

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
CITY HALL  
MAY 2, 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 and CEDA Representatives Hillary Tweed & Sara Weese.

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. Swift County HRA Housing Grant was added. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

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

- April 18, 2022 City Council Minutes
- April 13, 2022 Special City Council Minutes
- City of Benson Utilities – Power Supply Mix
- DGR Engineering Pay Request #4 – \$6,000 – Balance to Finish - \$12,000
- LandTeam Incorporated Pay Request - \$5,370 - Balance to Finish - \$13,742.96
- Rodeberg & Berryman Inc. – Wisconsin Ave Utility Improvements Project - \$2,860.00
- Lions Club of Benson – Gambling Permit – October 1, 2022
- Ducks Unlimited Prairie Benson #57 – Gambling Permit – May 25, 2022
- Electronic Transfers:
- Payroll: April 21, 2022 - \$95,803.22

There was no one with unscheduled business.

First was a conditional use permit (CUP) for Nutrien Ag at 195 - 25<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW, Benson. Buyck said they want to build a warehouse on the lot they own south of their current building. It will be used to store seed and chemicals. It will have warm and cold storage and they hope to eventually process seed with chemicals and send it out to the farmer from there. He went on to say the Planning Commission held a public hearing at noon for the CUP, and found the warehouse would not be disruptive to the neighbors, and recommended approval. After discussion, it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve CUP #2022-03 with the following conditions:

1. The warehouse continues to be used for agricultural use and meet the ag conditions in an I-1 zone.
2. Observe and conform to the setbacks for the Great River Energy Services and City of Benson Power lines.
3. Observe and continue safe storage and use of chemicals in accordance with state and federal guidelines.

Next Pederson approached to discuss a petition to rezone a piece of property from Stony Ridge Foods at 640 Atlantic Avenue. The current property is zoned R-2 and B-2, and are asking to rezone it to I-1. Their property to the west was rezoned in 2020 to I-1. The parcel they are asking to be rezoned is an

odd shaped parcel. Stony Ridge wants this land as a buffer between their edible bean plant and the proposed slaughterhouse to the east of their current plant. The lot was discussed and a certificate of survey reviewed. Pederson said the Planning Commission made a recommendation to approve the zoning request based on the findings of fact mirroring the March 23, 2020 report prepared by Stantec. There were no written or verbal comments for or against the petition. After discussion it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Evenson to approve the First 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 presented a preliminary electric study for the Nature Energy facility on how the City can best serve their electrical needs. Wolfington had contacted MRES to help determine who will pay for the electrical line service from Benson out to the Nature Energy site. Their attorney was unable to help with the determination because of conflict of interest. He then referred us to an attorney in Minneapolis. Pederson proposed a conference call with DGR at a Utility Board meeting to review their memo. He went on to say the DGR study said with the addition of the Nature Energy load, there would be a 30-minute period when the existing substation transformer could be overloaded assuming Nature Energy is running at peak at the same time the City is experiencing a peak load.

Pederson presented a proposal for modifications for the WWTF project. Gens approached to discuss the modifications and costs. There was discussion on the four points they wish to modify and the Council agreed to table the proposal to the next meeting for clarification.

Gens said we received quotes on the Wisconsin Avenue project. We sent a request for quotes to 5 companies and received 2 quotes back as follows:

- Duinick, Inc. - \$185,165.00
- Crow River Construction - \$193,200.00

After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the quote from Duinick Inc. in the amount of \$185,165.00. Olson asked how long the project will take. Gens said that will be discussed at the pre-construction meeting. Gens gave some projects updates. East Pacific Avenue road work will begin around June 1, 2022. The sanitary-storm sewer cross connection was located and the manhole will be filled in to stop the cross. The water tower is scheduled to be cleaned inside tomorrow. They are transferring sludge out of the wastewater plant for the upcoming project and lastly, we are figuring out parking for the nursing home staff during the clear well project.

Pederson presented a timeline from David Drown for Council consideration on the search for a City Manager to start in August and asked for City Council thoughts. There was discussion on moving the study up to June. Pederson said on the agenda next is a request for a salary compensation study and feels waiting until the study is complete would be beneficial with setting the City Manager salary before the search. After discussion, it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to direct Pederson to go back to Liza with David Drown to present an accelerated timeline.

Next Pederson said he contacted a couple firms to for proposals on conducting a salary compensation study. He received quotes from David Drown and Gallagher. He said Swift County is currently using David Drown. Gallagher's proposal is for \$19,500. David Drown has five options to consider. He said he would like to do the job evaluations with the Ongoing Maintenance option which would analyze 1/3 of each job category a year. The first year would be City Manager and administrative jobs and Police as there are negotiations this year with LELS. If you do the full compensation package it totals \$15,900. Evenson asked if the League of Minnesota Cities does salary surveys. Pederson said they don't do comprehensive studies, only salary surveys. Collins asked when was the last time a comprehensive salary study has been done. Pederson said not in his 35 years with the City. There was discussion on the process. Collins asked where in the budget we would pay for this. Pederson said Contracted Services. He also said it is important to retain our trained employees. Every 3 years we have to file a Comparable Worth report with the State of Minnesota to be sure all jobs are in line between male

and female dominated jobs. Options were discussed, and Pederson said at a minimum he recommended the three year plan It was moved by Buyck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to have the personnel committee schedule a video chat with David Drown and Associates and bring back a recommendation to the Council.

Pederson explained Swift County HRA had a county-wide grant in place to fix up homes in the County. Benson had agreed to fund 4 grants awarding up to \$25,000 each using Xcel grant dollars. Three homes were awarded. Today, Swift County HRA is asking for reimbursement for the first one. It was moved by Olson, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the grant reimbursement request in the amount of \$21,000.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:25 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk