

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
CITY HALL  
MAY 16, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Collins. Members present: Jack Evenson, Terri Collins, Jon Buyck, Mark Schreck & Lucas Olson. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Glen Pederson, Police Chief Ian Hodge, Public Works Director Dan Gens, CEDA Representative Hillary Tweed & Reed Anfinson. CEDA Representative Sara Weese telephonically.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. She asked for any changes to the agenda. Stantec Clearwell contract amendment, Flag Day Parade request for assistance, Pioneerland Band Festival Committee Request for support and City Manager Memorandum of Understanding was added. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Olsonson and carried unanimously to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- May 2, 2022 City Council Minutes
- April 4, 2022 Planning Commission Minutes
- July 26, 2021 Park Board Minutes
- Johnson Jetline Request for Payment - \$8,684.00
- Gambling Permit – Northern Lights Trails – November 18, 2022
- Electronic Transfers:  
Payroll: May 5, 2022 - \$143,762.81

There was no one with unscheduled business.

Pederson presented a proposal for contract modification for the WWTF miscellaneous upgrades project from Stantec. A revised proposal was distributed to replace the one sent out in the packets. This proposal stated Stantaec will provide general construction administration services. They will have part-time on-site observation services, and provide Record Drawings at the end of the project. The total increase is \$10,742. After discussion, it was moved by Olson, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the budget increase for the Wastewater Treatment Facility miscellaneous upgrades in the amount of \$10,742.

Next was a request from Stantec to amend the Clearwell engineering project budget. Additions include:

1. Piping modifications, site/drainage improvements, storm lift station for \$28,000
2. Construction administration, special inspections, construction engineering for \$85,000

Pederson said the total increase is \$113,000. The project is a \$2.6 million project, and recommended approval. After discussion it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the amended Clearwell project as presented.

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck to approve the Second Reading of An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Map of the City of Benson. The following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck. NAYS: None. ABSTAIN: Olson.

Pederson said former City Manager Wolfington contacted an attorney with MRES to help with the upcoming Nature Energy project. They said they have a conflict of interest and referred us to a respected attorney well versed in electrical negotiations. Pederson said we will also need an electrical attorney with the new 115 KV line coming into town. He presented a Letter of Engagement from Kaela Brennan of McGrann, Shea, Carnival, Straughn & Lamb, Chartered Attorneys. Pederson went on to say Nature Energy is anxious to start negotiations and recommended approval of the letter of engagement. After discussion it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the letter of engagement with Kaela Brennan as presented.

Next Mayor Collins discussed the David Drown & Associates compensation Study proposal and said the personnel committee met via conference call with their representative and is prepared to recommend option 3 which included market analysis, compare our positions with the market and calculate budget provisions for implementing compensation adjustments. Councilmember Schreck made a motion to approve option 3 in the David Drown proposal but expressed his reservations while doing so. After discussion the motion died for a lack of a second.

Next Mayor Collins discussed the second posting for the City Manager search. She had hoped to have the salary study done in order to find out if what we are offering for the City Manager wage is adequate. After discussion the Council came to the consensus the personnel committee should conduct a zoom meeting with Lisa Donabauer with David Drown and come back with a wage recommendation for the City Manager position. The Council directed Pederson to set the meeting up.

Pederson presented an addendum to the joint resolution between Toring Township and the City of Benson for the Mooberry property. He went on to explain the original resolution was missing a key point, if the township had obligations, the City of Benson must make that whole. This addendum waives the obligation reimbursement for special assessments. After discussion, it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the addendum to the joint resolution adopted by the Council at the February 7, 2022 Council Meeting as presented.

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the bills and warrants in the amount of \$473,516.52.

Pederson discussed the American Rescue Plan Act. He said it is time to start discussion on what to use the \$332,000 for. He presented a list of eligible uses. He said there doesn't need to be a decision now, but suggested the Council think about what long term investment that makes a difference would be an appropriate use of the money. He said we must spend it by 2025. He also suggested they look at the strategic plan for suggestions.

Gens and Hodge gave an update on the damages from the 100-mph wind storm on May 12, 2022. Gens said the public works have been working on moving trees to make roads passable. He said the line department is finally catching up. The wastewater plant was overflowing, but the guys are working to correct the issue. He said there were a couple sink holes and next they will be looking at pot holes. Hodge said there were a couple small fires once the electric lines were re-energized. Generation stopped at about 10:30 p.m. Law enforcement encountered a couple domestics and a DWI during the clean-up. He felt everyone did a great job. Hodge then suggested there be a table-top debriefing to focus on more emergency management communications.

Pederson said during the storm, part of the lower portion of the elevator blew off and across highway 9 into the neighbor's tree and yard. He said the building was not safe with part of the roof and side torn off, and wants to engage Kennedy to finish taking the damaged part down for safety reasons. He went on to say with the condition of the building we need to proceed with the demolition of the elevator. LandTeam said all the plans are done, and all that is left is a railroad permit and a detour application with MnDOT. Pederson said he reached out to former City Manager Wolfington to get advice on contacts to make this happen. He said he isn't sure when specs for this project will be ready.

Next was list that is presented annually by the Band Fest committee asking for help with barricades and other set-up and tear down assistance. Also presented was Pioneerland Band Festival Committee Request for support. After discussion it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the request for \$3,500 to come from tourism funds.

Pederson reminded the Council of the Nature Energy open house on Thursday at the Benson Golf Club 4-7 p.m. Buyck asked to meet with the Nature Energy representatives earlier in the day as he won't be able to attend the afternoon open house. Tweed said she will work with Buyck and the Nature Energy group to set up a time.

Next Pederson presented a Memorandum of Understanding between himself and the Personnel Committee. He said when the City conducted City Manager interviews, he was directed by the personnel committee to draw up a contract. The Committee decided they didn't want a contract after all as it might dissuade the Council from proceeding with the City Manager search. Pederson proceeded through the Memorandum of Understanding drawn up at the Personnel Committee's request. There was concern a memorandum isn't formal enough. Pederson offered to work with Wilcox to draw up a contract with the terms from the memorandum of understanding and bring it back to the June 6, 2022 Council meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Olson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:30 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk