

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
CITY HALL  
JANUARY 17, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Evenson. Members present: Dan Enderson, Gary Landmark, Chris Carruth & Jack Evenson. Telephonically: Mark Schreck. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Rob Wolfington, Director of Finance Glen Pederson, Administrative Assistant Val Alsaker, CEDA Representative Hillary Tweed, Accounting Clerk Lisa Kent & Reed Anfinson.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alsaker approached the Council to perform the Oath of Office with newly appointed Councilmember Gary Landmark.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the agenda. Bob Haase application to the Library Board was added. It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

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

- January 3, 2023 City Council Minutes
- December 5, 2022 Planning Commission Minutes
- Northern Lights Trails Snowmobile Club-Gambling Permit – April 1, 2023
- Greg Zniewski Appointment to the Cemetery Board
- Pay Request from WSB – South Industrial Park Study - \$12,583.25
- Pay Request from Bolton & Menk – WWTF Flood Protection Project - \$22,079.55
- Pay Request from Stantec – Clearwell & Pump Station - \$11,291.28
- Pay Request from Stantec – WWRP Misc. Upgrades - \$15,925.55
- Electronic Transfers:  
Payroll: January 12, 2023 - \$167,588.22.

There was no one with unscheduled business.

Next was City Council Appointments. It was then moved by Carruth, seconded by Landmark and carried unanimously to approve the following City Council Appointments:

**Chain of Command:**

Jack Evenson [Mayor]  
Mark Schreck [Mayor Pro-Tem]  
Dan Enderson  
Chris Carruth  
Gary Landmark

**Blight Committee:**

Dan Enderson and Chris Carruth

**EDA:** [Voting Members]

Dan Enderson and Jack Evenson

**Fire Board:**

Mark Schreck and Jack Evenson

**HRA:** [Voting Members]

Gary Landmark

[Council opted to leave one spot open]

**Library Board:** [Council Liaison]

Jack Evenson

**Liquor Committee:**

Dan Enderson and Gary Landmark

**Park Board:**

Voting Member  
Council Liaison

Chris Carruth  
[Council opted to leave this position open in  
2022]

**Personnel Committee:**

Mark Schreck and Jack Evenson

**Planning Commission:** [Voting Member]

Jack Evenson and Dan Enderson

**Utility Committee:**

Jack Evenson and Mark Schreck

**Facilities Committee:**

Mark Schreck and Jack Evenson

**Kid Day Committee:**

Dan Enderson and Jack Evenson

Alsaker and Wolfington explained for the Council to be able to hold the Board of Review in April, we need to have one more Councilmember trained. Councilmember Schreck is currently trained through 2024, but if he is unable to attend the meeting, we need to have a back-up. After discussion, Evenson volunteered to take the training.

Wolfington presented a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Benson and CentraCare Health-Benson LLC. Enderson explained in order for the hospital to participate in the 340B drug discount program, they must contract with a unit of local government. The agreement also states its commitment to serving indigent, uninsured and underinsured residents quality care. After discussion, it was moved by Landmark, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to authorize the Mayor to sign the memorandum of understanding with CentraCare Health-Benson LLC as presented.

Next was a request for support from Prairie Five Community Action Council for their Reach out for Warmth Program. The City has supported the program in the past. Pederson said in 2020 we used COVID monies to give a substantial donation toward the program. Wolfington said we have given \$1,000 in the past to be used for local residents that need assistance with their City utility bills. After discussion, it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve a \$1,000 contribution to Prairie Five's Reach Out for Warmth program to be paid out of the utility fund.

Next was a final pay request from T & K Kennedy Excavating for elevator demolition. Pederson said there have been two partial payments made and this is the final pay request. He said all that is left is the large scale that needs to be removed. Wolfington asked Kent to comment on how the FEMA reimbursement for the demolition of the elevator is coming. She said as of today, the elevator demolition costs are still eligible. It was then moved by Landmark, seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to approve the final pay request from T & K Kennedy Excavating in the amount of \$106,490. Pederson stated he expects a few other bills from the demolition of the elevator to come in yet from other entities.

Wolfington said the City contracts with Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association (MMUA) for our safety program. He said they come out once a month and are available for a number of safety related services. The annual safety schedule is approved by the Safety Committee before the beginning of the year. Enderson asked who does the OSHA reporting to which Wolfington said Alsaker. He then presented an invoice for this year's safety program. After discussion, it was moved by Carruth, seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to approve the jobs training and safety program for 2023 in the amount of \$14,219.00.

Wolfington said the Strategic Planning session for the Council is set for March 10-11, 2023 at the Benson Golf Club. He said in 2019 we did a "Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats" (SWOT) analysis and in 2021 the EDA and BIDC boards were invited to the strategic planning exercise. He noted he included the summaries from 2019 and 2021's planning sessions in the packet for reference. He said Marcy Douglas from Missouri River Energy Services will be conducting the Strategic Planning event at a cost of \$1,500.

Wolfington said in 2022 the Minnesota State Legislature created opportunities for the sale of edible THC products. The legislature allows cities to make certain zoning decisions on where these products can be sold. He went on to say there could be a more liberal approach to cannabis in future legislative sessions and asked are we ready for that. He presented an interim ordinance to establish a

temporary moratorium on the sale of these products for up to a year to allow the Planning Commission to study the situation based on evidence and create an amendment to the ordinance which will establish where this kind of retail activity may be held when it comes. The Planning Commission will present their findings to the Council. This moratorium requires a first and second reading and a publication. Upon a first reading, the moratorium will go into effect immediately. After discussion it was moved by Landmark, seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of an Interim Ordinance to Establish a Moratorium on the Sale of Certain Cannabinoid and/or Cannabis Products Within the City of Benson.

Councilmember Carruth offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING \$80,000 FROM  
THE LIQUOR FUND TO THE GENERAL FUND  
(RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07)**

WHEREAS, the City of Benson owns and operates a Municipal Liquor Store, and

WHEREAS, the City Council has budgeted to transfer \$80,000 from the Liquor fund to the General Fund for calendar year 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council authorized the transfer of \$80,000 from the Liquor Fund to the General Fund.

Councilmember Enderson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Schreck, Enderson, Landmark, Carruth. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2023-07 duly passed and adopted.

Pederson said at the last meeting we approved check signers. In anticipation of his retirement, we need 3 check signers. After discussion on who to have sign, and considering separation of duties, Alsaker who does not process claims or prepare checks and is a logical choice. It was then moved by Landmark, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve Valerie Alsaker as a check signer on all checks.

Pederson approached the Council and passed out a schedule of maturity dates on our City investments. In the next couple of years the maturities are low. Investment strategies a couple of years ago showed low interest rates, so he and the City Manager decided to extend the maturity dates longer than usual to get a higher interest rate, so CDs are not coming due as often. Interest rates are higher today and it isn't financially prudent to cash these CDs out for upcoming equipment purchases. This puts a strain on our cash flow. After talking to our investment advisors, he is proposing to take out a General Obligation Bond rolling the following equipment purchases into it: Fire pumper truck, water meter reading modules, AMI System and wastewater SCADA controls system equipment. There are a lot of bidders looking for this type of equipment certificate. The estimate is to raise \$2,025,000 million for the aforementioned projects. Timeline is at our next meeting in February the financial advisors will come with a revised set of documents and estimates and make a presentation to the Council. Notice will be published in the paper, a month later bonds will be sold, and a month after that they will close and we will receive proceeds in April 2023. The debt capacity was discussed, to which Pederson said none of the utility projects mentioned will go against our debt service limit except the fire truck. Between now and the next meeting staff will review options to sell investments early versus issuing bonds.

Next Pederson presented the following budgets: Library endowment fund, Perpetual Care Cemetery, Concrete Projects Fund, Storm Water Fund, EDA Budget, Xcel Grant Budget, Small Cities Grant Fund 2005, Small Cities Grant Fund 2009, Small Cities Grant fund 2017, Tax Increment Financing District #8, Garbage Collection Fund and the Liquor Fund. After discussion it was moved by Landmark and Seconded by Enderson carried unanimously to approve the 2023 Budgets.

It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve the December 31, 2022 bills and warrants in the amount of \$701,302.18.

It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve the January 10, 2023 bills and warrants in the amount of \$29,243.97.

Next the City Council recognized a letter of retirement from Director of Finance Glen Pederson. The Mayor and Council thanked Pederson for all his years of dedicated service. It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to accept Pederson's notice of retirement.

Lastly the Council reviewed Bob Haase's application to the Library Board. After discussion, it was moved by Carruth, seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to approve the application.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Schreck, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:28 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk