

City of Brownsville  
Minutes of February 7, 2024 Regular Monthly Council Meeting and HRA of Brownsville

The regular monthly meeting of the Brownsville City Council was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Jean Meyer. Council members present were Barb Hurley, Pam Walhovd, Tim Klug and Bill Fitzpatrick. Also attending were Clerk, Steve Schuldt, Treasurer, Jenna Knight, City Maintenance Dean Twite and Brandon Frank, Brownsville F.D., Ben Novak, Brownsville F.D., Gary Schulze, Jeff LeJeune, Jim Hakes, Angie Bissen, Frank Dvorak, Joe Driscoll and Charlene Selbee with Fillmore County Journal.

Jean Meyer convened a special meeting to discuss a small cities development grant for public facilities infrastructure. She explained that the wastewater treatment facility is over 30 years old and needs major updates and repair. The grant request is for \$550,000 and funds are intended for outdated and failing systems. She explained that a survey form has been sent to residents to determine if the city has 51% or more of low to moderate income residents in the city. She also explained that the sewer system does not extend to residents along Cork Hollow Road and areas north of Mississippi Lane that are required to be attached to the city sewer system according to ordinance. Ms. Meyer gave a brief description of items needing to be repaired or replaced. She stated that the full grant application is due by April 17, 2024 and announcements in summer 2024. The expected completion is the summer of 2025. Following questions and answers by all those in attendance, Jean Meyer adjourned the special meeting at 7:34 pm.

CONSENT AGENDA: Council reviewed the consent agenda which includes the agenda for today's meeting, the minutes of January 3, 2024 and claims payable. Pam Walhovd requested that discussion of public safety aid be postponed until the March meeting. Tim Klug moved to address public safety aid to tonight's meeting under new business. There was no second to the motion but council agreed to discuss the question under new business. Pam Walhovd questioned there being 3 sets of minutes provided to council and indicated that it was confusing. She questioned what were the changes that required rewritten minutes. Tim Klug explained that he made a motion that was seconded and passed but was not recorded in the earlier submission of minutes. Pam Walhovd then questioned if the IRS approved vehicle mileage rate for reimbursement will fluctuate with the IRS changes. It was agreed that it would. Pam Walhovd questioned the Sunday Liquor License requirement and fee. It was noted it will be addressed later in the meeting. Pam Walhovd expressed confusion regarding an event fee for the gym and kitchen. She felt that including the front room and council room under the same heading as Event, means that front room and council rooms are also included as a 3-day rental. Jenna will rewrite the schedule to clarify. Pam Walhovd expressed that she understood that new rental rates for Bluffview Manor were to go into effect on June 1. It was explained that last year's change will again be used for this year's change. Pam Walhovd questioned the new Minnesota State Flag motion made by Tim Klug and seconded by Bill Fitzpatrick then approved by the full council. Ms. Walhovd requested that her vote of approval be rescinded. Barb Hurley requested that her vote of approval be rescinded also. Tim Klug expressed point of order that revoking or changing their votes on a duly adopted and recorded motion is not allowable. Barb Hurley requested that discussion be reopened regarding the proposed new Minnesota State Flag under new business. Jenna Knight will add it to the March meeting agenda. Barb Hurley noted that January meeting minutes should have recorded that should Dean Twite need to remove snow from a resident's sidewalk there will be a charge of \$75.00 per hour with a 1 hour minimum. Tim Klug moved, seconded by Bill Fitzpatrick and the motion passed to approve the minutes with amendments.

FLOOR CORRESPONDENCE: None.

PRESENTATIONS: None

APPOINTMENTS: Tim Klug presented staff wage recommendations to council for consideration. Tim Klug moved, seconded by Barb Hurley and motion carried to approve wage recommendations as follows:

City Clerk	\$25.50 hourly	City Treasurer	\$22.00 hourly
City Maintenance (FT)	\$27.25 hourly	City Maintenance (PT)	\$19.75 hourly

Jean Meyer stated that appointments will include Dean Twite's title as Maintenance Supervisor. Tim Klug questioned wages for summer recreation staff. Jean Meyer stated that it will be addressed when the jobs are offered later in spring.

OLD BUSINESS: Council was informed that a Sunday liquor license is required by ordinance and statute. Jean Meyer requested discussion regarding a license fee. Pam Walhovd moved, seconded by Barb Hurley and the motion passed to approve a license fee of \$65.00.



Council considered the ballpark and shelter fee. Barb Hurley moved to approve dropping the wording "Shelter Fee" and reference "Shelter & Concession Stand" with a fee of \$75.00 per event. The motion is to include a \$25.00 security deposit. The motion was seconded by Tim Klug and carried.

Council discussed the need to increase sewer rates, currently \$18.00 monthly for debt service and \$23.30 for sewer operations. The recommendation is to increase the monthly sewer operations fee to \$28.00 monthly and leave sewer debt service fee at \$18.00 monthly. Council considered differentiating commercial from residential for rate charges. Bill Fitzpatrick moved, seconded by Tim Klug to approve a residential rate of \$28.00 for sewer operations, a commercial rate of \$35.00 for sewer operations and a debt service rate of \$18.00 monthly.

Jean Meyer called attention to a proposed comprehensive survey that was deferred to the February meeting. Barb Hurley moved, seconded by Tim Klug to defer discussion of the comprehensive survey indefinitely. Jean Meyer explained that the city has a responsibility to seek input from its residents as to city priorities. Pam Walhovd questioned if the question of a survey could be placed on the city ballot with the question, "As a city resident, are you interested in a comprehensive survey or the following, yes or no". Jean Meyer explained that only referendums are put on ballots as they are tax items. Tim Klug expressed that there are challenges to maintaining the city versus the question of bird watching, kayaking, and camping and he doesn't see the importance of it and the reason for his second of the motion. Barb Hurley stated that she also didn't see the importance of it and stands by her motion. The motion passed with a vote of 3 in favor and 2 against.

Dean Twite presented council with a list of proposed city projects in conjunction with Houston County Highway 18 resurfacing in 2026. The city needs to submit its plans so that designs can be drawn and estimating completed. It was explained that improvements requested by the city must be paid for by the city. No action was taken.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Council reviewed a building permit application submitted by Patrick Bolduan to construct a 1 story house addition 25' long by 21' wide, 525 square feet and provide a master bedroom and living room. The addition will have crawl space and no basement. Tim Klug moved, seconded by Pam Walhovd and motion passed to approve the building permit.

Jean Meyer read a proclamation provided to the city by the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge to celebrate 100 years and to support community efforts to continue the legacy of cooperation and to participate in the refuge events throughout 2024 in celebration of The Refuge vision. The council voted unanimously to adopt the proclamation.

Jean Meyer presented a resolution to support a grant application to Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. The grant program is titled Publicly Owned Housing Grant (POHG) and is intended to be used for rehabilitating Bluffview Manor. The amount requested is \$600,000 and will be in the form of a forgivable loan at 0% interest due in 20 years. Proceeds will be used for ADA compliance, improving energy efficiency, upgrades to plumbing, repair apartment venting, roof replacement and any maintenance needed to provide for health, safety and general welfare of residents. Following discussion, Bill Fitzpatrick moved, seconded by Barb Hurley and the motion passed to approve the grant application. Under further discussion, Tim Klug inquired the amount of the grant which will be \$50,000 per apartment. Following discussion, council voted in favor of proceeding with the forgivable loan application.

Council considered a resolution required to apply for a Small Cities Development grant for improvements to the city wastewater treatment system. Tim Klug moved, seconded by Barb Hurley and the motion passed to approve the resolution.

Tim Klug moved to have the Brownsville City Clerk inform our State Representatives in writing of our desire that the state remain on traditional time and ceases the practice of applying daylight savings time to our clock. Jean Meyer reiterated the motion as follows; send a proclamation from the city clerk that the city desires that the state remains central standard time and ceases the practice of applying daylight savings time. There being no second, the motion failed.

Tim Klug proposed the following; "In hopes that this action may be paid at least in part by the Public Action Aid monies, and because many residents Brownsville City are reliant on electricity for their heat source and water, a building like our Community Center could be vital in an emergency situation that resulted in any extended period of electrical service disruption. I (Tim Klug), move that the City of Brownsville place near the top of our city goal priorities the installation of an electric generator at the Community Center". Barb Hurley spoke in favor of the idea and asked about cost. There was discussion about the need for the fire department to have a backup generator. There being no second, the motion failed. Dean Twite will review generator options and bring pricing to the March meeting for consideration.



Jean Meyer informed council that in light of raising council member pay at the January meeting, the pay raise cannot take affect until the next election cycle as defined by state statute.

Jenna Knight questioned council about charging Brownsville Township for their meetings in the Community Center council room. The new nonresident rate is \$80.00. Jean Meyer requested that council consider a governmental rate for the township. Bill Fitzpatrick moved to charge a fee of \$35.00 per meeting without a security deposit, seconded by Pam Walhovd and the motion passed.

Dean Twite reviewed his preprinted maintenance report council which is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes.

Brandon Frank presented council with draft letters to be sent to Brownsville and Crooked Creek Townships providing the results of the formula used to determine their fair share of emergency services. Council was asked to review the documents and requested their input if changes were desired. Council discussed who might be available to attend Brownsville Townships meeting on February 13. Barb Hurley agreed to attend the Brownsville Township meeting with Brandon Frank if requested by the Township.

Brandon Frank inquired if there was any progress in being able to levy boathouse owners for emergency services. It is realized that boathouses are not attached to the shoreland and the property rights are regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers and the land adjoining the water line is railroad right-of-way. Therefore there is not a means to levy the boathouse owners. Pam Walhovd suggested canvassing the boathouse owners and requesting donations toward Brownsville's Fire and Rescue Department. No action was taken. Brandon reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> DNR truck is now in service and the white 2000 Chevrolet truck has been turned over to city maintenance.

CLERKS OFFICE REPORT: Jenna Knight reported that Driftless Vector Control is seeking a 2024 contract to include 1 initial check and 2 follow up checks for \$382.00. Barb Hurley moved, seconded by Bill Fitzpatrick to approve the 2024 contract. The motion carried with Pam Walhovd and Tim Klug voting in the negative.

Council was informed that a small claims filing was ruled in favor of the city and payment is expected Thursday, February 8.

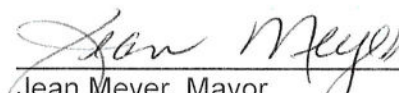
Jenna Knight informed council of a request to allow a stationary bike in the common area of Bluffview Manor for residents to use. Council agreed by consensus to allow the request.

Council was reminded that ads are needed to be posted for a summer recreation program coordinator and assistant job postings. Council was questioned if the job postings are to be advertised in the Fillmore County Journal only or to include The Caledonia Argus. The question was not addressed.

Steve Schuldt informed council of the reconciled checkbook balance and the 4-M investment account balance. The firetruck loan balance is now \$5,550.00 and will be paid off after first half taxes are settled. The maintenance building loan balance is \$11,987.00 and will be paid off on August 1, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Pam Walhovd moved, seconded by Barb Hurley and the motion passed to adjourn at 9:26 pm.

  
Steve Schuldt, Clerk

  
Jean Meyer, Mayor

