

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
CITY HALL  
SEPTEMBER 5, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Evenson. Members present: Jack Evenson, Chris Carruth, Dan Enderson, Mark Schreck, Nancy Maanum. Members Absent: None. Also present: Director of Finance Lisa Kent, City Clerk Valerie Alsaker, City Manager Kyle Harris, Police Chief Ian Hodge, CEDA Representative Hillary Tweed, Assistant City Attorney Stephan Kowal, Public Works Director Dan Gens, Jim Cromberg with WSB, Cherie Stielow, Bob Simonson and Reed Anfinson. Telephonically: Liz Wefel from the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

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

- August 21, 2023 City Council Minutes
- July 17, 2023 EDA Meeting
- July 25, 2023 Park Board Meeting
- Charter Communication's Franchise Fee Payment
- Pioneerland Library System 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Pay Request Correction - ~~\$24,650.75~~  
-\$27,650.75
- Electronic Transfers:  
Payroll: August 24, 2023 - \$115,993.56

Mayor Evenson asked for anyone with unscheduled business, to which there was no one.

Wefel gave a presentation on the Coalition's work on LGA increases and the 2023 State Legislative priorities to include bonding, infrastructure packages, environmental protections for greater Minnesota, lead pipe initiative and looking ahead to the 2024 legislative session. The Council thanked Wefel for her presentation.

Chief Hodge came forward with a request from the Farmer's Market group to have exclusive use of the parking lot on the south side of the 1200 Block of Atlantic Avenue. Currently they use a portion of this lot and wish to use the entire lot on the Farmer's Market days which is on Thursday afternoon for the summer and into early fall. After discussion, it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve the request sidewalk to railroad track at the parking lot aforementioned during Farmer's Market days 3-6 p.m.

Next Harris discussed the tax forfeiture parcel 23-1447-075. This parcel is along East Pacific Avenue, also known as Gusty's Road. This parcel was originally included in on a home that was foreclosed on, and only the home parcel was foreclosed on. The county got this back from the State of Minnesota. If this parcel is purchased by another party, they cannot close Gusty's road, as it is a right-of-way. If we do not act, this land will hang in limbo. Cost to the City for this parcel of land is \$250 to the State of Minnesota, plus recording fees. After discussion, it was moved by Carruth, seconded by Schreck

and carried unanimously to approve moving forward with the conditional use deed process to own this parcel of land.

Tweed approached with a proposal to the Council to consider a City In-fill Lot Sale Program. She said the EDA has been discussing how to develop housing in Benson. Joe Maffit with CEDA has researched incentives for selling City owned in-fill lots. The City owns 5 lots; four located in a R-1 zoning district and one lot in a R-2 Zoning District. The proposal is to sell these lots for \$5,000 with the purpose of building a house on. This will allow these lots to be placed back on the tax rolls, and help alleviate City maintenance. Along with the purchase price of \$5,000, the new land owner must pull a building permit within one year. If they do not, the City will only refund 20% of the purchase price. This will give an incentive to build a home on the lot. She went on to say both Planning Commission and EDA recommends to the City Council to move forward with the program. After discussion, it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to move forward with the housing in-fill program as presented.

Tweed said Bob Simonson presented an application for the Swift County Demolition program. He has already demolished the building on Atlantic Avenue, as the business agreeing to do the demolition was passing through town and said it had to be done that day. Simonson presented pictures and quotes for the project. This building was considered commercial. The program states he is responsible for 50% of the actual cost, with Swift County and the City reimbursing the other half. After discussion, it was moved by Schreck, seconded by Carruth and carried unanimously to approve payment to Bob Simonson in the amount of \$2,378.64 under the demolition program.

Gens approached the Council with a quote for a V-plow for the one-ton truck to plow alleys. The V-plow last year broke down. He stated he will get some trade-in on it, but isn't sure exactly how much he will get. He said this purchase of equipment is off the state bid. After discussion, it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the quote for a V-plow in the amount not to exceed \$9,933.00.

Hodge approached the Council. In September of 2022, the Council passed a resolution designating the use of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds toward the purchase of a new fire truck and emergency radios. He presented quotes for new radios for the Police and Fire departments. He said the current radios the officers carry are old and we cannot get parts for them anymore. He said the quote includes a new radio for the new fire truck as well. Also included in the quote are two new emergency sirens which are in need of replacement. The total quote for the radios and sirens is \$131,281.23. These items are on the state bid. Two new poles and batteries for the sirens will be purchased with the balance of the ARPA funds which is \$4,102.62. After discussion, it was moved by Carruth, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to purchase the sirens and radios from West Central Communications in the amount of \$100,826.23, and the emergency sirens from Federal Signal Corporation in the amount of \$30,455.00.

Next Harris presented information for budget discussions. He said he spoke to each City Council member and gave an overview of the proposed levee which will need to be set at the next City Council meeting. The final levee will be set the last meeting of this year. The preliminary budget was discussed. Enderson asked if Harris is proposing a 10.5% increase in the levee to which he said yes. Enderson asked for a better understanding of the capital outlay and fund balances before moving forward with setting the maximum levee.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Carruth seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:35 p.m.

---

Mayor

---

City Clerk

**BENSON CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 5, 2023**

**Members Present:** Chris Carruth, Mark Schreck, Jack Evenson, Dan Enderson, Nancy Maanum

**Members Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Reed Anfinson and Jim Cromberg with WSB Engineering

Mayor Evenson stated the purpose of this work session today is to discuss the south industrial park study.

Cromberg introduced himself. He discussed the possibility of grant funds for the south industrial park development. He said there are funds from the Business Development Public Infrastructure (BDPI) which we could apply for to help in constructing an industrial park. The cap is \$2 million over 2 years, with a 50% match.

Cromberg provided several community examples of economic development.

There was discussion on how far out the Xcel dollars are invested. Cromberg said that is where the BDPI monies could help float the City until the investments come due.