

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY HALL  
JULY 20, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Collins. 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, Police Chief Ian Hodge, Public Works Director Dan Gens, Countryside Public Health Director Liz Auch, Terri & Jen Sullivan, School Superintendent Dennis Laumeier, and Paul Youngquist with I & S Group, Inc. Architects.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the agenda. Liz Auch addressing masks was added. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

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

- July 6, 2020 City Council Minutes
- May 4, 2020 Planning Commission Minutes
- Charter Communications New Channel
- Electronic Transfers:
  - Payroll: \$99,803.39 – June 18, 2020
  - \$118,585.95 – July 2, 2020
  - \$111,906.13 – July 16, 2020
  - Journal: \$9,480,377.89 - June 2020

The Mayor called for anyone with unscheduled business and there was none.

Terry and Jen Sullivan presented a request to move the street dance originally scheduled for Kid Day weekend to Rib Fest Weekend. They would like to have the street dance on Friday, September 11, 2020. They would like to block 13<sup>th</sup> Street South off between Kansas and Pacific Avenue for the dance and beer garden. They will provide proof of insurance, have police presence and follow the same protocol as they have in past years. After discussion it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the street closure request for the evening of September 11, 2020 for a street dance and beer garden.

Laumeier and Youngquist presented a packet showing the plan for the gymnastics building, asking the City Council to consider approving the variance application presented to the Planning Commission on July 6, 2020. They are asking for an exception for set-backs on the south and east of the proposed building. They are looking for a 15' set-back on the south, and an 8' set-back on the east. Wolfington said the Planning Commission approved a 10' set-back on the east side of the building. Youngquist said they had to move the HVAC system to the east side of the building and need the extra 2'. Wolfington said at the public hearing on July 6, 2020 there were citizens there were under the belief the building would have a 10' setback on the east side of the proposed building, and the Planning Commission approved the application with a 10' set-back. Laumeier and Youngquist said they will honor the 10' set-back on the east side of the building. After discussion, it was moved by Olson, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve variance application #2020-01 as presented.

Next Liz Auch was asked to give feedback on mask use with the COVID-19 pandemic. She reviewed the history of information from the CDC on when to use a mask. She said largely the metro areas are mandating mask usage. She said the science says best practice is to stay 6' or more away from

each other, washing your hands and mask usage to be the best defense. She said she isn't here to tell us what to do, but provide the science. She said the message needs to be aimed at the young people how to not make Grandpa sick. Wolfington said there are 4 tools in the mask toolbox: 1) set the example by wearing a mask, 2) Mayor proclamation on mask usage 3) Emergency Order 4) Standard ordinance. Mayor Collins said she isn't interested in mandating mask usage and feels it's a freedom of choice. She did say she sent a letter to the editor on mask usage. Schreck asked what happens if the Governor mandates mask use. Wolfington said we will have a special meeting to work out the details should that happen. Evenson asked how we will enforce this. Auch added staying 6' away is a big key.

Bradley Peterson with Flaherty & Hood gave a Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC) annual legislative report via telephone. He discussed the COVID-19 resource page, CARES Act funding, 2nd legislative session, bonding grants for infrastructure and childcare. He predicts a 3<sup>rd</sup> special legislative session in August and the possibility of mandatory masking requirements coming. He also discussed the projected \$2.3 billion deficit projections for the State, but there will be a better idea this fall. Wolfington shared the many hats CGMC wears and thanked them for their work.

Wolfington shared a letter he sent to Wilcox with a list of eligible expenses for the CARES Act reimbursement. He said the City will receive \$237,000 in the Federal CARES act Relief Funding. He reviewed the guidelines and presented a memorandum from Wilcox addressing each proposal. The Council reviewed the list. After discussion Olson made a motion to proceed with the list of qualified expenses as presented, with the exception of replacing the HVAC in the Armory. The motion was seconded by Evenson. Schreck asked if the Council should hold a work session. Wolfington said it would be good to come up with some ideas he maybe missed that would replace the Armory HVAC. He also stated he has been meeting with staff on this, and asked the Council to come up with some ideas. The motion passed unanimously.

Wolfington discussed a budget request from Pioneerland Library System for 2021. They are choosing to keep their funding request at the 2020 amount of \$91,164. This item will be included in the 2021 budget.

Next was a request by the Benson Library Advisory Board President Dixie Golden to appoint Susan Snow to the Pioneerland Library System Governing Board. It was then moved by Buyck, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously.

Councilmember Evenson offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TRANSFER OF XCEL ENERGY GRANT DOLLARS FOR  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES  
(RESOLUTION 2020-20)**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Benson, County of Swift, State of Minnesota, received grant dollars from Northern State Power (Xcel Energy) as part of the Benson Power LLC biomass plant closing, and;

**WHEREAS**, these grant dollars are limited in use for the purposes of economic development, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Council has determined that Sanitary Sewer Collection and treatment improvements quality as an economic development purpose, and;

**WHEREAS**, the proposed 2019 Sanitary Sewer WWTP Filter project is an authorized use of grant dollars, and;

**WHEREAS**, the estimated cost of this project is \$600,000.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that \$200,596.65 as itemized on the attached invoices to be transferred from the NSP Grant Fund to the Sewer Fund.

Councilmember Schreck seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck, Olson. NAYS: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2020-20 duly passed and adopted.

Councilmember Evenson offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TRANSFER OF XCEL ENERGY GRANT DOLLARS FOR  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES  
(RESOLUTION 2020-21)**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Benson, County of Swift, State of Minnesota, received grant dollars from Northern State Power (Xcel Energy) as part of the Benson Power LLC biomass plant closing, and;

**WHEREAS**, these grant dollars are limited in use for the purposes of economic development, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Council has determined that water treatment improvements quality as an economic development purpose, and;

**WHEREAS**, the proposed 2020 Water Filter project is an authorized use of grant dollars, and:

**WHEREAS**, the estimated cost of this project is \$180,000.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that \$61,650.08 as itemized on the attached invoices to be transferred from the NSP Grant Fund to the Water Fund.

Councilmember Olson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck, Olson. NAYS: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2020-21 duly passed and adopted.

Councilmember Evenson offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TRANSFER OF XCEL ENERGY GRANT DOLLARS FOR  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES  
(RESOLUTION 2020-22)**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Benson, County of Swift, State of Minnesota, received grant dollars from Northern State Power (Xcel Energy) as part of the Benson Power LLC biomass plant closing, and;

**WHEREAS**, these grant dollars are limited in use for the purposes of economic development, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Council has determined that Sanitary Sewer Collection and treatment improvements quality as an economic development purpose, and;

**WHEREAS**, the proposed 2020 Sanitary Sewer WWTP Flood Protection project is an authorized use of grant dollars, and:

**WHEREAS**, the estimated cost of this project is \$964,794.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that \$5,280 as itemized on the attached invoices to be transferred from the NSP Grant Fund to the Sewer Fund.

Councilmember Olson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded:  
AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck, Olson. NAYS: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared  
Resolution 2020-22 duly passed and adopted.

Councilmember Schreck offered the following resolution:

**CITY OF BENSON  
RESOLUTION NO. 2020-23  
RESOLUTION ACCEPTING DONATIONS**

**WHEREAS**, The City of Benson is generally authorized to accepts gifts and bequests pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 and Minnesota Statutes Section 471.17 for the benefit of its citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, the following persons and entities have offered to contribute the cash amounts set forth below to the city:

**Library Patrons \$378.63 to Benson Public Library  
Pam Perrizo \$30 to Beautify Benson Sweatshirt  
Judy Staton \$30 for Beautify Benson Sweatshirt  
Benson Residents \$3,162 for Beautify Benson Sweatshirts  
Enbridge Alliance \$5,000 for Fire Department Radios  
Diane Quame \$650 for Fire Call Donation  
Karen Manzke \$30 for Beautify Benson Sweatshirt  
Melissa Touhey-Ziegler \$30 for Beautify Benson Sweatshirt**

**WHEREAS**, all such donations have been contributed to assist the various city departments and programs as allowed by law; and

**WHEREAS**, The City Council finds that it is appropriate to accept the donations offered.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BENSON, MINNESOTA, AS FOLLOWS:**

1. The donations described above are accepted and shall be used to benefit the departments listed above, as allowed by law.

Councilmember Buyck seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded:  
AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck, Olson. NAYS: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared  
Resolution 2020-23 duly passed and adopted.

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve bills and warrants in the amount of \$763,246.56

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 6:44 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk