

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Paul Kittelson. Members present: Sue Fitz, Bob Claussen, Gary Landmark, and Paul Kittelson. Members absent: Ben Hess. Also present: City Manager Rob Wolfington, Finance Director Glen Pederson, Tom Lee, Scott Vick, Joe Torbert, Frank Christianson, Joe Holm, and Tim Kletscher.

There was no one with unscheduled business to come before the Council.

It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to approve the January 3, 2011 Regular City Council Meeting.

The Council reviewed the following correspondence:

- a. Relay for Life dated 1.3.2011: The Council acknowledged their request to allow them to run their event at Northside Recreation overnight until 8 am on June 18, 2011.
- b. Upper MN Valley RDC RE: Nomination of a municipal representative. This item was tabled to allow time to see if anyone would be available to attend these meetings.
- c. Countryside Public Health Tobacco Compliance. It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to enter into a contract with Countryside Public Health to conduct tobacco compliance checks for 2011.
- d. MN Historical Society dated 1.4.11 RE: Water Treatment #2 Improvement Project
- e. MPCA dated 1.6.11 RE: Water Treatment #2 Improvement Project

It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to appoint Jim Hilleren to a vacancy on the Cemetery Board with his term expiring December 31, 2013.

The Council was informed of the following traveling events:

- a. Mayor, City Manager and Finance Director to Sioux Falls Feb. 3-4 to attend MRES Technology Days
- b. Mayor and City Manager to St. Paul for CGMC Legislative meeting on Feb. 9 and to help man the booth at the Minneapolis RV and Recreation Show on Feb. 10

Joe Holm from Let's Go Fishing came before the Council to discuss the proposed amendment to Section 111.10, Use of Profits, of the City Code. He expressed that his group has been negligent in providing information to the Council but was unaware of the Council's previous requests. He has contacted the local Veteran's Service Office to see if they were interested in participating in the Let's Go Fishing activities. After discussion, the Council tabled action on the second reading of this proposed amendment until the February 22 Council meeting to allow time for Let's Go Fishing to provide an action plan for this summer season and provide financial numbers and participant numbers from the Benson area. Member Landmark was going to talk to the VFW, Veteran's Service Office and Benson HRA to obtain some participation numbers.

The next item discussed was the DeMarce Theatre Proposal. The City Manager informed the Council that the EDA is recommending that the Council approve a five year loan/grant to Tim and Susie Kletscher to come out of the EDA Fund with 1/5 forgiven after each year of continued operation. The money will be used to purchase the real estate, inventory, and equipment. Within three years of closing, the Kletschers have agreed to invest no less than \$80,000 of additional capital into improvements at the theatre. It was moved by Claussen,

seconded by Landmark and carried unanimously to approve the loan/grant to the Kletschers as recommended by the EDA. Staff informed the Council that fundraising efforts to solicit for donations/pledges to replace the \$50,000 loan/grant have begun.

It was moved by Claussen, seconded by Landmark and carried unanimously to approve a \$10,000 donation to the Benson Golf Club from General Fund Reserves to pay down their operating line of credit.

The City Manager informed the Council that the City is hosting a meeting on January 27 at 1:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers to prepare for the potential of spring flooding.

It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Fitz and carried unanimously to approve the following 2011 budgets: 1) Concrete Projects Fund, 2) Storm Water Fund, 3) Library Endowment Fund, 4) Perpetual Care Cemetery, and 5) Tax Increment District #4.

It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to approve the appointment of the following Benson Fire Department officers for 2011 – 2012:

Chief	Mark Schreck
First Assistant Chief	Rob Lee
Second Assistant Chief	Tom Ascheman
Captain	Dave Vollan
Lieutenant	Robert Hoberg
Secretary	David Ebert

It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Fitz and carried unanimously to approve two sets of bills and warrants in the amount of \$634,186.47.

Council Member Landmark offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption:

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF LGA
(RESOLUTION 2011-01)**

WHEREAS, LGA is a state funded property tax relief program that helps reduce the property tax burden on homeowners and businesses in Benson.

WHEREAS, without LGA property taxes would have to be increased by 63% or services would have to be cut even more in Benson.

WHEREAS, LGA to Benson has already been cut \$349,092 since 2003 resulting in a 64% property tax increase and cuts in many city services.

WHEREAS, the city has already reduced its workforce by not replacing a retired police officer or a retired street department supervisor and reduced services by reducing street maintenance and delaying planned street reconstruction.

WHEREAS, the city will have to higher taxes on its residents and businesses and lower services if LGA is cut or eliminated.

WHEREAS, higher property taxes and lower services in Benson will make it even less competitive for jobs and economic growth with suburban cities in Minnesota and in cities in other states.

WHEREAS, the state has certified that Benson will receive \$897,970 in LGA for 2011.

WHEREAS, the city has set its budget and will be several months into its budget year before the Legislature acts on the state budget.

WHEREAS, LGA has already been cut over \$1 billion and city property taxes are up 59% since 2003.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the city of Benson urges the Legislature to keep its promise and pay the city the \$897,970 of LGA it already certified to the city for 2011.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislature maintain funding for LGA at its current funding level for 2011 and 2012.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, upon passage, this resolution be forwarded to the Governor, the Speaker of the House, the Senate Majority Leader, and to the members of the State Legislature representing the city of Benson.

Council Member Claussen seconded the foregoing Resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Landmark, Claussen, Fitz, Kittelson. NAYS: None. ABSENT: Hess. Whereupon the Mayor declared Resolution No. 2011-01 duly passed and adopted.

It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk