

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 4, 2018**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Collins. Members present: Jack Evenson, Terri Collins, Mark Schreck & Lucas Olson. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Rob Wolfington, Director of Finance Glen Pederson, Police Chief Ian Hodge, Fire Chief Jeff Reuss, Public Works Director Dan Gens, Larry Smith, Mark & Kaden Burns, School Superintendent Dennis Laumeyer and Darrin Ogdahl with Conway, Dueth and Schmiesing.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Collins asked for any changes or additions to the agenda. Wolfington asked to add discussion on back yard swimming pools, Alumni Director, 13 Ways to Kill a Community, and the Wall Street Journal's housing article. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

It was moved by Schreck seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- May 21, 2018 City Council Minutes
- Special Use Permit to Dispose of Septic Tank Sludge to Harry's Pumping Service
- Memo from League of Minnesota Cities declaring a Zero Dues Increase for 2019

The Mayor asked for people with unscheduled business, to which there were none.

Fire Chief Reuss approached the Council with a capital authorization for a 4 wheeler to help fight grass fires. The vehicle will have tracks instead of wheels to help avoid the possibility of getting stuck in the field. Mayor Collins suggested buying local from Midwest Machinery. Schreck asked what the officer's recommendation was. Reuss said the Polaris Ranger. Reuss said the Fire Department already has a Polaris 6 wheel and wished they could get the same rig, but it is no longer made. He also said the State bid on these is more than the low quote from Motor Sports of Willmar. Wolfington stated he feels the public has the expectation we usually accept the lowest quote. After discussion, it was moved by Olson, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the quote from Motor Sports of Willmar in the amount of \$18,472.25.

Darrin Ogdahl with Conway, Dueth and Schmiesing presented the 2017 Annual Audit Report. Wolfington thanked Director of Finance Pederson and his staff for a job well done.

Superintendent Laumeyer approached the Council and gave an update on the facilities improvement plan referendum scheduled for August 2018. He stated a grassroots group brought a plan to the School Board who in turn approved and adopted the plan. He said they will reduce their footprint by 50,000 square feet. Some issues that will be addressed are a collaborative learning center, new auditorium, new childcare facility which the demand is ever growing, moving 5th graders back to Northside, expanding the trades area, new music room, new secured entrance to the secondary school to name a few. The referendum is for \$26 million. The first public meeting will be Monday, June 25 at 6pm in the high school cafeteria. Laumeyer said the School Board will be seeking City Council support in the future. He also stated the State of Minnesota's bonding bill secured funds to help schools secure their entrances. He said he is applying for the grant and it is a first come first served grant. 11 Grants will be awarded in outstate Minnesota.

Next Wolfington presented the 2019 funding request for the local transit service from Prairie Five Community Action Council. They are asking for \$10,667. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve including this expense in the 2019 budget.

Wolfington reported the detachment/annexation agreement between Torning Township and the City of Benson has been signed. This agreement will now be converted into a resolution and sent to the State of Minnesota.

Gens approached the Council. He received only one quote on the 14th Street North project. He said he solicited several companies but all are swamped this year with projects. After discussion, it was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the quote from T & K Kennedy in the amount of \$97,441.00.

Gens presented quotes from several companies on the overhead to underground project running south on highway 29. Border States, DSG, Stuart Irby and JT Services were the companies submitting quotes. The quotes were presented highlighting the low quotes. After review and discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the recommended low quotes as presented.

Next Wolfington had an update on the Xcel Energy Grant. He stated the first payment was due June 1, 2018, but we did not receive it. He went on to say the North Dakota Public Utilities Commission needs to approve the sale of Benson Power to Xcel Energy. They will meet on June 11, 2018 to decide if they need a public hearing. There will be a follow up meeting on June 13, 2018 or June 29, 2018.

Wolfington discussed the swimming pool ordinance. It states pools over 24” deep need a 4’ fence around it with a latch located on the top to prevent small children from getting into the pool by accident and drowning. Two residents claimed they did not know this, so we will put an ad in the paper to educate the public. The Police have reached out to several homeowners on this.

Wolfington discussed the need to generate population in the community and suggested hiring an alumni director. It would be a private non-profit entity. They would use social medial to generate interest in Benson through alumni contacts. There was concern some people would not appreciate their personal information being used to solicit them in this way. The Mayor has helped to develop this idea. She said there are no other communities doing this, and there was further discussion on how to organize this.

Wofington said author of *13 Ways to Kill A Community* Doug Griffiths is tentatively coming to Benson in September. This is out of a desire to bring the community together, discuss habits our community has that are productive and non-productive. There would be community and committee meetings to work on how to rally our community. He is available September 17-18, 2018 at a cost of \$25,000. He said he is looking for a location to hold the community meetings.

Lastly Wolfington shared an article with the Council he came across in the Wall Street Journal. It reported on the lack of single family homes in rural communities which there is a dire need. This could be an issue we can address when Doug Griffiths is here.

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 6:44 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk