to them from the FAA for the event. **Motion to grant permission to Powerhouse Mobile Dyno and MN Outlaw Customs to use the airport for Drag Racing during the event of Wilderness Days by Scheff, seconded by Olson, and MCU.**

**Bigfork Booster Club Donation Request:** The Bigfork Booster Club has submitted a Donation Request Form for the amount of \$3,000.00. The intended use for these funds would be to help equip the Phy Ed class, the football program & cheerleading. The Council discussed not wanting to deplete the funds in the Gambling Tax Fund but being fair and donating the same amount donated to the PTA, Council also discussed that later in the year if the Fund gains more money,

they could revisit a second donation. **Motion to donate \$750.00 to the Bigfork Booster Club paid out of the Gambling Tax Fund by Denny, seconded by Olson, and MCU.**

**Bigfork Youth Baseball Donation Request:** The Bigfork Youth Baseball organization has requested \$1,525.96 to help fund the purchase of a pitching machine. Explain letter  
Motion to donate \$1,525.96 to the Bigfork Youth Baseball Team out of the Gambling Tax by Olson, seconded by Scheff, and MCU.

**Cemetery Sexton Pay Increase:** Jerry Pula, the cemetery sexton for Bigfork reached out to Melissa and said that within the next 5 years he would like to retire from the position. He also stated that it has been about 15 years since he last got a raise. He currently is paid \$10.45 an hour for any plot work he does at the cemetery. Any digging is charged by him to the families privately. Boone suggested adding this to the agenda for the Budget meeting to help determine the funds needed to increase Jerry's pay and potentially adding a Cemetery Sexton Assistant position so that he could over time train someone to take over. Melissa will add this to the Budget Meeting agenda for further review.

**Seasonal Part Time Public Works Position:** After having the position posted for about 4 weeks the city received one application from former Public Works Manager Joe Zimmer. Aaron was on board with hiring the applicant as he would be a valuable asset to have on hand as he has knowledge on the position already. **Motion to offer the position of Seasonal Part Time Public Works Operator to Joe Zimmer by Boone, Seconded by Denny, and MCU.**

**Mayor & Council Member Pay:** Boone would like to propose an adjustment to address the salary for the Mayor & Council Positions as he is likely stepping down next year from his mayoral seat. The average mayor and city council member pay for cities with the population under 1000 from the League of Minnesota's statistics is \$2,300 for Mayor and \$1,600 for council members. The current Mayor pay for the city is \$1,000.00 and the current Council member pay is \$750.00. An additional rate of \$25.00 per meeting attended is also paid to each member. Boone suggested moving up to the median rate paid in Minnesota for cities of our size and raising the Mayor pay to \$2,200.00 and the council pay to \$1,200.00. Scheff and Denny also suggested raising the meeting rate to \$50.00 to encourage the council members to have more incentive to attend meetings. Any changes in Council & Mayor pay will not be in place until after the next election is completed, and members are sworn in. This will be further discussed among the Planning Commission at the next planning commission meeting. This meeting is currently scheduled for June 4<sup>th</sup> with potential to be rescheduled.

#### **OTHER/ ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Vacation Request- Paul June 18<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, & 21<sup>st</sup>. **Motion to approve vacation request for Paul Gustafson on June 18<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup>, by Olson, seconded by Boone, and MCU.**

Next meeting is June 11, 2024, at 5:30 PM at Bigfork City Hall

**Motion to adjourn at 6:37 p.m. by Denny, seconded by Olson, and MCU.**

Melissa J. David

*City Clerk/Treasurer*

Approved at the regular meeting held on  
June 11, 2024

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Mayor