

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY HALL
MAY 1, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Evenson. Members present: Mark Schreck, Jack Evenson, Chris Carruth, Dan Enderson, Nancy Maanum. Members Absent: None. Also present: Director of Finance Lisa Kent, City Clerk Val Alsaker, Public Works Director Dan Gens, City Manager Kyle Harris, Police Chief Ian Hodge, CEDA Representative Hillary Tweed, Kelly Michaelson, Rhonda Fennell, Sheila Dokken, Kevin & Peggy Bausman, Maggie Fennell, Don Lenz, Shelly Mikkelson and Reed Anfinson.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any additions to the agenda items. Agenda Policy was added. It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

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

- April 17, 2023 City Council Minutes
- February 27, 2023 Park Board Minutes
- March 6, 2023 EDA Minutes
- Benson Golf Club Foundation Gambling Permit – July 1-31, 2023
- Electronic Transfers:
Payroll: April 20, 2023 - \$103,863.95

The Mayor asked for anyone with unscheduled business. Rhonda Fennell raised her hand. Evenson informed her she has 3 minutes to address the Council. Fennell said she has had a day care business for several years. She takes her kids to the pool 3-5 days per week. She heard the Council will be discussing the possibility of a change in pool fees and feels it will be detrimental to families if there is a change made especially with the current recession. She said she would also like to see life jackets allowed during regular swimming hours and not only limited to family swim.

Next with unscheduled business, Lenz approached the Council. He said he has heard the proposal to move the city compost site, and he is not in favor of it. He doesn't like the thought of driving out of town to the old dump site with limited hours. He went on to say he likes being able to haul his leaves out whenever he does his lawn. He suggested putting cameras up to deter illegal dumping at the current site. The Mayor thanked Fennell and Lenz for their comments.

Kevin Bausman approached with the Benson Lion's Club. He is asking permission from the City to place a Lion's club emblem on the six Benson population signs. He said he talked to MnDOT, who placed the signs. He said cost per sign is \$200 per sign for a total of \$1,200. The Benson Lion's Club will pay for the signs and future maintenance of the signs. He said the paperwork and payment must be run through the City. After discussion, it was moved by Carruth, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve placing the Lion's emblems on the population signs coming into Benson, with the Lion's maintaining them. Enderson said he appreciates what the Lion's Club does for the community.

Harris referred to the meeting on April 3, 2023, and asked if the intention of the Council is to not allow apartments in the upstairs of properties zoned B-1, except for those grandfathered in, the current zoning ordinance prohibits this already. If this is the Council's wishes we will not need to proceed with a second reading. Enderson asked for a background of the ordinance. The Mayor explained not allowing apartments on the main level or basements are already prohibited. A current B-1 zoning district building

owner has violated this ordinance. There was discussion on permits and the possibility of creating a rental ordinance. It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Evenson and carried unanimously to table the second reading of the amended ordinance to give more time to research this amendment. Enderson and Schreck will meet with staff to further research the amendment.

Harris addressed the Council with a proposal to amend pool and camping fees. Harris said they would like to hire an adult manager for the pool. He stated he feels the pass system is complicated. He proposed eliminating all passes. Community Education has sold passes for us in the past and informed the City they will no longer sell these passes for us. This means passes will be purchased either at the pool or at City Hall. He proposed a flat \$6.00 entrance fee for everyone. A punch card would be available for \$50 for 10 punches which brings the entrance fee down to \$5.00. Also, if a family decided to purchase 4 punch cards, the 5th would be free. This will bring the entrance fees down to \$4.00. The punch card holder would be responsible for the card, and must present it to be punched upon entrance. He said pool fees have not been increased in 14 years. We do not make a profit on the pool, and we possibly have \$1 million in deferred maintenance for the pool. He said he feels this will eliminate those entering without a pass. Enderson said he wasn't aware we were contemplating fee changes and is not prepared to move on the proposal. Schreck asked to put a committee together to discuss fees. After further discussion it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to leave the pool rates for 2023 the same as 2022.

Harris said over the next few years, there will be a lot of construction workers in the area, and Gens proposed putting in 10-12 campsites by the old Rob's Motel location with strictly electric service and a gravel pad to accommodate the construction workers. This will keep our existing campground available for family camping. If we can accommodate construction campers, they will spend money here in Benson. He went on to say the last time camping rates were raised was 2011. He presented the following rate increases:

Hard pad increase of \$11.05 to \$40.00
Tent Site increase of \$2.53 to \$25.00
Shelter Increase of \$3.28 to \$25.00
Construction site cost of \$30.00

Harris went on to say if the additional construction sites are successful, we will eventually add water and sewer. After discussion, it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve the rate increases for the existing camping sites and shelters. The Council asked for more information on the proposed campsites.

Harris then addressed for informational purposes, the concessions at the pool. The Park Board made a recommendation to eliminate concessions at the pool. Community Education is having a hard time finding enough employees to work at the pool, which impacts the number of guards that can be rotated into the concessions. He proposed eliminating concessions as we have provided in the past and install vending machines. We would allow snacks to be brought in and eaten in the designated food area. Harris further stated in reviewing last year's concession numbers, we made \$2,868, before considering wages. The Mayor asked Carruth what the Park Board's discussion was. Carruth said the Park Board voted in favor of all Ambush and Pool Changes. After discussion, it was moved by Carruth and seconded by the Mayor to eliminate concessions at the pool for 2023. The following vote was taken: AYES: Carruth, Schreck. NAYS: Enderson, Maanum, Schreck. ABSTAIN: None. The motion did not pass. Enderson asked for a clear plan on vending machines and Countryside Public Health.

Harris presented a pay request from T & R Service Company for PCB disposal from electrical transformers. It was moved by Carruth, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the pay request to T & R Service Company in the amount of \$10,500.

Tweed approached the Council to present the results of the Armory Bids that came in last week. They are as follows:

The Tradesman Construction Inc.	\$1,963,998.00
Brennan Construction of MN, Inc.	\$2,215,000.00
BCI Construction Inc.	\$2,046,000.00
Baratto Brothers Construction	\$1,828,450.00

The grant the City received was for \$600,000 with City matching funds of \$600,000. Our budget is \$1.2 million. The lowest bid came in \$600,000 over budget. She went on to say she has reached out to DEED for additional funding for the entirety of the project. This is timely for all State grants in this project as The state funds need to be spent by October of 2023 and several communities have turned back grant monies. She asked the Council not to vote on accepting any bids until the next meeting where she could have new information for consideration.

Tweed presented a pay request from Engan Associates for additional work on the Armory. She explained engineers base their fees on total project costs. The project came in over budget because the committee decided to leave in alternates. Engan's claim is they had additional work. The bill today is for work they've done to date. If we should move forward with the project the balance of their fees will be \$16,250. Schreck asked about our contract with them. Tweed said she will be happy to bring the contract spelling out fees. After further discussion, it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Carruth to approve the pay request from Engan Associates in the amount of \$1,905.06. The following vote was taken: AYES: Carruth, Evenson, Enderson, Maanum. NAYS: Schreck. ABSTAIN: None. The motion carried.

Kent approached the Council with two grants that were awarded to the Benson Kid Day event. The first grant is from the Benson Area Community Foundation (BACF) for prizes and activities. It was moved by Carruth, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to accept the grant from BACF for Kid Day expenses in the amount of \$4,420.90. Next was a grant from the Robert Sonsteng Memorial Advised Endowment Fund for Kid Day expenses. It was moved by Carruth, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to approve the grant from the Robert Sonsteng Endowment Foundation for Kid Day expenses in the amount of \$2,579.10.

Kent said with Harris as the new City Manager, we will need to make adjustments with City check signers. It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Schreck and carried unanimously to authorize the following as check signers on all accounts: Mayor Jack Evenson, City Manager Kyle Harris and Director of Finance Lisa Kent. Incidental Fund: Valerie Alsaker and Kylee Collins and Kylee Collins on the Hospital Fund.

Harris presented the City's credit card policy for reviews. He proposed the Director of Finance limit to go from \$5,000-\$10,000. He also proposed his credit card limit be moved up to \$10,000, and to eliminate the Building Official credit card. It was moved by Schreck, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the credit card policy as presented.

Next was a letter of resignation from Tom Lee, Benson Liquor Store Manager, effective June 30, 2023. It was moved by Shreck, seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to accept Lee's resignation. When asked how she plans to fill the position, Kent said she is already reviewing the job description and will be meeting with Lee.

Lastly, packet policy was discussed. Enderson said it's hard when receiving the packet Friday afternoon, to make informed decisions by Monday's meeting. He asked that it be considered to send the packet earlier. Or consider bringing items twice to Council Meetings. Harris said if we send packet information Thursday, all items to go into the packet must be submitted earlier.

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 7:33 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk