

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY HALL  
SEPTEMBER 14, 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, Melissa Thompson & Dan Enderson from Swift County-Benson Health Services, Angi Rodi and Val VanderWeyst. Joya Stetson and Cris Gastner from CEDA and Laura Ostlie telephonically.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the agenda. Airport contract and insurance claim was added. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

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

- August 17, 2020 City Council Minutes
- September 3, 2020 Special City Council Minutes
- July 20, 2020 EDA Minutes
- Electronic Transfers:  
Payroll: \$102,448.12 – August 27, 2020  
\$102,240.93 – September 10, 2020

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

Rodi and VanderWeyst approached the Council. They set up a large Halloween display each year and have between 400-500 visitors every year. VanderWeyst said they are promoting cancelling Halloween this year because of COVID19 concerns. Wolfington said he has looked for guidance from the MN Department of Health, as well as the local health agency for direction, which there really is nothing definitive. He said he did find recommendations to not host a large gathering for Halloween or Trick-or-Trunk venues as it promotes large groups in a concentrated area. He then said he recommends people do what is comfortable to them. He said follow best practices such as masks and washing hands if you decide to pass out candy. Mayor Collins suggested Rodi and VanderWeyst don't set up this year if you don't want, and maybe next year will be better.

Next Enderson and Thompson approached with a resolution of thanks to the City for all the support given which will allow several much needed projects to happen at the hospital. They said the refinancing is done and in place, the new fire alarm system is currently being installed, the new boilers and HVAC are coming soon and they recapped other changes happening as well, also revenues are rebounding from the losses with COVID19.

Wolfington shared at the EDA meeting today time was spent with CEDA representatives via teleconference as well as debating the issue of hiring and Economic Development person. They will meet again on Thursday to make a final recommendation to they Council. Stetson and Gastner with CEDA gave a presentation to the Council. They said they have been around for 30 years and are helping 50 different Cities and Counties. They strictly work with small rural

communities in economic development. They are a 501C3 organization, and have 100 years of collective experience. Stetson said their organization is different in they contract on a scale that suits the City and they offer a “30 Day Out” clause in all contracts and their team members physically work in the contract City they work for. There were questions from the Council. Wolfington asked Stetson to cover the 2021 full-time price point. She said that would cost \$87,500 and would cover most all of the employee’s expenses. After more discussion, the Mayor thanked CEDA for their presentation. No action was taken.

Gens came forward to discuss a proposal for services he obtained from Stantec for upgrades at the wastewater facility. The project includes new boiler and heat exchanger, a new mixing system for the primary digester, new gas detection sensors and new biogas flares and safety equipment. The project estimate is \$787,710 for which Xcel dollars will be used. After discussion it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve engineering services from Stantec in the amount of \$197,500.

Next Gens discussed the need for a 300,000-gallon clear well water storage tank. Wolfington discussed the design and construction which will take place early spring of 2021 and should be complete in the early winter 2021. When complete, the tank will store treated water at the Benson filter plant, and the project cost is estimated at \$934,000 for which Xcel dollars will be used. After discussion it was moved by Olson, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve engineering costs with Stantec at a cost of \$185,500.

Gens said the Water plant did not pass lead and copper testing. After all the construction in the water plant this last summer, the biological activity was disrupted, so the water tests did not pass. He is hopeful that by the next test period it should be back on track.

Next Wolfington said the Fire Department applied for a grant with CenterPoint Energy and received a \$2,500 grant. This money will be used toward pagers, gas meter, bump test station and calibration equipment. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve accepting the grant monies.

Wolfington presented the 2021 draft levy and general fund budget. He said the 2021 levy is being presented at a -24.8% which represents the loss of tax base from the Xcel power plant demolition. The levy reduction will be made up by using a portion of the 2 annual payments from Xcel as negotiated by the City in the purchase of the property. He said the levy & budget must be set by the next Council meeting on September 28, 2020. He reminded the Council that once it is approved, they cannot raise it but they can reduce the levy at the last meeting in December. The levy amount adopted will be used on the proposed property tax statements for 2021. Councilmember Evenson offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING PROPOSED 2020 PROPERTY  
TAX LEVY, COLLECTIBLE IN 2021  
(RESOLUTION NO. 2020-26)**

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Benson, County of Swift, Minnesota that the following proposed sums of money be levied for the current year, collectible in 2021, upon the taxable property in the City of Benson, for the following purposes:

General Fund Levy	\$316,708
Police Personnel	754,834
Library Fund Levy	120,119
G.O. CIP Bonds 2014 - Street Garage	70,397
G. O. CIP Bonds 2017 - Police Department	<u>86,809</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,348,867</b>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following sum of money be levied for the current year, collectible in 2021, based upon the market value of the taxable property in the City of Benson, for the following purpose:

G.O. Swimming Pool	\$ <u>75,044</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,044</b>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council will hold its Truth in Taxation Hearing on Monday, December 7, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Benson City Council Chambers. Comments may be made by calling 320-843-4775, email to [staff@bensonmn.org](mailto:staff@bensonmn.org) or by postal mail to 1410 Kansas Avenue, Benson, MN 56215.

Councilmember Olson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Collins, Olson, Schreck, Buyck. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2020-26 duly passed and adopted.

Councilmember Evenson offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION CERTIFYING THE PROPOSED GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET  
FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2021 FOR THE CITY OF BENSON, MINNESOTA  
(RESOLUTION NO. 2020-27)**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the proposed Operating Budget for the General Fund of the City of Benson, Minnesota, for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2021 is hereby approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the budget is summarized as follows:

<u>Revenues</u>	
Taxes - General	\$1,071,542
Taxes - Library	120,119
State Grants and Aids	1,313,564
Other Revenues	<u>1,268,278</u>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$3,773,503</b>

<u>Expenditures</u>	
General Government	\$399,531
Public Safety	1,371,433
Highways, Streets and Roads	618,410
Parks and Recreation	532,710
Public Transit	10,700
Public Library	121,364
Capital Outlay	500,000
Other Expenditures	<u>170,750</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$3,724,898</b>

<b>Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues over Expenditures</b>	<b>\$48,605</b>
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Councilmember Schreck seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Collins, Olson, Schreck, Buyck. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2020-27 duly passed and adopted.

Next was the League of Minnesota Cities membership dues for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2020 as well as the Mayor's annual membership dues. It was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and approved unanimously to approve paying the Annual League of Minnesota Cities dues in the amount of \$3,543.00 and the Mayor annual dues membership in the amount of \$30.00.

Next was a pay request from TKDA for engineering services for the airport arrival departure building. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve the pay request in the amount of \$9,940.00. Wolfington stated he and the building official are meeting with TKDA and the contractor on September 29, 2020 at 10 a.m. to discuss the project. Olson said he will join the meeting.

The Council then reviewed the July 2020 budget report.

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the bills and warrants in the amount of \$386,559.05.

Wolfington discussed the damage to the roof at the main hangar at the airport during the high winds last month. He said the insurance approved our claim for \$12,330 on the roof. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the contract to repair the roof at the airport.

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 6:10 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk