

Fertile City Council Minutes February 11, 2013

The Fertile City Council held its regular meeting on Monday, February 11, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Present were: Mayor Brian Nephew, Council members Dennis Hasler, Linda Widrig, Todd Wise, and Tanner Lehmann.

Barry Robertson, Fair Meadow Administrator, was unavailable for the meeting but had submitted his monthly written report to Council members prior to the meeting.

Kevin Nephew, Public Works Director, was also unavailable for the meeting due to snow removal needs.

After a review of the minutes of the January 14, 2013 meeting Council member Wise made a motion to approve, seconded by Council member Hasler. The motion carried.

The next item up for discussion was the Treasurer's Report and Bills. There was a question regarding the items indicated as flow throughs on the monthly reports. Deputy Administrator Liden explained that these were generally grant funds that were paid to the City to reimburse expenses already paid by the City on behalf of another non-profit organization. The funding for the new sign south of town as well as the Nature Play Space were cited as examples of these.

There was then a question on the \$42,200 check that had been paid to the EDA. Administrator Frohrip explained that this was the annual budgeted amount to be transferred to the EDA to fund some of their activities. He explained further that the transfer in January was for 2012.

Council member Hasler then made the motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Bills. The motion was seconded by Council member Widrig and was carried.

A request for the vacation of an alley was then brought to the Council. It was explained to the Council that the alley was between Doris Wang's and Erman Ueland's and that the alley currently was a dead-end. Otter Tail would have to be consulted on the vacation since there was a utility line in the alley. Administrator Frohrip explained that the Council would have to hold a public hearing at next month's meeting as the next stage in the process.

Upon further discussion, Council member Hasler made the motion that the request be accepted and a Public Hearing scheduled for the next Council meeting. Council member Lehmann seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

Steve Emery from Widseth, Smith and Nolting then appeared before the Council. Emery presented the Council with two copies of the plans and specifications for the utility expansion for the Industrial Park and Peterson's Subdivision. One copy of the plans was to be filed with the Department of Health. Emery explained that they were ready to advertise for bids on the sewer and lift station. The bids would be received through March 7th, then tabulated to be presented to the Council at the March meeting. After further discussion, Council member Wise, seconded by Council member Hasler, made the motion to approve advertising for bids on the project. The motion was carried.

Administrator Frohrip then addressed Steve Emery regarding looking at the elevations in the Industrial Park. He stated that there were three potential clients for the Park and that there needs to be more work done on the east end. Frohrip instructed Steve Emery that he would like to get some estimates from Widseth, Smith and Nolting on getting this done.

The next item up for discussion was the inventory sheets that had been included in the packets. Frohrip explained that the spreadsheet was the list of assets with a value over \$5,000 and/or a five year life or more. He explained that the other sheets were a listing than Kevin had done a few years ago that needed to be updated. He suggested that Council members take a tour of the shops to see the equipment that the City has.

There was then discussion on whether some of the old equipment needed to be cleaned out. For example, Frohrip said there were seven generators and of these, only four were operational. Mayor Nephew then explained that extra generators could be needed in an emergency at the lift stations. This was followed by a conversation on perhaps holding an auction like other Cities and the Sheriff's Department do from time to time.

Council member Hasler then brought up doing an annual inventory to keep better track of the equipment. Administrator Frohrip explained that it would be better to update on an ongoing basis as equipment was retired and purchased. This led to a discussion on a bike that was purchased several years ago and was no longer in the shop. Mayor Nephew explained the history of the bike purchase and that the bike had not been in the shop for many years already.

Council member Hasler then pointed out the note at the bottom of the inventory memo about personnel matters. Frohrip explained that the Personnel Committee would work on those matters later this year. He further explained that any work on job descriptions should involve the City attorney since they can lead to legal issues.

Council member Hasler then brought up evaluating the number of employees that the City currently has and the full and part time status of the employees. Council member Hasler questioned when the City started having two full-time Public Works employees. Mayor Nephew explained that there had been two employees in Public Works for most of the City's history. He then went on to explain that it was necessary to have two people full time to cover the tasks they were required to do and also to cover for vacation and sick days.

Council member Hasler then questioned whether it was necessary to have three employees in the summer months. Administrator Frohrip explained that this was quite often needed to get all the mowing done, especially when there were other projects being worked on.

Council member Hasler then inquired about whether there had always been a cleaning person hired for the Community Center. Mayor Nephew stated that there had always been a cleaning person except for a couple of years when Mayor Duane Knutson had done some of the cleaning.

Administrator Frohrip explained that most of his time is spent on Economic Development and that he spends as much as 20 to 30 hours per week on development. Council member Widrig then asked who the three potential clients were for the Industrial Park. Frohrip stated that he couldn't name them at this point at a public meeting. Mayor Nephew further explained that his was usually the case since sometimes these potential clients don't want to go public yet.

Council member Widrig then questioned why she had been hearing about potential clients for years and was wondering why nothing had come in yet. Mayor Nephew explained that the Industrial Park wasn't ready yet but could accommodate industry when the lift station was in. This led to a discussion on the capacity of the sewer lagoons and whether they would need to be increased to accommodate an industry that uses a large amount of water.

Council member Widrig then brought up work logs. Administrator Frohrip explained that he had Kevin and Dana working on them now. Widrig stated that she would like to see all employees do work logs. Administrator Frohrip stated that he couldn't do a log because he was constantly going back and forth between tasks.

Then the discussion went into the area of job descriptions and whether or not you could have an accurate job description for the City Administrator position. Council member Widrig then shared a job description that the City of Ada had posted on their website since they were seeking a new Administrator. Mayor Nephew stated that the Council could ask Frohrip to write his job description but that it would have to be evaluated by an attorney.

This was followed by further discussion of the City Administrator job description. Administrator Frohrip then explained about the duties of clerk, treasurer and administrator stating that the Administrator is the focal point for any questions that citizens may have. Council member Hasler then questioned whether he should redirect calls that he receives from citizens to the City Office. Mayor Nephew said that it would be best to direct calls to the City Office but that Council members could then follow up by questioning Administrator Frohrip about whether he had received such calls. Frohrip then asked Hasler whether the people calling to complain were the same ones all the time. Hasler responded that some of them were.

Council member Widrig then asked Frohrip who is on the Personnel Committee and Frohrip responded that Council members Hasler and Widrig were and that they would be working on ironing out issues. The committee's findings would then be brought to the Council. Mayor Nephew then explained the items that the Personnel Committee would address. He also stated that the League and the City attorney would be good reference points for the Committee.

The next agenda item brought to the Council was a Community Club request that the City share the cost of replacing the final twelve to fourteen Christmas decorations that need replacing. After further discussion, Council member Wise made a motion to match the funds to get the decorations replaced. The motion was seconded by Council member Hasler and was carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Brian Nephew, Mayor

John J. Frohrip, City Administrator