

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR MEETING  
JULY 15, 2019**

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 Rob Wolfington, Public Works Director Dan Gens and Police Chief Ian Hodge.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Collins asked for any changes or additions to the agenda. The following items were added to the agenda: Gustie's Road, Community Center Committee Update, BNSF Railroad Visit, Benson Public Schools Term Sheet, and Mayor's Mingle Update. 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:

- July 1, 2019 City Council Minutes
- June 3, 2019 Planning Commission Minutes
- MRES Red Rocks Hydroelectric Project Update
- Donation – Travis Strickland – Tee Shirts Beautify Benson - \$24.00
- Donation – Stoney Ridge Foods – Beautify Benson - \$100.00
- Library Patrons - \$54.09
- Electronic Transfer to Payroll - July 3, 2019 - \$117,977.18

The Mayor asked for people with unscheduled business to which there was no one.

There was discussion on the request for support of the Sr. Nutrition Program. The Council reviewed current City's support of the senior citizen program. After discussion it was moved by Olson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to give \$1,000 to the Prairie Five Senior Nutrition program from the senior citizen program budget.

Gens presented a request from Benson Public Schools to change the bus and car traffic patterns at the high school and Northside Elementary. He first presented a map of the Northside school, with the proposal making Nevada Avenue a one way only going west between 18<sup>th</sup> St. N. and 20<sup>th</sup> St. N., with the designated bus drop off area on the north side of Nevada Avenue in front of the school. Next was traffic and bus drop off at the High School. The proposal is to make 14<sup>th</sup> St. N. a one way running south from Sunwall Avenue to Elizabeth Avenue, then continuing on Elizabeth to 13<sup>th</sup> St. N. remaining a one way. Bus drop off would be along 14<sup>th</sup> St. N. and Elizabeth Avenue. There was discussion of a parking area for school staff on the vacant lot north across from the Auxillary gym, but City staff felt this traffic would offer too much wear and tear on the alley. Chief Hodge was not available for questions at this time, but was on his way to the meeting.

Next were the bids to repair the chlorine damage at the water plant. It was reviewed by the Council. It was then moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to accept the low bid by MN Mechanical Solutions Inc. for \$511,275.00 less addendum bid No. 1 of <\$15,630.00> for a total of \$495,645.000.

Wolfington informed the Council the engineer on the Airport Arrival/Departure building project is working on his 4<sup>th</sup> funding attempt. To make this project work, we will need to be reimbursed in 2021,

which means the City's General fund will have to carry the \$83,403 until our reimbursement comes in. Wolfington stated he will bring the contract to the Council when the details are finalized.

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Buyck to approve a pay request from Stantec Engineering for chlorine damage remediation work in the amount of \$13,107.96. This will be reimbursed by insurance.

It was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve a pay request from Stantec engineers for zoning map updates, Fibrominn building assessment report and sanitary cost estimate in the amount of \$18,383.17.

Next Gens gave an update on Gustie's Road. He said he and former Public Works Director Elliot Nelson met to discuss drainage on the road. Stantec Engineering was also contacted. They discussed raising the east end of the road to slope toward the west end to aid in drainage. The culvert was filled in during railroad construction and re-opening this will be a key factor in draining water on the south side of the road to the north side of the road. The residents living along Gustie's road will be contacted with details of the plan for the road.

Evenson gave an update on the Community Center Committee. This committee was born out of the Strategic Plan. He said he invited 11 individuals, and 6 showed up. After a 2 ½ hour meeting they had a better idea what the center can look like. They went to their neighbors and friends for feedback, and came back with a variety of ideas of what should go into a community center. Funding and management of the facility was discussed at the meeting

Hodge arrived and discussed the school's traffic flow request with the Council. He added Northside School has always been a safety concern with buses and parents getting their kids to and from school. He reiterated the school's request to make this a permanent change. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to grant the school's request to make Nevada Avenue a one way street only going west between 18<sup>th</sup> St. N. and 20<sup>th</sup> St. N., and to make 14<sup>th</sup> St. N. a one way street running south from Sunwall Avenue to Elizabeth Avenue, then continuing on Elizabeth east to 13<sup>th</sup> St. N. only for the duration of the school construction, then to re-evaluate whether to make this change permanent after construction is complete.

Next Wolfington discussed BNSF's visit to Benson last week. They took a tour with Amy McBeth Director of Government Relations. She asked for our CRISI Grant Application to see if any BNSF Grants would help with the bridge replacement. Clearing the drainage structure under Gustie's road was reviewed. Wolfington made a request to trade BNSF parking north across the street from City Hall to for green space in order to install nose end parking there. McBeth said the old pole near this area is scheduled to come down. As for the elevator, the owners lease part of the BNSF property with the building on it from BNSF and they have not been paying their lease payments. McBeth said she would have her legal team look into whether they have any recourse for their back logged lease payments. Wolfington said the railroad bridge on highway 9 is not in their plans to replace.

Wolfington discussed a meeting the Civic Center Board had last Monday how to move forward with the remodeling of the north end of the civic center. The Civic Center Board voted not to proceed with a project at this time due to a lack of a long term lease commitment from the school. Wolfington has given a proposal to the school that states the City will designate \$500,000 for a loan from their General Capital Outlay funds to the Benson Civic Center Board. The School District will enter into a lease agreement with the Civic Center Board for 5 years, paying \$50,000 annually for 5 years, plus two lump sum payments of \$125,000 in the 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> years totaling \$500,000. Wolfington stated this proposal is going to the School Board tonight. Wolfington said the property taxes we will be getting from the Xcel payment could be divided between the School, County and City. The school's portion could go to make these payments. Their lease payments would reimburse the General Capital Outlay funds. After discussion it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to direct staff to move forward with the loan proposal to the Civic Center Board.

Mayor Collins reminded everyone the Mayor's Mingle is July 18, 2019. Funds raised go toward the Beautify Benson project.

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve bills and warrants in the amount of \$512,212.96.

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 6:25 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk