

**MINUTES – SPECIAL BENSON CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JOINT CITY-COUNTY-SWIFT COUNTY-BENSON HEALTH SERVICES
MARCH 30, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Collins telephonically. Members present: Jack Evenson, Terri Collins, Mark Schreck, Jon Buyck & Lucas Olson. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Rob Wolfington, Director of Finance Glen Pederson, County Commissioners Gary Hendrickx, Joe Fox, Pete Peterson, Ed Pederson and Eric Rudnigen, Swift County Manager Kelsey Baker, Swift County-Benson Healthcare Services. (SCBHS) Board Members Jill Martin, Patty Schreck, Jill Hedman, Pat Langan, SCBHS Attorney Don Wilcox, Ryan Bjerke with CentraCare, Brian Lydick with Carris Health, George Eilerts from Northland Securities, SCBHS Co-CEOs Dan Enderson & Melissa Thompson and Swift County Attorney Danielle Olson.

SCBHS Board Chair Patty Schreck stated the purpose of the joint City Council, County Commissioner, Hospital Board meeting via teleconference is to make a decision on refinancing options for Swift County-Benson Health Services. She noted all parties are joined via teleconference due to COVID-19. Everyone introduced themselves. She went on to thank the City and County for all they have done for the Hospital over the years.

Enderson reviewed the March 2, 2020 meeting and the financing options discussed. On March 26th the Hospital Board passed a resolution approving option 4 as follows:

- The City issues a loan to the Hospital District which is used to pay off the 2013 bonds.
- Issue Tax Exempt Bonds supported with GO Pledge of Swift County.
- \$1,000,000 City Capital Contribution over the next 2 years.
- Incorporate ROI into the Hospital District.
- Hospital will save approximately \$5,000,000 with Refinancing.
- County Debt direct loan is \$1.3 Million, and a GO Outstanding Pledge of \$12.5 Million.

After discussion the Mayor asked if the City Council had any questions, to which there were none. It was then moved by Evenson, and seconded by Schreck to approve an extension of financial assistance to Swift County-Benson Health Services in the form of a bond purchase in an amount necessary to pay off the balances owed by them on their 2013 Hospital Revenue Bonds. A roll-call vote was taken as follows: AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Olson, Buyck, Collins. NAYES: None. The motion passed unanimously.

County Board Chairman Hendrickx then discussed several meetings discussing refinancing the Bremer Bank loan and GO Backing of new bond financing. Hendrix asked if approving Resolution 2020-3 was in order. It was moved by Commissioner Fox to approve resolution 2020-3, seconded by Peterson. Hendrickx called for discussion: Commissioner Pederson asked several questions of Enderson on the Bremer Bank Loan, and if the financing passes could it be subject to a backward referendum. Attorney Olson answered it is possible. Eilerts from Northland Securities said the interest is between 2.25-2.4% right now and feels the market has settled. Enderson said they have filed for tax exempt status with the state for Scandihaven which is waiting for a court date. Commissioner Pederson also asked City Manager Wolfington if they could use more Xcel dollars to fund the hospital. Wolfington stated the Xcel monies must be used for Economic Development and must meet 4 criteria: Infrastructure, jobs, Utilities consumption and taxes. Our findings of fact define how we use the Xcel dollars. He said our motion met the findings of facts. He also stated the City has committed \$2 Million to SCBHS. Hendrickx called for a vote which went as follows: AYES: Peterson, Hendrickx, Fox. NAYES: Pederson, Rudnigen. Chairman Patty Schreck thanked the County and City.

The City Council recessed at 6:13 p.m. to reconvene later for City business.

The City Council was reconvened by Mayor Collins telephonically at 6:20 p.m. Those present were Councilmembers Mark Schreck, Jack Evenson, Lucas Olson, Jon Buyck and Terri Collins. Also present Director of Finance Glen Pederson, City Manager Rob Wolfington and Police Chief Ian Hodge.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the Agenda. North American Fertilizer and Minnesota Department of Commerce memo was added. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck to approve the amended agenda. The following vote was taken: AYES: Olson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck and Evenson. NAYES: None. The motion passed unanimously.

There was no one with unscheduled business.

Wolfington discussed the feasibility study done on the Wastewater Treatment Plant to add flood protection. In order for us to improve our chance for federal funds to do this, he is asking to contract with the Upper Minnesota Valley Rural Development Commission to author a grant to the Department of Commerce Federal EDA for a disaster supplemental notice of funding opportunity. Their fee is \$10,560. After discussion it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Buyck and the following vote was taken: AYES: Olson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck and Evenson. NAYES: None. The motion passed unanimously to have staff execute the contract for services.

It was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to grant a pay request for the Police K-9 in the amount of \$15,395.00. The following vote was taken: AYES: Olson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck and Evenson. NAYES: None. The motion for a pay request to Performance Kennels Inc. passed unanimously.

Next was a pay request from KHC Construction for work in the WWTP on the filters. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson to pay KHC Construction's pay request #4 in the amount of \$74,080.26. the following vote was taken: AYES: Olson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck and Evenson. NAYES: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Hodge discussed the possibility of going into homes for body retrieval of those who have died from COVID-19. He wants the maximum protection for his officers and wants to order two self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). He said there might be a grant for these. He also feels it will qualify for FEMA reimbursement. Wolfington said it takes at least 9 months for FEMA reimbursements, but with how things are now who knows how long it might take. When asked Wolfington said he has seen a 75% reimbursement rate in the past. Hodge said he used the Fire Department to help him obtain a quote. Schreck questioned why only one quote and are other PDs using SCBAs? Hodge said some towns will use their Fire Departments for body retrieval. He also said he doesn't want the FD going into homes and becoming contaminated. Schreck asked if the Swift County Sheriff is doing this and if not will they participate in the expense of purchasing, training and upkeep. Schreck then made a motion to table this request until there can be more information obtained, with a second by Buyck. Hodge said he could continue to research the issue. There was discussion on a grant and the desire to keep the PD safe. A vote was taken: AYES: Schreck, Buyck. NAYES: Collins, Olson, Evenson. The motion failed. Evenson then made a motion to accept the quote from Emergency Response Solutions for 2 SCBAs in the amount of \$12,360.88. It was seconded by Olson and the following vote was taken: AYES: Olson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck and Evenson. NAYES: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Wolfington Said North American Fertilizer wishes to expand and needs a15,000 kva electric transformer at their business. Our Line Department has been looking for one to buy from another town with no luck. This will have to be built and will take 8-10 weeks to receive it. Wolfington estimated the

cost could run up to \$35,000 for the transformer. After discussion, it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Olson to order the transformer. The following vote was taken: AYES: Olson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck and Evenson. NAYES: None. The motion passed unanimously to order the transformer not to exceed \$35,000.

Wolfington presented a memo from the Department of Commerce. They are asking the Municipal Utility of Benson extend the Cold Weather Rule and work with customers to arrange payment plans, and waive late fees during this peacetime emergency declared by Governor Walz. Wolfington stated the City will be complying with the Department of Commerce's wish.

Wolfington thanked the Council for their leadership with the SCBHS Funding.

There being no further business to come before the Council upon motion by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:53 p.m. A vote was taken: AYES: Olson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck and Evenson. NAYES: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor

City Clerk