

## City of Bigfork

### Regular City Council Meeting

May 9, 2023

5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Bryan Boone, Ben Maxa, Sarah Scheff,  
Members Absent: Paul Gustafson, Jerry Denny,  
Also Present: Gary Erickson, Mike Olson, Sally Sedgwick,

Mayor Boone called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.

Reverend Boone opened with a prayer.

The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Public Forum was opened.

Gary addressed two culverts that are on the riverwalk trail that are very full of water and asked about looking into placing a grate over the flowing water as it is fairly deep and dangerous for any kids or small animals. Melissa stated that she would have Aaron look at it tomorrow.

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

**Move Youth Baseball Donation Request to after consent agenda.** Bryan wanted to add to the agenda a discussion about staffing in case of emergency, under announcements. Motion by Maxa to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Scheff, motion carried unanimously (MCU).

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

1. Minutes of the April 11, 2023, Regular City Council meeting,
2. City Clerk's office report for April 2023,
3. Financial report for April 2023,
4. Public Works Department Report for April 2023,
5. Payroll and timecards for April 14, 2023, and April 28, 2023, regular payrolls, in the amount of \$7,126.79,
6. Claims paid from April, 2023, in the amount of \$12,465.44 and claims for payment in the amount of \$27,554.97.

**Youth Baseball Donation Request:** Mike Olson addressed the City Council to talk about the needs of the Softball Field, and a donation request. Some needs at the field are lines painted for base lines, the field also needs to be rolled, he also said that in the future he would like to get some

lockable storage out there for their equipment. He mentioned possibly teaming up with the shop class to build a storage shed. Practices will be held through July, and the field is being used multiple days throughout the week. Mike has been working on grants and requesting more equipment for the baseball team. Currently he has been granted \$750 from BFVCF, and \$500 from Operation Round Up and Storlie Construction has donated \$250. For one mat, a protective L-Screen, and a Batting Cage is approximately \$3247 and Mike is asking the City Council to Match the funds he has already received to order the equipment. Bryan asked the Council members how they would feel utilizing the Blandin Foundation Grants or the Gambling Tax Funds. Mike said there are currently 27 kids on the team. Grand Rapids Baseball Association has been very generous too with helping Bigfork create a team again and has waived the team fees for games for this season. Mike also stated that the grant money he received has to be spent by Dec 2023. Mike is requesting at this time \$1,747 for the equipment. Scheff mentioned that it is great what Mike is doing for the youth and bringing back baseball to the area and utilizing the field is a great addition to the community. She was in favor of continuing to make additions to the softball field in means of equipment and whatever needs the field may have. **Motion to grant \$1,747 to the Youth Baseball Team for practice equipment coming from either the Blandin Community Foundation Grant or the Gambling Tax fund by Maxa, seconded by Scheff, and MCU.**

Mike also mentioned that he is currently looking for coaches for T-Ball and if there are any interested parties, they can get ahold of him directly.

**2023 Housing Summit:** Gary Erickson attended the Build North Housing Summit that was hosted at the Timberlake Lodge last week by the IEDC and agreed to report to the City Council what he learned. Gary summarized some of the topics that were discussed at the Summit, some of the trends were housing shortages across the county, listings are down, prices are up, and mortgage rates are up, rental costs are up, aging population, wages are also up, but are not keeping pace with the housing costs. Gary said there were about 100 people in attendance. He stated that there was a lot of discussion regarding attracting developers to our area, and all of the logistics included in investing in these areas for building homes. Gary continued to question how he could take their ideas that were presented and dial them down to a scale that would reflect the housing needs in the City of Bigfork but found there were not a ton of resources for middle class housing development. Gary stated that one big issues IEDC brought up is how childcare availability has impacted on people being able to work and move into our area on top of being able to afford it with the rising median market values of homes. Affordable housing for low-income households has been pushed in our community, however low-income housing has limitations on who can live there and small communities like Bigfork are finding that median income housing availability is actually harder to find in our area. This is a growing problem in our community, and we do not need more low-income housing but blue collar, working family, median income housing. Gary also mentioned that in order to look into housing opportunities would have to be an effort by all members of the community including employers in the area, IEDC, developers, contractors, and the City. IEDC does provide consulting services for these types of housing interests, but they are limited.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Blandin Foundation Community Development Grant:** Melissa reached out to Caleb from WiDseth regarding the Trestle and Walking Bridge inspection. Caleb said that he would reach out to Kent to see if he can send the report soon so that we can figure out what costs the city will have regarding any work that may need to be done to both bridges in order to maintain them. With the walking and trestle bridge being priority for the grant, Melissa did also reach out to two different contractors to get quotes for fishing piers, one quote was for approximately \$16,000 but it was a dock that we would have to put in the river and taken out every year. The second quote was approximately \$50,000 for a more stationary pier that would be custom-built for the City but would not have to be removed and would move freely with the ice. These types of piers have been tried out in Alaska, and throughout Canada. Scheff asked Melissa if she could look into any warranties for the more stationary pier in case it doesn't last or obtains damages.

Bryan also stated that pending the report we get back from WiDseth the idea of installing playground equipment or camping spots in the city park are always a great idea should we find ourselves needing to spend the funds. This Agenda item will be added to the meeting for June for further discussion.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Quote on Parts for Lift Station at Rajala Mill Road:** Motion to approve the quote from MN Pump works for Lift Station at Rajala Mill Rd by Maxa, seconded by Scheff, and MCU.

**RESOLUTION 2023-09: A Resolution Approving County Project NO. 031-678-006:** Motion to approve Resolution 2023-09 Approving County Project NO. 031-678-006 by Maxa, seconded by Boone, and MCU.

**Donation Request Policy:** Bryan stated that the City needs to consider creating a policy that states specifically what the city will and will not approve for donation requests as we have had an influx in donation requests. Maxa said having a policy stating that the city needs an itemized list of what exactly is needed from the city and what they are asking for will help the city have more clarity on donations. Bryan said that any donation requests should also be required to attend the council meeting to state what they are looking for in case the council has questions. In order for the city to distribute donations the requesting party should have to be present and not just send a request through Melissa. Maxa asked if the city should place a stipulation stating that they need to present an itemized list of their needs, and either attend in person or have a detailed letter stating the details along with a statement of how the donation would impact the community directly. Bryan asked Melissa to draft up a policy to bring back to council next month for review. Maxa also liked the idea of the policy stating that the City will not donate to any political parties, or for-profit organizations, and the donation has to directly have a positive impact on the community as a whole.

**Bigfork River Board Donation Request:** The Bigfork River Board has asked the City of Bigfork for a donation that would be used to purchase water monitoring supplies, assist schools, pay membership fees and technical expenses, pay per diems and mileage to members and other

board approved expenses as needed. **Motion to donate \$250.00 to the Bigfork River Board by Boone, seconded by Maxa, and MCU.**

**OTHER/ ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Aaron OFF from May 29, 2023 through July 11<sup>th</sup> (Medical Leave for Surgery)

Joe will be back to work on June 1, 2023. **Motion was made that in case of an emergency during this time the Council has given authority to Public works or Melissa to call in for backup help from any other municipality should we need the help with city Duties by Boone, seconded by Scheff, and MCU.**

Next meeting is June 13, 2023, at 5:30PM at Bigfork City Hall

Motion to adjourn at 6:57 p.m. by Maxa, seconded by Boone, and MCU.

Melissa J. Grover

*City Clerk/Treasurer*

Approved at the regular meeting held on  
June 13, 2023

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Mayor