

City of Brownsville
Minutes of August 2, 2023 Regular Monthly Council Meeting

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 Jacob Danielson. Also attending were City Clerk Steve Schuldt and City Maintenance, Dean Twite. Guests in attendance were Brandon Frank, Jim Hakes and Chelsey Leis.

ROLL CALL of council was taken with a quorum being present.

MINUTES of the July 5, 2023 regular council meeting were reviewed. Jacob Danielson moved, second by Barb Hurley. Under discussion, Barb Hurley requested that the minutes include the following corrected motion by Jacob Danielson; "Jacob Danielson moved, second by Tim Klug and the motion passed to allow floor replacement by the tenants at their cost and to allow providing their own refrigerator". Additionally, under old business, the following correction: Jacob Danielson seconded a motion made by Tim Klug to approve the building permit application with inclusion of waterfront improvements as a class and to include the ordinance number for clarification.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Jacob Danielson moved, second by Pam Walhovd and the motion passed to approve the agenda.

SEWER OPERATIONS REPORT: Steve Schuldt reported that sewer operations year to date 2023 indicate an operating deficit of \$13,467.92 due to unusually high maintenance costs. The system is aging and requires updating to maintain reliability as well as regulatory compliance. Council requested projections with costs and options to be reviewed at the September council meeting.

FLOOR CORRESPONDENCE: Chelsey Leis expressed her concern that the city's new building permit application was overly complex for a small city. She felt that the application copied the City of Caledonia's application which is a city of roughly 3,000 people with different ordinances and city staffing. She expressed that the city cannot charge a permit fee for a finished basement. She stated that the city has not adopted a building code. Ms. Leis requested that the city revise the application and confer with the city attorney and League of Minnesota Cities to be sure that it coordinates with the city ordinances. Also questioned were the permit fees, which were determined in January and then revised mid-year. Ms. Leis offered to meet with council members to create a building permit and zoning application to be compatible with city ordinances.

OLD BUSINESS: Barb Hurley questioned the building permit application which requires an application and fee for basement enhancements but not for attics. Ms. Hurley expressed that the ordinance was approved with revisions but not reviewed again prior to adoption by the full council. Pam Walhovd expressed that she would not approve a document without having reviewed the final version. Following discussion, Barb Hurley moved to rescind the application and refine the document further with the understanding that it is to be reviewed again after completion prior to a vote for adoption. Council members questioned permit fees. There being no second to Ms. Hurley's motion, Jacob Danielson moved to accept the current building/zoning application as written and allow for public comment during the month of August. Two council members are to review citizen comments. Additionally, League of Minnesota Cities attorneys are to be contacted for comment regarding the building/zoning application. The motion was seconded by Tim Klug. The motion carried with Barb Hurley voting against and Pam Walhovd abstaining. Tim Klug suggested that one or two citizens with two council members review the building/zoning application prior to adoption.

BLUFFVIEW MANOR: Dean Twite reviewed the following air conditioner quotes for Bluffview Manor: Coulee Region A/C, \$18,000.00: Winona Controls, \$18,790.00: Schroeder H&C, \$16,441.61: Matt Schmitz, quote not provided. Tim Klug expressed that the project cost appears to be high in his opinion and would like to see additional quotes. Additionally, as long as the present air conditioning units are functioning, additional quotes should be obtained. Pam Walhovd moved, seconded by Barb Hurley to accept the quote submitted by Winona Controls for \$18,000.00. The motion failed by a vote of 2 in favor and 3 against.

DVORAK DITCH CONCERN: A letter from Frank and Cindy Dvorak expressed their dissatisfaction in a waterway drainage gutter adjacent to his property's west side which impairs his ability to park on the street in front of their house. Dvorak's referred to the drainage gutter as an unnecessary ditch and requested that it be filled in and restored to its original condition. Jacob Danielson suggested the matter be tabled for further consideration and research, second by Pam Walhovd and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS: Council considered membership in the Minnesota Association of Small Cities at a cost of \$374.25 annually. Jacob Danielson moved, seconded by Tim Klug and the motion passed to not join the Minnesota Association of Small Cities with Barb Hurley and Pam Walhovd voting against the motion.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT: Council reviewed and discussed a written maintenance report submitted by Dean Twite. See Exhibit A: "August Maintenance Report" attached hereto and is a part of these minutes.

In addition to the report, Mr. Twite updated council about removal of a stump at the east end of Clay Street. A quote from Clint Rohrer was \$1,260.00 and additional quotes are being obtained. Pam Walhovd moved to obtain additional quotes for stump removal and to allow Mr. Twite to use his best judgement to choose a vendor for removal of the stump. The motion was seconded by Tim Klug and carried unanimously.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Brandon Frank acknowledged that a letter being sent to residents of the Brownsville Fire District regarding an Emergency Protective Services contract met with the departments approval. The letter informs residents of a public meeting on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 6:00 pm for discussion of a proposed contract. Jacob Danielson moved, second by Pam Walhovd the motion passed to send the letter to residents of the Brownsville Township Fire District including Brownsville City. Brandon Frank presented council with a proposed presentation for the September 26 meeting. Mr. Frank requested guidance regarding implementation of proposed fees for Crook Creek Township's proposed Emergency Protective Services. Idea's will be proposed at the September 6 council meeting. Mr. Frank informed council that the second DNR truck is nearly completed and the 2000 Chevrolet 1 ton, 4 door rescue truck will be ready for decommissioning. The city will need to decide whether to sell or repurpose the 2000 Chevrolet truck.

CITY CLERK: Council was informed that the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust will only insure the Veteran's Memorial for replacement cost and nothing less. Assuming the memorial cost was \$80,000.00 and an insurance rate of \$.69 per hundred dollars of coverage, the premium would be \$552.00. Following discussion, Jacob Danielson moved, seconded by Jean Meyer to insure the memorial for \$80,000.00. The motion failed by a vote 2 in favor and 3 against.

Council was informed that a second inspection by Driftless Region Vector Control will take place in late summer, after which letters will be sent to violators.

Council was informed of a recommendation by Minnesota Public Employees Retirement Association's (PERA) Statewide Volunteer Firefighters (SVF) program to increase the benefit level from \$500.00 per year of service to \$2,100.00. Additional information is to be provided at the September 6 council meeting.

Council was informed of an increase in sewer and garbage/recycling monthly costs due to increases by, Richard's Sanitation (3% increase) and the reinstatement of fuel charges by Richard's Sanitation. The new fee will be \$60.50 monthly.

Council was informed of an opportunity to install an electric vehicle (EV) charging station in the city. Additional information is to be provided at the September 6 council meeting.

Council considered an application by Brownsville Lions Club for a temporary liquor license to serve alcohol at their upcoming gun raffle fund raiser. Jacob Danielson moved second by Tim Klug and the motion passed to approve the license application. Barb Hurley representing the Lions Club requested that the city consider allowing pickle ball in the community center during winter months. It was noted that a weekly exercise program was held last year and some coordination may be needed if the exercise program returns.. Pam Walhovd recommended that surveillance cameras be installed at the recreation park. Information is to be provided at a future meeting.

CLAIMS LIST: Council reviewed claims payable. Jacob Danielson moved, second by Tim Klug and the motion passed to pay all claims.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Jacob Danielson moved, second by Pam Walhovd and the motion passed to adjourn at 9:17 pm.


Steve Schudt, Clerk


Jean Meyer, Mayor