

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL
AUGUST 1, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Collins. Members present: Terri Collins, Jon Buyck, Mark Schreck & Lucas Olson. Members Absent: Jack Evenson. Also present: City Manager Glen Pederson, Police Chief Ian Hodge, Public Works Director Dan Gens, City Attorney Ben Wilcox, CEDA Representative Hillary Tweed, Shelly Mikkelson, Lizzy Koehl, Reed Anfinson. Telephonically Val Alsaker.

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 Schreck, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

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

- July 18, 2022 City Council Minutes
- May 9, 2022 Park Board Minutes
- Charter Communications Channel Change
- PERA Volunteer Firefighter Contribution
- Prairie Five Rides 2023 Budget Request
- Electronic Transfers:
Payroll: July 28, 2022 \$107,564.31

There was no one with unscheduled business.

Mayor Collins called on Mikkelson to address the Council. She presented a fundraising request to add the second slide to the Benson Pool. She went on to say the second slide was in the original pool plans but it wasn't in the budget when the pool was built, but was intended to be added one day. Now that the pool is paid for she felt it is time to add it. She presented a quote from Lemmie Jones LLC in the amount of \$149,200. She said 50% is due upon award of contract. She and her fundraising team would like to have that down payment raised by the summer of 2023. Grants will be written to the Sonsteng Foundation and the Southwest Initiative Foundation. They will be soliciting for donations and hoping for City and County support as well. The timeline is to raise 50% of the quote by the summer of 2023, have 100% raised by 2024, install the slide the end of the 2024 pool season and complete it in the spring of 2025. She said they will need a fiscal agent for the grant applications and fundraising. After discussion, Olson made a motion to support the slide fundraising effort and to have the City be the fiscal agent for their fundraising projects and allot up to \$1,000 for fundraising expenses. The motion was seconded by Schreck and the motion carried unanimously. Pederson added USAquatics said all the motors, pumping equipment and tubes are already in place so there would be no additional costs other than the slide itself.

Gens gave an update on the pool. There is a leak at the pool. We have tried to address it by donning scuba gear and attempting to seal around the drains at the bottom of the pool. USAquatics is coming in September to go through the entire pool and help us find the leak. He said he will come to Council with a report from that investigation.

Next the Council discussed the possible emergency ordinance addressing edible cannabinoid products. Since the State Legislature legalized edible cannabinoids there is a lot of conversations among the cities of Minnesota, and how quickly it became legalized in the State. Wilcox reminded the Council they will need a super majority vote to pass an emergency ordinance. He said the ordinance in the packet

is for the City of Willmar. If the Council would like him to draft an ordinance for Benson he is happy to do so and discuss it with Police Chief Hodge and City Manager Pederson. He discussed options for the ordinance such as zoning and where a business can place the product for sale. He said there are some state restrictions such as age restrictions on purchasing. Mayor Collins said she has concerns who and where they will sell the products. There was discussion on regulations and where they can be sold. After discussion, it was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to table the emergency ordinance until the next meeting until Wilcox can meet with Chief Hodge to draft up an ordinance for Benson.

The Council reviewed the 2023 Kid Day report from Roger Ebnet.

Next the Park Board has recommended to the Council to set up a disc golf course on the west side of Ambush Park. Lynette Tessem has been in contact with a disc golf professional who came to Ambush Park. Tessem has done a lot of work on the project, and she said she is going to ask the Lion's Club be the fiscal agent and has applied for some grants for the project as well. It was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve proceeding with a disc golf course at Ambush Park.

Pederson presented a Smart Grid Technology Services Agreement draft for Council review. Pederson said last March he came to Council with a recommendation to go with Eaton Company for smart meter and load management technology and we approved entering into an agreement to purchase the equipment from them. We also agreed to go with MRES for the software hosting. Currently we host the software and equipment in our office. All that equipment will go away and will be handled at the MRES office in Sioux Falls, SD. We had our kick-off meeting last week with Eaton. We have reviewed it and see nothing objectionable. Wilcox is reviewing the agreement. MRES and Eaton have a good working relationship and it makes sense to continue to partner with MRES. It was then moved by Buyck, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the Smart Grid Technology Services Agreement with MRES.

Pederson said the original smart meter contract included only one hand device held to read a meter on a house. We have two components which are electric and water. We would like to have two of these so each department has their own hand-held unit. He also presented an email showing the equipment to go with these handhelds which is an increase of \$8,000 over the original purchase price. Also, currently there is a load management box on each house. We thought we would have to purchase new boxes for each house. We learned at the kick-off meeting the boards will fit into the existing boxes so we may not have to purchase 600 new boxes. He went on to say he is asking for an increase to the budget but sees a savings on the box purchases. It was moved by Olson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the increase in the budget to purchase the hand-held tablets and supporting equipment in the amount of \$8,000.

Tweed said since the last Council meeting Council showed interest in Social media for the City. She and Pederson have worked on amending the social media policy previously adopted by the Council. She outlined some of the changes. After review it was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the social media policy as presented.

Pederson said we have been invited to attend a meeting on August 4, 2022 at Northside School at 5:30 p.m. for a joint meeting of the City, County and Hospital at the Hospital's request. It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the special meeting.

Liza from David Drown Associates requested a special City Council meeting on August 22, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall for further direction on the City Manager search. It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the special City Council meeting.

Buyck asked about the status of the Gusty Road project. Gens said work is scheduled to begin mid-August of this year.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Schreck seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk