

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL
FEBRUARY 1, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Collins. Members present: Terri Collins, Jack Evenson, Mark Schreck. Members present telephonically: Jon Buyck & Lucas Olson. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Manager Rob Wolfington, Director of Finance Glen Pederson and Hillary Tweed from CEDA. Attending telephonically are Public Works Director Dan Gens, Dan Enderson & Melissa Thompson from Swift County-Benson Healthservices and Reed Anfinson.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the agenda to which there was none. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

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

- January 4, 2021 City Council Minutes
- November 23, 2020 EDA Minutes
- December 21, 2020 Special EDA Minutes
- Chippewa Valley Deer Hunter's Assn. Gambling Permit for June 1, 2021
- Electronic Transfers: Payroll: January 14, 2021 - \$142,953.02
January 28, 2021 - \$90,185.17
Journal Entries: \$4,508,641.72 - December 2020
- City Attorney Notice of Rate Increase
- Consider Engineering Services Quotes-Elevator Demolition-Stantec & Landteam
- MMUA Annual Safety Program Pay Request - \$9,800.00
- MMUA 2021 Membership Dues - \$6,403.00
- Great Plains Institute 2021 Membership - \$2,500.00
- Prairie Five Rides Garage Rent Agreement – 2021
- Prairie Five Rides 2nd Half of 2020 Pay Reqeust - \$6,534.00
- Approval of 2021 Tree Removal Contract Increase as presented

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

Enderson and Thompson discussed the Hospital is applying for the second round of PPP Covid-19 relief loans. They have consulted with their accountants and CentraCare. It is in the hospital's By-laws that any loan over \$50,000 must be approved by the City Council and the Swift County Commissioners. After discussion, Councilmember Olson offered the following resolution:

**BENSON CITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION APPROVING PPP LOAN FOR SWIFT COUNTY-BENSON HOSPITAL
(RESOLUTIUON 2021-05)**

WHEREAS, Swift County – Benson Hospital (“SCBH”) has the opportunity to make an application, through the Coop Credit Union of Montevideo, Benson Branch, for an additional loan under the Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program (“PPP”); in the amount of \$1,311,037.00; and,

WHEREAS, Acceptance by SCBH of this PPP loan, if approved, requires the approval of the Benson City Council and of the Swift County Board;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the approval of this council is hereby given for Swift County – Benson Hospital to accept a loan under the Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program (“PPP”) through the Coop Credit Union of Montevideo in the amount of \$1,311,037.00 in the event that its application for said loan is approved by the Small Business Administration.

Councilmember Buyck seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Collins, Olson, Buyck, Schreck. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2021-05 duly passed and adopted.

Wolfington asked for an update on the capital projects going on at the hospital. Enderson said the projects came in cheaper than expected. The boilers and sprinkler system are complete. The air handlers are almost complete. He went on to say they don’t plan on asking for any City reimbursement until 2022 as they don’t want to hurt their chances with the PPP Loan. Thompson explained they are looking at a fourth project with the balance of the money from the City and a grant they applied for to increase the security at the hospital, and primarily at the emergency room entrance, which will run at about \$550,000. Wolfington asked about the COVID-19 vaccination progress. Thompson said all the staff that wanted the vaccine will be vaccinated by the end of the week. They have been working with their community health partners including Countryside Public Health, who have been doing a great job. The 65+ age group is now being offered the vaccination using the CentraCare model. The Clinic has been calling the high risk patients and inviting them to come and get the vaccination.

Wolfington introduced new CEDA employee Hillary Tweed. She is the new Economic Development Specialist. Tweed expressed she is excited to be here and to get started. The Council welcomed her.

Evenson offered the following resolution:

**POLICE OFFICER DECLARATION
(RESOLUTION NO. 2021-06)**

WHEREAS, the policy of the State of Minnesota as declared in Minnesota Statutes 353.63 is to give special consideration to employees who perform hazardous work and devote their time and skills to protecting the property and personal safety of others; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes Section 353.64 permits governmental subdivisions to request coverage in the Public Employees Police and Fire plan for eligible employees of police departments whose position duties meet the requirements stated therein and listed below.

BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Benson hereby declares that the position titled Part-Time Police Officer, currently held by James Faulkner meets all of the following Police and Fire membership requirements:

1. Said position requires a license by the Minnesota peace officer standards and training board under sections 626.84 to 626.863 and this employee is so licensed;
2. Said position’s primary (over 50%) duty is to enforce the general criminal laws of the state;
3. Said position charges this employee with the prevention and detection of crime;
4. Said position gives this employee the full power of arrest, and
5. Said position is assigned to a designated police or sheriff’s department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this governing body hereby requests that the above-named employee be accepted as a member of the Public Employees Police and Fire Plan effective the date of this employee’s initial Police and Fire salary deduction by the governmental subdivision.

Councilmember Schreck seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Collins, Olson, Buyck, Schreck. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2021-06 duly passed and adopted.

Pederson approached the Council and reviewed the 2020 Pay Equity Implementation Report. He said every three years we are required to complete this report. We use the state job match for comparison. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the 2020 pay Equity Implementation Report.

It was moved by Olson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the pay request from Buttweiler's Do-All for the roof repairs to the power plant in the amount of \$104,634.64.

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve pay request #6 from Kalcon, Inc. for work on the airport arrival/departure building in the amount of \$55,250.10.

It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the pay request from TKDA for engineering on the airport arrival/departure building in the amount of \$730.00.

Wolfington presented an agreement with Flaherty and Hood for legislative services for the 2021 year. He stated they have watched over the activity of the legislature regarding the Xcel allocations for the past three years. This is the last and final year of these payments. He said other entities are lobbying that fund for several million dollars and feels it might be a good idea to engage Flaherty and Hood one last year. After discussion it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the agreement with Flaherty and Hood for services in 2020 not to exceed \$15,000.00.

Next Wolfington presented a pay request from VCI Environmental for asbestos removal in the power plant. It was moved by Olson, seconded by Buyck and carried unanimously to approve the pay request from VCI Environmental in the amount of \$44,760.00 upon receipt of the manifest of proper asbestos material disposal.

Pederson approached the Council. He reminded them the City is to receive two annual payments from Xcel in lieu of property taxes that was negotiated in the purchase of the property by the City. This total is \$815,920.95 each. The City's share is \$465,460.22, which we used to buy down the property taxes payable in 2021. The balance equals what Swift County and School District 777 would have received. He went on to say we have received this payment, and the money is in the EDA account. He said if the Council chooses to allocate the County & School's share it would come to \$205,522.65 for Swift County and \$144,938.08 for the School District, for a total of \$350,460.73. He said the Council can see this in the EDA budget being presented tonight. After discussion, it was moved by Evenson, seconded by Olson and carried unanimously to approve paying Swift County and School District #777 the amounts as discussed.

Councilmember Schreck offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING \$80,000 FROM
THE LIQUOR FUND TO THE GENERAL FUND
(RESOLUTION NO. 2021-07)**

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 2020.

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

Councilmember Evenson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Collins, Olson, Buyck, Schreck. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2021-07 duly passed and adopted.

Pederson presented the 2021 budgets to the Council. It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the following departmental budgets for 2021:

- Library Endowment Fund
- Concrete Projects Fund
- Economic Development Authority
- Small Cities Grant Fund 2005
- Small Cities Grant Fund 2017
- Utility Fund 10-Year Capital Projects Plan
- Garbage Collection Fund
- Perpetual Care Cemetery
- Storm Water Fund
- Xcel Grant Fund
- Small Cities Grant Fund 2009
- Utility Fund (Water, sewer, Electric)
- Liquor Fund

It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to approve the January 2021 bills and warrants in the amount of \$406,788.12

It was moved by Evenson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the December bills and warrants in the amount of \$280,946.89.

Next was discussion on the City Council appointments to board and commissions. It was moved by Evenson to leave them as they are for 2021. It was seconded by Olson. The following vote was taken: AYES: Evenson, Olson, Collins. NAYES: Buyck, Schreck. The motion passed.

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.

Mayor

City Clerk