

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Evenson. Members present: Mark Schreck, Jack Evenson, Chris Carruth, Nancy Maanum. Members Absent: None. Telephonically: Dan Enderson. Also present: Director of Finance Lisa Kent, City Clerk Val Alsaker, Public Works Director Dan Gens, Rob Wolfington, City Manager Kyle Harris, Police Chief Ian Hodge, County Assessor Joe Tschida, Gabby Doscher, Tom & Rita Gorres, Nelson delaVega, Janice Gallagher, William Luzum, Kathleen Hilleren, James O’Leary, Jeff Zosel and Jason Slaughter.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alsaker approached the Council to perform the Oath of Office with newly elected Councilmember Nancy Maanum.

It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

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

- April 3, 2023 City Council Minutes
- April 6, 2023 Safety Committee Minutes
- 2023 Arbor Day Proclamation
- Xcel Quarterly Report
- Charter Communications Fee Change
- Jon Buyck to the EDA Board Term Expiring December 31, 2026
- Northern Lights Trails Gambling Permit – November 17, 2023
- Pay Request #9 - Magney Construction-Clearwell Project - \$41,925.40 – Balance to Finish - \$727,975.64
- Pay Request #12 - Magney Construction-Anaerobic Digester Project - \$6,346.06-Balance to Finish-\$24,996.74
- Pay Request - Recreation by Lemmie Jones, LLC-Final Payment Pool Features - \$17,900
- Pay Request - WSB – Final Engineering Services-S. Industrial Park Feasibility Study - \$1,756.50
- Pay Request - CDS – Progress Billing on 2022 Audit - \$14,000
- Electronic Transfers:
 - Payroll: April 6, 2023 - \$115,841.23
 - Journal Entries: - March 2023 - \$4,344,118.14

Mayor Evenson said he would like to follow a 3-minute comment period for any persons attending our meetings under unscheduled business. It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the 3-minute time limit for persons with unscheduled business for all future meetings.

The Mayor opened the Board of Review at 5:32 p.m. Tschida approached the Council. He reviewed Council certifications in order to conduct the Board of Appeals. He stated he knows there are several appeals to be heard today. One written appeal came from Bruce Tengwall who isn’t here today. Tschida said he would make an appointment with him. Hilleren asked who determines values? An appraiser or the County. Tschida said after review, he and Hilleren agreed on a value adjustment. Tschida

said the State looks at all property sales and determines how sales are trending, providing guidance based on the State Statutes formulation, which is how values are placed on a property. Gallagher spoke reading case studies on property values, and asked if there are any considerations for properties in a flood zone. He assured the citizens their taxes won't go up because the value goes up. After each citizen addressed the County Assessor, he informed the audience the City Council is the first step in appealing property values. The next step is to appeal to the County Board, then finally they can appeal it to the State of Minnesota if they are still not satisfied. It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to deny further adjustment on Kathy Hilleren's property value any lower than \$681,800. The Mayor closed the Board of review at 6:10 p.m.

There was no one with unscheduled business.

Wolfington approached the Council and gave a final report on his services as interim City Manager. He acknowledged the new Councilmembers and City Manager. He thanked staff for their support and the Council for an opportunity to serve the City.

Wolfington next addressed the Council as the City's delegate to MRES about two transmission projects coming up. First is the 115 KW transmission line running from Appleton to Benson. The second project is much larger and is a 345 KW line which will be owned jointly between MRES and Ottertail Power. This project will start in 2027 and finish in 2030. The route will be Big Stone to Benson to Alexandria. Homeowners are invited to an informational meeting on April 27, 2023 at McKinney's.

Next the Mayor addressed tabling the second reading of an ordinance to allow apartments in the upstairs of a B-1 District. Enderson asked why. Mayor Evenson said he felt more research is needed before allowing apartments in the downtown business district. He also stated the current table of uses states no new apartments are allowed in the downtown business district. After discussion it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to table the second reading of the ordinance.

Kent reviewed the Annual PERA Fireman Funding report with the Council. She said we have a surplus in the account and do not need to add any additional dollars at this time.

The Council reviewed the March 2023 budget report.

It was moved by Carruth, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the bills and warrants in the amount of \$1,412,079.99.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Enderson, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk