

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL
JULY 6, 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 and Amanda Ness telephonically.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the agenda. To which there was none. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

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

- 6.15.2020 City Council Minutes
- 5.18.2020 EDA Minutes
- 5.26.2020 Special EDA Minutes
- 6.30.2020 Safety Committee Minutes
- MN State Demographer Population Estimate for Benson
- League of Minnesota Dues Memo
- Board of Appeal & Equalization Training
- Gambling Permit Benson Golf Club Foundation for September 15, 2020

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

There was a request from Shamrock Hest Riding Club for an alcohol permit on July 17, 2020 for their annual Rodeo at the riding arena. They will plan to fence off the beer tent, it will be run by a caterer with a caterer license as in past years. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the Alcohol permit to Shamrock Hest Riding Club for July 17, 6pm-midnight.

Next Wolfington presented a letter from the Minnesota Office of the Commissioner to Police Chief Hodge thanking the officers who answered the call for help during the riots in Minneapolis. Mayor Collins also thanked our officers for their service.

Chief Hodge gave a summary of the clean-up activity of blight conditions at 406 – 12th St. S. He said there has been a substantial reduction of vehicles on the property. There was one on the street and two in the driveway which all run. Wolfington noted there were originally 12 vehicles when the notice went out to the homeowner. It was the consensus of the Council the owner of the property has satisfied the conditions of the removal of vehicles.

Wolfington said last year Vicki Syverson with Swift County HRA applied for a grant from Federal Home Loan Bank in Iowa to help with home improvements in Swift County. She was awarded the grant. This is a border to border grant in Swift County and will cover 20 homes. Although the program will be run similar to the Small Cities Grant, it does not have the same requirements. Seven homes qualified in Benson. Wolfington reminded the Council that they agreed to fund 4 additional grants up to \$21,00 each using Xcel grant dollars. A \$1,700 administrative fee would be paid to the Swift County HRA. The owner will have to have owner equity of \$7,000 as well. She wants to start the program this fall.

Wolfington said things are moving along at the Rob's Motel site. The asbestos has been removed, the Fire Department applied and received a permit from the State to burn the property, which they will use as a training opportunity. The tentative date to burn it is the third week in July. After the ashes cool down, they will be hauled to a landfill that accepts the waste. Swift County HRA has committed \$10,000 toward the tear down expenses.

Next Wolfington discussed in March the U.S. Congress approved State funding for COVID-19 expenses. At the regular and special sessions of the Minnesota legislature, the distribution plan was not approved, but Governor Walz carried out a plan for distribution to local governments. He said the City qualifies for \$230,000, but there are many restrictions as to what expenses qualify. There was discussion on ways to utilize the funds, and he asked the Councilmembers to come with a list of expenses to go over at the next Council meeting.

Wolfington presented an Inter-Creditor Agreement between the creditors for the loans to the Benson Hospital. The agreement puts Rural Electric Economic Development, Inc. (REED) in first position above the City and the Sonsteng Foundation in event of bankruptcy by the Swift County-Benson Hospital. After discussion it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the Inter-Creditor Agreement at presented.

Next was a request from the Southwest Initiative Foundation for a contribution in support of their entrepreneur grant program and economic development assistance with businesses in the region. After discussion, it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the request in the amount of \$1,046.00 to be included in the City's 2021 budget.

A pay request from MN Mechanical for work in the water plant on the chlorine damage was presented. There was discussion on the change order on the pay request. Buyck made a motion to approve pay request #4 per clarification to the Council on the change order amount. It was seconded by Schreck and the motion carried unanimously to approve Pay Request #4 to MN Mechanical in the amount of \$169,405.90.

There was another pay request from MN Mechanical for work on the water plant chlorine damage. It was moved by Buyck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve pay request #5 in the amount of \$9,500.00

Next was a pay request from Stantec for engineering expenses due to chlorine damages in the water plant. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the pay request in the amount of \$10,082.29.

Schreck asked if there are any warrantees by the engineers at the water plant if their plans do not work out. He asked about switching engineering firms and asked for a recommendation from the Utility Commission.

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 6:26 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk