

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 20, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Paul Kittelson. Members present: Sue Fitz, Anne Johnson, Bob Claussen, Gary Landmark, and Paul Kittelson. Members absent: None. Also present: City Manager Rob Wolfington, Finance Director Glen Pederson, Public Works Director Elliot Nelson, Bill Radio, and Pat Duffy.

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

It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to approve the following minutes on the consent agenda:

- a. January 2, 2009 Special City Council Meeting
- b. January 5, 2009 Regular City Council Meeting
- c. January 5, 2009 Benson Planning Commission Meeting
- d. December 10, 2008 Benson HRA Meeting
- e. December 29, 2008 Benson HRA Meeting
- f. December 22, 2008 Benson Golf Club Board of Directors Meeting

The City Manager reviewed the following correspondence with the Council:

- a. Dept. of Employment & Ec. Dev. RE: Approval of a MIF grant for the SpecSys, Inc. project
- b. Benson Public Schools RE: Making Montana Avenue a one-way street between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets
- c. Invoice for wastewater damage at 308 – 18<sup>th</sup> St. No. The City Manager informed the Council that the wastewater department responded to a sewer blockage call. They used the jet truck to clear the blockage but further up the line it caused a backup at 308 – 18<sup>th</sup> St. No. It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to pay the invoice in the amount of \$2,174.70 because this was an innocent party.

The City Manager informed the Council that two applications for City board appointments were received today. The Mayor mentioned that additional applications for the Library Board are expected shortly. The City Manager withdrew his application to the Library Board. It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to appoint Brad Johnson to the Library Board with his term expiring December 31, 2009. It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to appoint Sandy Hill to the Tourism Board with her term expiring December 31, 2011.

It was moved by Johnson, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to approve a gambling permit to the Swift County Pheasants Forever for a raffle at McKinney's on March 6, 2009.

There was a discussion about the Sidewalk Café Ordinance. Pat Duffy, Duffy's Bar and Grill, was present for the discussion and asked for clarification on a couple of items. There was a consensus of the Council to have staff prepare language that would implement a five year sunset of this ordinance for the Council to consider at their next meeting. It was moved by Claussen,

seconded by Fitz and carried unanimously to approve the First Reading of an Ordinance to Adopt Chapter 119: Sidewalk Cafes.

Bill Radio from Missouri River Energy Services reviewed the T-1 Transmission Service Agreement with the Council. The term of the agreement is January 1, 2010 through January 1, 2046. The agreement should be ready by February. MRES is asking for a letter of intent by the MRES annual meeting. After discussion, there was a consensus of the Council to sign a letter of intent to sign the agreement.

Bill Radio gave an update on the Big Stone II power plant project. He said they received approval from the Minnesota Public Utility Commission with a couple of conditions.

It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to approve the appointment of the following Benson Fire Department officers for 2009 – 2010:

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

The City Manager informed the Council that to collect about \$75,000 annually from a natural gas franchise meter tax it would cost residential customers about \$3 per month and commercial customers \$75 per month. After discussion, staff was directed to prepare a draft natural gas franchise fee ordinance and what customer costs would be to collect \$50,000 from a meter tax.

It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to approve Pay Request #8 from Harold K. Scholz for the Substation Construction Project in the amount of \$195,581.73.

The Public Works Director updated the Council on the electric utility planned outage to take place on Saturday, January 24.

The City Manager informed the Council that the Central Business District Sidewalk Reconstruction Project estimate is \$180,000. It was mentioned the need to invite affected business owners to a meeting to inform them what their individual costs would be. It was mentioned the need to find out what the individual costs are before making a decision whether to move forward with this project.

It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Johnson and carried unanimously to approve entering into a contract with the Upper Minnesota Valley RDC to update the Comprehensive Plan in the amount of \$14,820.

It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to approve two sets of bills and warrants in the amount of \$1,084,075.69.

The Finance Director informed the Council that the last time the Pay Equity Report was filed was in 2005. The City is in compliance and needs to file the Pay Equity Report by the end of the month. It was moved by Landmark, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to approve the Pay Equity Report.

The City Manager informed the Council that staff has met with the AFSCME union representatives and will meet next week with the LELS union representatives to discuss revenues and the City's budget. He will be conducting monthly meetings with union representatives to review revenues and the budget.

The City Manager informed the Council that the Matt Goebel arbitration hearing was held last week and are waiting for the determination of that hearing.

It was moved by Fitz, seconded by Claussen and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

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Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk