

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH IN THE COUNTY OF CHISAGO AND IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

REGULAR SESSION

April 14, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: The North Branch City Council met in regular session and Mayor Lindquist called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL: Councilmembers present were Kathy Blomquist, Theresa Furman, Ronald Lindquist, Joyce Borchardt, and Trent Jensen. Staff members present were City Administrator Konrad, Liquor Store Manager Dahlberg, Finance Director Hill and the City Attorney Squires.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Claims
- Resolution 018-04-14-14 – Special Event Permit – Bridge of Grace Church Block Party
- Resolution 017-04-14-14 – Budget Transfers & Payoff of Rental Property Bond
- ~~Minutes – March 10, 2014 Regular Session~~
- Resolution 020-04-14-14 – St. Gregory's Gambling & Temporary Liquor License

Item 4D was removed for discussion.

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Borchardt to approve Consent Agenda items A, B, C, and E. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

4D Minutes, March 10, 2014, Regular Session

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Borchardt, to approve the Minutes of March 10, 2014, Regular Session. Members voted: Ayes – 3, Nays – 0, Abstain – 2(Furman/Lindquist). Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

NONE

COMMITTEE/COMMISSIONS:

6A PLANNING COMMISSION

A1 Minutes

INFO

Blomquist indicated that the Planning Commission has put a lot of work into the proposed Interim Use Ordinance.

A2 Commission Appointment

Konrad outlined the applications for the vacant Planning Commission appointment.

Motion by Blomquist, to appoint Dennis Mabery to the Planning Commission. Motion died for lack of a second.

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Furman, to appoint Brian Belfield to the Planning Commission. Members voted: Ayes – 4, Nays – 1 (Blomquist). Motion carried.

6B ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

B1 Minutes

INFO

Hill provided an overview of the economic development activity in the City including a letter of intent for the purchase of 40 acres by Superior Silica Sand.

Furman said she is abstaining from issues with regard to ESSBY since she lives right across the street but will discuss the bypass because that impacts the whole City.

6C PARK COMMISSION

NONE

6D WATER AND LIGHT COMMISSION

D1 Genesis Antenna Lease Agreement

Konrad noted that the Water and Light has been working with Genesis Wireless for placement of an antenna on one of the water towers. In exchange they will provide free internet service to the City building. She indicated there will be a one-month trial period to be sure the service meets the needs and if the needs are met the City would have free internet service and would save \$350 per month on internet charges.

Furman said that if this does not work there is no dollar amount they would pay to leave the antenna on the tower and there is no language if something were to happen that the City would be held harmless. Furman said the attorney said he could draft some language if the Council agrees.

Attorney Squires indicated that he agrees there should be some language to clarify what the requirements are for rent. He then said he believes there is enough protection for the City.

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Furman, to approve the Genesis Antenna Lease Agreement subject to amendment as suggested by the City Attorney. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

D2 Minutes

INFO

STAFF REPORTS:

7A ENGINEERING/PUBLIC WORKS

A1 Sewer Bill Reduction Request – Halliday/Anderson

Tammy Anderson appeared before Council and explained that her mom passed away and they are working on getting the house squared away. On March 18, 2014, it was discovered that a toilet was running and they received a \$600 plus bill for water and the usual bill is around \$65.00. They have fixed the leaky toilet and they are asking for a reduction in the sewer portion of the bill due to their circumstances. Lindquist said that once the water goes through the system the sewer has to be paid. He understands and sympathizes but the City has not ever reduced the fee but the City could make a payment plan to get the amount paid over time.

Konrad noted that there is a memo from Public Works Director Williams indicating it is a difficult situation but the City has not waived fees in the past and he would recommend not doing so. Konrad noted that the City has ability to adjust only the sewer rate and there is no tiered system.

Ms. Anderson thanked the Council for time.

A2 Authorize Advertisement – 2014 Gravel Project

Konrad noted it is time to seek bids for the annual gravel project.

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Borchardt, to authorize advertisement for bid for the 2014 Gravel Project. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

7B ADMINISTRATION

B1 Senior Center – Request for Funding

Barb Nelson, Chisago County Board on Aging addressed Council and requested funding assistance for the Chisago County Senior Center. The Center is asking for \$4,200 to aid in their discussions with Catholic Charities. They are trying to get Catholic Charities back at the Senior Center.

Konrad indicated that there is \$1,500 in the 2014 budget earmarked as contract for services with the Senior Center and the contract has to have the statute reference amended.

Lindquist asked if the Fire Department donations can be used for this request. Council agreed that could be possible but would like to check with the Fire Department because they are being asked for a donation also.

Furman suggested asking Lake State Bank for a donation. Blomquist indicated that would need to be a capital item and not just for programming.

Jensen indicated he is not in favor of any donation because he does not think the City should be in the business of making donations and the contract is a work around. Taxpayers can make a donation if they want to but he does not feel taxpayer money should be used for this.

Furman noted that there is \$1,500 in the budget for this year. Furman would be interested in doing the \$1,500 and look for additional monies to try and assist.

Jensen asked if the City donates to the Boy Scouts too if they ask.

Blomquist noted that the website position has not started yet but is budgeted for so she is wondering about using the funding for that position.

Jensen indicated there is always money but what isn't spent can be written down on debt or to bring taxes down.

Lindquist would be fine with the \$1,500.

Barb Nelson indicated that there is a fundraiser scheduled but that is for general operating expenses but the silent auction items will be set aside for Catholic Charities.

Barb Nelson indicated that they are making everyone a better person health wise, emotionally and mentally and they are asking for funding to help with this. The Senior Center is working on becoming an ACT community and that recognition goes to the City and not the Senior Center.

Barb Nelson said that she does not think that any citizens would criticize Council for voting to support the Senior Center.

Blomquist wished her luck on the grant writing as the funding is hard to come by.

Bob Streater encouraged the Council to discuss this because he thinks that there is community support for the Senior Center.

Lindquist would like to help out but not just the City other organizations should help as well.

Motion by Furman, seconded by Blomquist, to approve the Contract for Services with the Senior Center for \$1,500. Members voted: Ayes – 4, Nays – 1 (Jensen). Motion carried.

Jensen asked why it is against the law for the City to make donations. Attorney Squires indicated that the expenditure is to be for a public purpose and authorized by law. This type of situation the issue usually is about the statutory authority for the expenditure. He then said he believes this meets the statute as the Senior Center

B2 Reschedule May 26, 2014 Council Meeting

Motion by Borchardt, seconded by Jensen, to move the second May meeting meeting to Tuesday, May 27, 2014. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

B3 Assistant Liquor Store Manager Hire

Konrad provided an overview of the hiring process and recommended approval of hiring Mark Piper.

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Blomquist, to adopt Resolution 019-04-14-14, "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF MARK PIPER FOR THE ASSISTANT LIQUOR STORE MANAGER POSITION." All voted AYE. Motion carried.

B4 2014 Garbage Bids

Konrad outlined the bids received for 2014 garbage removal.

Motion by Furman, seconded by Borchardt, to adopt Resolution 021-04-14-14, " A RESOLUTION AWARDDING THE 2014 GARBAGE REMOVAL CONTRACT." All voted AYE. Motion carried.

7C	BUILDING	
C1	Activity Report	INFO
7D	FINANCE	
D1	Financial Report	INFO
	Hill indicated that expenses are at 21.4% and we are 25% through the year at this point so everything is on track.	
7E	LEGAL	NONE

NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS:

8A	Regional Job Fair	INFO
	Konrad provided information on the Regional Job Fair.	

8B Senior Health and Wellness Expo

INFO

Konrad noted there will be a Health & Wellness expo on Thursday, April 27, 2014 at the Senior Center.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mick Dahlberg of 38336 Cassleberry Drive indicated that the discussion on the EDA minutes the Mayor asked if there were questions or comments but he thought of some. Mr. Dahlberg commented that it was good to ask but the issue was not on the Agenda. Mr. Dahlberg asked when there will be opportunity for public input as to what goes into this new business. Konrad said that once there is a purchase agreement negotiated the EDA will hold a public hearing before the property can be sold.

The Council discussed transportation issues that need to be worked out with the development. Blomquist suggested that a booklet be prepared like was done for the bridge project for an overpass so when the Mayor or Council are talking to local legislators there is information available. The item will be scheduled for an upcoming work session.

Bob Streater addressed the Council said that as soon as there is an idea of the business and what will occur it will be time to get the public involved and open it up for discussion.

Representative Johnson said that he wished he knew about this last week because he could have amended the transportation budget to get this on the agenda to start talking about this bypass and get it on the radar screen.

Karen Kubat thanked the Council for kicking in the \$1,500 for the Senior Center and the willingness to have them back for additional funding.

Blomquist thanked the Mayor for going out of his way to ask for comments during the Agenda but she wants to clarify how Rush City does public comment. They start at 6:30 p.m. and they have public comment at 7:00 p.m. Blomquist thanked those that stayed at the meeting this evening. Blomquist commented that people usually leave after their discussion item. Blomquist said she thinks the public comment should be at the beginning of the meeting to accommodate residents. Blomquist would like to have public comment at the beginning to give the public that choice to stay or not instead of having to stay.

Motion by Blomquist to move the public comment to the beginning of the meeting to allow the residents to know what time they can comment. The motion died for lack of a second.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

NONE

MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

12A Upcoming Agendas

INFO

12B Rush Line Update

Blomquist indicated that this is the Rush Line Pre-Project Development Study, which will last 18 months where there will be a recommendation on a commuter line or rapid bus service. Konrad noted the Council could ask Diane to sit on the Technical Advisory Committee but that would be an additional charge outside of the scope of what is included in the contract for services. Furman asked if Joe Tripp could represent the City on this Committee. Blomquist said that he has not come. Furman would like to ask the County Commissioner if the County can provide a representative. Blomquist will ask.

12C Community Ed Advisory – Advertising Opportunity

INFO

Blomquist noted there are advertising opportunities in town along football fields and soccer fields and advertising in the brochures on the websites, etc. Contact Community Ed for pricing.

12D Fire Department Donation

Furman pointed out that between 1999 to present the Fire Department has donated \$136,994.99 and 75% went to the City for needed items and 25% went to the Community. The men and women on the Fire Department put out a lot more time than just going out to fires, they support the community at other events. There is a fish fry/smelt fry May 3, 2014 at 3:00 p.m.

Motion by Jensen, seconded by Furman to adjourn. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

ADJOURNED: at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridgitte Konrad, City Administrator
jrl/TOSS