

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL
JULY 6, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Collins. Members present: Terri Collins, Lucas Olson, Mark Schreck, Jack Evenson and Jon Buyck. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Rob Wolfington, Police Chief Ian Hodge, Administrative Assistant Val Alsaker, CEDA Representative Hillary Tweed, Public Works Director Dan Gens, City Attorney Ben Wilcox and Co-Administrators of Swift County Benson Health Services Dan Enderson & Melissa Thompson.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the agenda to which there were 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:

- June 21, 2021 City Council Minutes
- June 28, 2021 Special City Council Minutes
- June 17, 2021 Pioneerland Library System Board Minutes
- Parkview Manor Meal Site Reopening
- League of Minnesota Cities Preliminary Membership Dues Increase – 4%
- Department of Energy Memo – Draught Adder
- Minnesota Department of Health Plan Review Approval – Clearwell Project
- Electronic Transfers:
 - Payroll: - June 17, 2021 - \$103,540.47
 - July 1, 2021 - \$130,881.48

There was no one with unscheduled business to come before the Council.

Enderson & Thompson approached the Council. Enderson said they were at the County Commissioner's meeting this morning to get approval to refinance the 2014 General Obligation Refunding bonds. The Commissioners approved the refinancing plan. Enderson said the Hospital will save \$500,000 with refinancing. Northland Securities will be handling the tax exempt bond refinancing process. Enderson discussed the summary of the bond refinancing and a timeline.

Next he discussed the changes to the Swift-County Benson Hospital Bylaws. He referenced the copy provided with noted changes in it. He said this was reviewed by CentraCare, the bylaws committee and Hospital Attorney Don Wilcox. The various changes were discussed. It was then moved by Buyck, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the amended Swift County-Benson Hospital Bylaws as presented. Enderson said these changes will go to the County Commissioners for approval at their next meeting.

Thompson said services are normalizing at the hospital. Services are up, but noted masks are still required in the facility. She said the hospital received a \$100,000 Rural Hospital Grant which will go toward updating safety and security at the facility. CentraCare security team came to the Benson Hospital and conducted a security assessment. Thompson said they should be receiving that report soon. Thompson said they have had several medical residents working at the hospital and clinic. An interested doctor will be coming the third week in July for a tour of the hospital and community. If he wishes to come to Benson, he will be available in 2023. She said a locum doctor recently was approved to work in

Benson 3 days a week, and the hope is he will come as a permanent doctor in the future.

Alsaker presented a Notice of Catering Event involving the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor to the Council. She explained Brink's Beer Joint & Grill has been asked by the Hockey Association to provide liquor to their rib fest event during Kid Day. The Benson Hockey Association as part of the annual Kid Day activities has provided ribs in Ambush Park along with other group events at Ambush Park for a few years now. Two years ago Brink's provided food and alcohol at Ambush Park. Alsaker said normally if a licensed caterer serves an event with alcohol on private property they do not need to get permission from the Council as they are licensed from the State. They do have to notify law enforcement of the event. Since this event is taking place on City property, it requires Council approval. Along with the notification, a certificate of liability from Brink's insurance company was presented. A condition of any catering event requires food to be served which they plan on doing. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve Brink's Beer Joint & Grill serving alcohol at Ambush Park July 17, 2021 from 4 p.m.-9 p.m.

Wolfington presented a memo from transit provider Prairie Five Community Action Council. They are asking to do a one year contract because of the effect COVID-19 has placed on funding. They also announced there will not be an increase in cost for services for 2022.

Wolfington presented a resolution for consideration in reference to coronavirus fiscal recovery established under the American Rescue Plan Act. With Council approval tonight, the City can go forward with submitting the application. Councilmember Olson presented the following resolution:

**A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND
ESTABLISHED UNDER THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT
(RESOLUTION NO. (2021-16))**

WHEREAS, since the first case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was discovered in the United States in January 2020, the disease has infected over 32 million and killed over 575,000 Americans ("Pandemic"). The disease has impacted every part of life: as social distancing became a necessity, businesses closed, schools transitioned to remote education, travel was sharply reduced, and millions of Americans lost their jobs;

WHEREAS, as a result of the Pandemic cities have been called on to respond to the needs of their communities through the prevention, treatment, and vaccination of COVID-19.

WHEREAS, city revenues, businesses and nonprofits in the city have faced economic impacts due to the Pandemic.

WHEREAS, Congress adopted the American Rescue Plan Act in March 2021 ("ARPA") which included **\$65 billion in recovery funds for cities across the country.**

WHEREAS, ARPA funds are intended to provide support to state, local, and tribal governments in responding to the impact of COVID-19 and in their efforts to contain COVID-19 in their communities, residents, and businesses.

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Treasury has adopted guidance regarding the use of ARPA funds.

WHEREAS, the City, in response to the Pandemic, has had expenditures and anticipates future expenditures consistent with the Department of Treasury's ARPA guidance.

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota will distribute ARPA funds to the City because its population is less than 50,000.

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

1. The City intends to collect its share of ARPA funds from the State of Minnesota to use in a manner consistent with the Department of Treasury's guidance.
2. City staff, together with the Mayor and the City Attorney are hereby authorized to take any actions necessary to receive the City's share of ARPA funds from the State of Minnesota for expenses incurred because of the Pandemic.
3. City staff, together with the Mayor and the City Attorney are hereby authorized to make recommendations to the City Council for future expenditures that may be reimbursed with ARPA funds.

Councilmember Buyck seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Schreck, Collins, Olson, Buyck, Evenson. NAYS: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2021-16 duly passed and adopted.

Next Gens approached the Council to discuss the wastewater department will be smoke testing the City's sanitary sewers in town July 19-22, 2021. This will consist of sending smoke into the sanitary sewer lines. Smoke should be observed coming out of the vent stack of buildings hooked into the sanitary service. However, if the smoke comes out of the ground, or into a home this will reveal a potential sewer problem for the property owner. This smoke is harmless and will not stain or leave an odor. Gens went on to say we are renting the smoke machine from Minnesota Rural Water. The City is posting this notice to citizens on the City website, on the radio and in the Swift County Monitor Newspaper.

Wolfington said after the last City Council meeting the Council took a field trip to Nevada Avenue in front of Northside School to explore expanding parking there. The City is currently rebuilding the road there and changing the project to include more parking that was not planned. Wolfington said School District Superintendent Laumeier is in agreement with the project. The School will pay for sidewalk replacement, the City will pay for new curb and the cost to remove several trees will be shared between the school district and the City. It was moved by Olson , seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the project changes as described.

Next Wilcox presented an ordinance to amend the City Charter, which will change municipal elections from odd years to even years and move how vacancies are handled to ordinances for Council consideration. It was then moved by Evenson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the 1st Reading of an Ordinance to Amend Section 2.05, Vacancies in the Council, and Section 4.01, the Regular Municipal Election, of the Charter of the City of Benson.

Wilcox then presented an ordinance amending filling vacancies on the Council. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the 1st Reading of an Ordinance Providing for Special Elections to Fill Certain Vacancies in Elected Offices at Times Other Than the Regular City General Election.

Councilmember Evenson offered the following resolution:

**CITY OF BENSON
RESOLUTION ACCEPTING DONATIONS
(RESOLUTION NO. 2021-17)**

WHEREAS, The City of Benson is generally authorized to accept 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:

Benson Residents \$216.00 for Beautify Benson Shirts
Chippewa Valley Ethanol Plant Donation - \$200.00 Beautify Benson
Eric Payne \$2,000 for Benson Kid Day
Mark Schreck \$20.00 Fire Department in Memory of Dennis DeHaan
Mayor's Mingle Tickets - \$2,795.00

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 Olson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded:
AYES: Schreck, Collins, Olson, Buyck, Evenson. NAYS: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2021-17 duly passed and adopted.

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 6:05 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk