

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 10, 2018**

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, Director of Public Works Dan Gens, Police Chief Ian Hodge, Jeff & Amanda Holmquist, William Strong, Tad, Susan and Aleah Egenes, Ron Rodi, Blake Flaten, Val Wyatt, Pastor Zane Anderson and Scott Collins.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Clerk Pederson swore in new Councilmember Buyck.

Mayor Collins asked for any changes or additions to the agenda. Wolfington asked to add Sewer lift station upgrades, and a resolution authorizing execution of the MnDOT Airport improvement grant. 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:

- August 20, 2018 City Council Minutes
- Police Report
- Benson/Kerkhoven Librarian Appointment – Nicole Schmiesing

The Mayor asked for people with unscheduled business. Val Wyatt representing her mother Carol Wyatt and Pastor Zane Anderson approached to discuss the recent sewer back-up in their basements. Wyatt stated there were four residents that suffered losses from the back up. Wolfington approached the Council to announce the City's insurance League of Minnesota Insurance Trust called at the end of the work day today to say they would like to meet with the homeowners to get information on their losses. He suggested each homeowner gather expenses and make an appointment with the claims adjuster this coming week. Wyatt and Anderson thanked the Council

There was no representative from the Golf Course to discuss their budget, so the Mayor tabled this item.

Next Wolfington discussed the Conditional Use Permits for a new outdoor and the existing indoor archery range. Wolfington said the outdoor range will be on City property at the west end of Pacific Avenue. He said a notice was sent to property owners within 350' of the property, and a public hearing was held at the Planning Commission meeting at noon today. Evenson is on the Planning Commission and stated one resident at the public hearing expressed concern about traffic and kids and fishermen. Hodge said there will be proper signs at the range and the fishing area by the river is quite a ways from the range firing area. Evenson said the Planning Commission recommended approval of this Conditional Use Permit. Wolfington said the Planning Commission also said if there are problems with the outdoor archery range, they recommended revocation of the Conditional Use Permit. After discussion, it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the Conditional Use Permit for the outdoor archery range.

It was discovered the indoor archery range did not have a conditional use permit range at 1215 Pacific Avenue, and per ordinance it is required. Notices were sent to property owners within 350' of the property, and a public hearing was held at the Planning Commission meeting at noon today. Wolfington presented the conditional use permit. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the

Conditional Use Permit. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the Conditional Use Permit for the indoor archery range at 1215 Pacific Avenue.

Next was a memo requesting financial support for the Benson School's Renaissance Program. The Mayor tabled this item until we can have more information on the program from the school.

The League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) annual dues was presented to the Council. There was discussion it could be considered in the 2019 budget. Pederson stated the LMC financial year runs September – August each year and the dues statement before them in the amount of \$3,462 is in the 2018 City budget already. It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to pay the LMC dues for 2019 in the amount of \$3,462.

Wolfington discussed the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant, and that we are at the point of getting letters of support from various entities in town. He presented the letter of support from the Mayor and a resolution to be considered for approval. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the letter of support as presented, and authorized the Mayor to sign in representation of the Council.

Councilmember Evenson offered the following resolution:

**CITY OF BENSON RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CONSOLIDATED RAIL
INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS GRANT APPLICATION
(RESOLUTION 2018-16)**

WHEREAS, the City of Benson has conducted the 2015 Railroad Crossing Study and the 2007 East Pacific Avenue Improvements Study both related to the railroad crossings located within the central business district and the problem with trains blocking those crossings which resulted in a series of projects (HEREAFTER, the PROJECT) to address mobility and safety issues between motor vehicles and the BNSF rail line that bisects the City of Bensons; and

WHEREAS, the PROJECT will address needed mobility improvements for the highway-rail at-grade crossings within the City of Benson, which include the reconstruction of Pacific Avenue to a 10-ton roadway from 9th St. S to 20th Ave. SE to provide a connection between 14th St. S and 20th Ave. SE for passenger cars, freight vehicles and emergency services vehicles to use as an alternate route to cross the BNSF railroad when the central business district crossings are blocked and installation of ITS devices at the six at-grade crossings in and around the City of Benson that allow the emergency services dispatcher to provide real time crossing conditions to emergency service vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the PROJECT will address needed safety improvements at highway-rail and pedestrian-rail at-grade crossings within the central business district which include installation of 4-Quadrant Gates at the 14th Street S (US 12/MN 29) at-grade crossing, non-traversable medians at the 13th Street and 12th Street at-grade crossings, pedestrian gates at all three central business district at-grade crossings, and pedestrian fencing along the entire central business district to prohibit pedestrian trespassing; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Railroad Administration in conjunction with the United States Department of Transportation is currently accepting grant applications for projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and/or reliability of passenger and/or freight rail transportation systems through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI); and

WHEREAS, the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program can fund up to 80% of the full construction cost of a project for qualifying applicants; and

WHEREAS, the City of Benson, MN meets Eligibility Requirements as a qualifying applicant in that it is a political subdivision of a State; and

WHEREAS, the PROJECT meets eligibility requirements in that it will reduce delays and risks associated with highway–rail grade crossings. The reconstruction of Pacific Ave. will benefit the City of Benson and The Minnesota Department of Transportation by improving the ability for passenger vehicles, freight vehicles and emergency service vehicles to travel within the City of Benson and through the City of Benson with reduced delay due to blocked railroad crossings; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Benson intends to submit a grant application for 50% of the eligible construction cost of the PROJECT through the Federal Railroad Administration and the United States Department of Transportation CRISI Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon award of its application by the Federal Railroad Administration and the United States Department of Transportation, the City of Benson may enter into an agreement with the FRA and the USDOT for the PROJECT, and that the City of Benson certifies that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in all contract agreements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon award of its application by the Federal Railroad Administration and the United States Department of Transportation, the City of Benson has committed to 100% of the funds to complete the required environmental documentation, right of way, design plans, maintenance costs of the constructed projects, and 50% of the eligible project cost construction to complete the PROJECT for a bid letting in 2020 and construction in 2021.

Councilmember Olson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck, Olson. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2018-16 duly passed and adopted.

Wolfington discussed the 13 Ways program with Doug Griffith. He presented the contract with a cost of \$20,000 plus up to 3 nights lodging, ground transportation and meals. He said the BIDC originally pledged \$7,500 toward the cost to bring Mr. Griffith to Benson, but have come to a 20% contribution of the cost instead. There are a couple other donations and the City will end up paying over half of the cost. The dates he will be here are November 14 & 15, 2018. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the contract with Doug Griffith and to send a down payment of \$10,000.

Next was a pay request from Benson Schools in the amount for \$10,000 to go toward their daycare program Discovery Kids for the 2017-2018 year. There was discussion the City agreed to pay up to \$10,000 if there is a deficit in operations the first few years. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to table the payment to Benson Public Schools until a financial statement accompanies the bill.

Pederson presented a lease option for the new sewer vac truck that will be ready for delivery soon. Pederson said when we financed the fire truck, we took bids and Bank of the West got the lease bid. After establishing a relationship with Bank of the West, he worked with them to get the same terms on the sewer vac truck and presented the information to the Council. He said our interest on the lease would be locked in when the truck arrives. Bank of the West would take ownership of the vehicle and we would make payments to them on it. Pederson recommended approval of the lease terms. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, second by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the lease with Bank of the West as presented for the sewer vac truck.

Pederson discussed a LMC investment pool that all government entities can belong to. With our first Xcel payment of \$4 million, this fund would give the City more diversity in investing the money with better interest rates. Buyck asked if Pederson had a plan on how he wants to invest the money. Pederson explained some ideas to the Council. After discussion it was moved by Buyck, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to authorize the City's membership in the LMC 4M fund.

Next Pederson discussed the 2019 Levy that will have to be set at the next meeting. With the bonds issued for the Police building purchase and remodel, we will already be over a 5% increase. Pederson said the preliminary levy has to be set in September, with the final levy set in December. He went on to say the preliminary levy can be set higher and reduced in December, but not lower in September and higher in December. This only affects the General fund budget. The Council discussed some of next year's expectations.

Wolfington said the October 1 meeting will be a tour of city projects.

Pederson discussed City Hall security. He said he was looking for economical ideas that could be carried forward to the next phase of City Hall. Two things he addressed are the window security issue in the billing office. He talked to a glass company which quoted him \$1,200 for the glass plus installation. He said there are cameras & video equipment in the old police offices that we could utilize. Pederson mentioned locks for the doors upstairs but they are fairly expensive. He said he would like to talk to staff before proceeding with security upstairs. Pederson said he would like to proceed with the glass and video equipment activation. It was the consensus of the Council to go ahead with the glass and video pieces of the City Hall security project

Gens discussed upgrades to the sewer lift stations. He would like to add audio, visual and call-out options to each multi use lift station. He presented information on the OmniBeacon visual alarm as well as the audio and call out costs. Gens also asked for a large screen tv to be placed in the wastewater plant. This will be used for enlarging maps of projects we are working on so service lines and valves can more easily be seen. After discussion it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the improvements in the amount of \$15,000 as presented.

Next Wolfington presented a resolution authorizing the state to execute our grant agreement.

Councilmember Schreck offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
GRANT AGREEMENT FOR AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT
EXCLUDING LAND ACQUISITION
(RESOLUTION 2018-17)**

It is resolved by the **City of Benson** as follows:

1. That the state of Minnesota Agreement No. **1031827**, "Grant Agreement for Airport Improvement Excluding Land Acquisition," for State Project No. **A7601-35** at the **Benson Municipal Airport** is accepted.
2. That the City Manager and Finance Director are authorized to execute this agreement and any amendments of behalf of the City of Benson

Councilmember Olson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Collins, Buyck, Olson. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2018-17 duly passed and adopted.

There being no further business to come before the Council upon motion by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:28 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk