

City of Bigfork

Work Session & Regular City Council Meeting June 9, 2016 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Amy Pifher, Drew Francisco, Pete Johnson, Randy Nei

Members Absent: Eric Storlie

Also Present: Becki Passeri, Itasca County Sheriff Vic Williams, Warren & Caroline Welch, Gene Rajala, John Thomas, Tom Moors, Travis Lovdahl

Mayor Pifher called the work session to order at 7:00 p.m. Employee requests for time off were added to the agenda. The item on skating rink was expanded to include a skate park discussion. Tom Moors introduced himself and requested financial assistance for the repair of the Veteran's rock monument. This item was added to the agenda. Moors also commended the public works department for the cemetery looking great for Memorial Day and the whole city looking great for Wilderness Day. A request from the Bigfork Improvement Group for financial assistance with architectural fees will be sent to the Budget Committee. Pifher closed the work session and opened the regular meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Public Forum on Law Enforcement: Itasca County Sheriff Vic Williams was asked to speak on law enforcement within the City of Bigfork from the County perspective. Williams provided information on the number of calls to the City of Bigfork and to the areas with a Bigfork, MN address. He noted that Bigfork is a unique small town because we have so much to support here such as the hospital, school and larger employers. He expressed appreciation for the wonderful volunteer Fire Department and Ambulance Service. The County will always be in support of additional law enforcement, however Williams stated that it is up to the Council to gauge what their own community wants and what taxpayers are willing to support. Resident John Thomas voiced his opinion that the City should continue to utilize the coverage offered by the Sheriff's Department and expressed that he thought they were doing an excellent job covering the City limits. He was concerned about the initial cost of starting up a city police department. Resident Gene Rajala echoed Thomas's thoughts, adding that he sees Sheriff's deputies in town often and feels the City is well covered. He repeated a suggestion he had made at a prior meeting about installing security cameras to deter crime. Johnson noted that he had done some research into the cost of a camera system and it came in at about \$60,000 so even with that option there is a cost-benefit analysis to be done. As no one else wished to address the Council, Pifher closed the public forum at 7:49 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mayor Pifher opened the regular public forum. As no one wished to address the Council, the public forum was closed.

Motion by Johnson to approve the agenda as amended during the work session, seconded by Francisco, motion carried unanimously (MCU).

Consent Agenda: Motion by Johnson seconded by Francisco and carried unanimously to approve the consent agenda including:

- 1. minutes of the May 10th regular City Council meeting,***
- 2. City Clerk's office report for May 2016,***
- 3. Financial reports for May 2016,***
- 4. Public Works Department report for May 2016,***
- 5. payroll and timecards for May 20th and June 3rd paydays in the amount of \$5,925.28***
- 6. claims paid in the amount of \$8,978.05 and claims for payment in the amount of \$25,488.61***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Johnson wished to address an email that was received from Howard McKinney in regard to the law enforcement public forum and other topics. Johnson felt that much of McKinney's concern was based on the history of the police department but history is history and we need to move on from that. McKinney raised concerns about the quality of the road patch job on Cedar Street. As this is a County road, the concern will be forwarded on to the County Highway Department. Another complained centered around the repair of sidewalks which has been completed. Francisco expressed concern that people in the community seem to believe that the Council is *trying* to start up a police department again and he stated that is not the case. The Council is just looking for people's input as to what they would like to see. Johnson agreed and added that he wanted to know people's reasons behind whether or not they wanted a city police department. The final item Johnson wanted to address from McKinney's email was a rumor that he, as a Council member, was vying for the position of City police officer. Johnson stated that, while he has been in school for law enforcement, he is not at all interested in being a police officer for the City of Bigfork.

Johnson suggested that the Council members seek to solicit more one-on-one input from residents as the turnout for the forum was very low.

NEW BUSINESS

Planning & Zoning Committee Recommendation - Ordinance #177 Zoning Amendments:

Motion to adopt Ordinance #177 by Johnson, seconded by Nei, MCU.

Motion to approve the summary of Ordinance #177 for publication by Johnson, seconded by Nei, MCU.

Motion to approve Ordinance #178, by Francisco, seconded by Johnson, MCU.

Preliminary Discussion on Skating Rink/Skate Park: These topics were brought up during the May Council meeting held at Bigfork School. Both Pifer and Francisco were aware of groups that had done fundraising for a skate park in the past. They agreed to contact individuals to find out the status of the funds. The City-owned parcel east of and adjacent to McGarry Park was suggested as a potential site. The Clerk was directed to find out about insurance issues related to

skate parks and also to request information on cost from any cities who have recently installed one.

Scheduling of meeting with MnDOT Aeronautics: MnDOT Aeronautics representatives have requested a meeting at the airport to go over future needs. The meeting was set for Tuesday, July 19th at 4:30 p.m. at the airport if that date works for MnDOT staff.

Veteran's Monument: *Motion to pay \$450 toward the repair and maintenance of the Veteran's monument by Johnson, seconded by Francisco, MCU.*

OTHER

Employee Time Off Requests: *Motion by Francisco to approve vacation requests as submitted, seconded by Johnson, MCU.*

Due to approved vacation days, the June Budget Committee meeting was rescheduled for Monday, June 20th at 6:00 p.m.

Fire Chief Travis Lovdahl informed the Council that the Department is still searching for a new/used truck, possibly two, and plans to take one of their current brush rigs out of service. While they have consistently been saving for this expense, they may decide to borrow a portion of the funds needed in anticipation of another large upcoming expense for replacement SCBA equipment. Lovdahl has been discussing option with Jef Fisher and will come back to the Council once they have some actual numbers.

Motion to adjourn by Francisco at 8:31 p.m., seconded by Nei, MCU.

Angela L. Storlie
City Clerk/Treasurer