

City of Bigfork

Regular City Council Meeting

July 9, 2024

5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Bryan Boone, Sarah Scheff, Samantha Olson, Jerry Denny,
Members Absent: Ben Maxa
Also Present: Amy Pifher, Joe Dasovich, Gail Anderson, Gary Erickson, Anthony Warzecha, Aaron Gould, Sally Sedgwick, Misty Olson, Jake Olson, Nathan & Bonnie Hough

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

The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Public Forum was opened.

Anthony Warzecha attended the meeting to discuss the possibility of attaining an easement through the city's property, parcel ID 85-026-2200. He is looking to purchase property that borders this, and he already owns property to the north. He is seeking an easement so that he can get to the property north of the city's property for logging. Mr. Warzecha has not purchased the property yet but wants to ensure that he can access his if he does. The Council did not see any reason to not grant access as we cannot land block him, however no official decision was granted as Mrk Warzecha does not yet own the property to the east of the city's. Mr. Warzecha also asked the city for permission to close E Ottum Ave near his property so that he can cut a few trees that are hanging over the road. This portion of the road is not within the city's jurisdiction so he was advised to contact Bigfork Township and the County.

Misty Olson attended the meeting to discuss a charge of 1,963.18 for water line damages that were fixed by Powell Excavating. Powell excavating had sent the bill directly to Misty and it went unpaid for about 6 months. The city then paid it and added the charge to Misty's utility account for reimbursement. Misty feels as though the city should have contacted her prior to fixing the water leak. Aaron stated that the parties living there were notified in person of the issue. She stated that the previous owner said the water break was the contractor's fault 12 years ago. Suzy Schmickle also said she's always had issues with this standpipe leaking over the course of years. The pipe was originally fixed in 2012 and has had issues since and so Misty feels as though she should not be held responsible for paying for the repair even though it is on her side of the water main. City ordinance directly states that anything on the property owners' side of the water line is their responsibility. Bryan asked Melissa and Aaron to look into the issue and make a recommendation to the council.

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

Add ARP Funds for Skating Rink from Itasca County under New Business, Add Resolution 2024-08 Appointment of New Mayor after Mayoral Seat Letters of Interest. Motion by Denny to approve the agenda, seconded by Olson, motion carried unanimously (MCU).

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

1. Minutes of the June 11, 2024, Regular City Council meeting,
2. City Clerk's office report for June 2024,
3. Financial report for June 2024,
4. Public Works Department Report for June 2024,
5. Payroll and timecards for June 7, 2024, and June 21, 2024, regular payrolls, in the amount of \$8,713.18
6. Claims paid from June 2024, in the amount of \$5,694.56 and claims for payment in the amount of \$54,299.65
7. Resolution 2024-06: Accepting Resignation and Declaring Vacancy

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ordinance Amendment #202: Council & Mayor Pay: After last months council meeting the council members agreed to up the Mayor salary to \$2,000 and the council member salary to \$1,000 with a meeting rate of \$50 per meeting. Boone suggested moving the rates back up to \$2,200 for mayor and \$1,200 for council after hearing the recommendations from the Planning Commission. Denny thought the rates suggested by the planning commission sounded good. Scheff and Olson said more incentive for council members moving forward would be beneficial to the city. **Motion to amend the rates to \$2,200 for Mayor salary and \$1,200 for Council member salary effective in 2025 by Boone, seconded by Scheff, and MCU.**

Motion to approve Ordinance Amendment #202 Council & Mayor Pay by Boone, seconded by Olson, and MCU.

NEW BUSINESS

Animal Control- Joe Dasovich: Gail Anderson from Hero's Heart Animal Rescue reached out to Joe Dasovich regarding the animal problem within the City of Bigfork. Dasovich recommended to the council that creating an ordinance for renters limiting the number of animals a renter can have could be beneficial for solving some of the ongoing problems. He said Nashwauk has had some success with this. Dasovich also stated the city could create an ordinance that stated a renter could have only 3 ordinance breaches or law enforcement encounters before the landlord can step in a work towards eviction. Denny asked Dasovich if he thought the ordinance enforcement was successful for Nashwauk and he stated that it has been. Boone stated that moving forward the city should create an ordinance limiting the number of animals per household cat or dog or other, and then move forward working with the sheriff's department regarding ordinances for renters. Boone asked Melissa to present these ideas to the Planning Commission so that they can work on creating the ordinances.

Dasovich asked where the city is currently having the most problems with their dog at large ordinance enforcement. Melissa stated that the largest issue right now is that people in the community are not registering their animals, and they are not reporting animals at large directly to her. Another case that was pointed out by Sheriff Deputy Olson was that most people feel more comfortable calling the sheriff's department when an incident occurs because the incident is dealt with directly by a deputy and usually the problem stops right there. Scheff asked how many calls on average the sheriff's department get per week regarding animals in town. Deputy Olson stated that it depends on the time of year but last month they were getting calls every single day. Deputy Olson also mentioned that moving forward whenever they get a call, they can forward that information on to the city clerk. Dasovich took Melissa information down. Moving forward, when the sheriff's department gets a call regarding a dog at large they will give that information to Melissa as a formal report so that the ordinances can be enforced.

Gail mentioned that she would love to work with Carly and our community to work on getting the animals in town that are not vaccinated, vaccinated moving forward. Scheff asked if Hero's Heart Animal Rescue knew how we could go about the problem of pet owners that do not want their animals because that is another problem in our community with animal breeding. Scheff also asked about the spay/neuter grant program that is in Grand Rapids and how we can get that program up here. Gail did say that she could forward Melissa any information she has on these programs in Grand Rapids and that she would be open to getting a program started up here with coordination with Carly Moberg.

RESOLUTION 2024-07: Setting Public Hearing Date for Vacation of Areas Surrounding 4th Street: Motion to accept Resolution 2024-07: Setting Public Hearing Date for Vacation of Areas Surrounding 4th Street for the 20th day of August 2024 at 6:00 p.m. during the next city council meeting by Denny, seconded by Olson, and MCU.

Airport Use Request for September 7th, 2024, Drag Racing: Outlaw Customs has requested to use the airport again for Drag racing at the Bigfork Municipal Airport. No maintenance issues were reported by the city after the last event. Mr. Erickson asked the council if the city charged Outlaw Customs to use the airport. The city did not charge outlaw customs at the last event for using the airport. Scheff suggested the city charging something so that the city can get a small profit to help offset the costs of maintenance. Boone said that the city was in favor of it but would like some more information regarding who is putting the event on, who the event would be supporting and looking into the costs of using the airport moving forward.

ARP Funding for Skating Rink: Itasca County Commissioner Terry Snyder reached out to mayor Boone and stated that Itasca County is granting the City of Bigfork \$5,000 for maintenance on the skating rink. **Motion to accept the ARP Funding in the amount of \$5,000 from Itasca County by Boone, seconded by Olson, and MCU.**

Mayoral Seat- Letters of Interest & Appointment: Boone handed the mayoral seat to Denny for further discussion. The city of Bigfork received one letter of interest for the mayoral seat from Amy Pifher.

RESOLUTION 2024-08: Appointing New MAYOR: Motion to accept Resolution 2024-08 to appoint Amy Pifher as the new Mayor of Bigfork effective immediately by Olson, and seconded by Scheff, and MCU. Boone abstained.

RESOLUTION 2024-09: AMENDING Appointments & Planning Commission Vacancies: Motion to approve Resolution 2024-09 Amending Appointments and replacing Bryan Boone with Amy Pifher by Denny, and seconded by Olson, and MCU. Boone Abstained.

Motion to grant permission to Melissa to open up for inquiries on anyone who may be interested in the Planning Commission Board by Olson, seconded by Denny, and MCU. Boone abstained.

OTHER/ ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Candidate filing opens on July 30th & ends August 13th, 2024, at 5:00PM

The City Clerk's office will be accepting affidavits for candidacy and office will be open until 5:00PM on August 13th, 2024. The filing fee is \$2.00. Seats that are open for election are: Mayor (2-year term), Council 2 (4-year term) & Council 3 (4-year term)

Next Council meeting cannot be held on August 13th, 2024, due to the election filing. Set new date & time. **Next Council meeting is August 20, 2024, at 5:30PM at Bigfork City Hall.**

Set Budget Meeting Date & Time: Budget meeting is set for August 27th at 5:00PM at Bigfork City Hall

Motion to adjourn at 6:46 p.m. by Olson, seconded by Scheff, and MCU.

Melissa J. David

City Clerk/Treasurer

Approved at the regular meeting held on
September 10, 2024

Mayor