

**CITY OF GRAFTON
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF JUNE 1, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Public Utilities Committee of the City of Grafton was held in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Grafton, North Dakota immediately following the 5:30 p.m. Ways and Means Committee meeting, Monday, June 1, 2020.

Chairperson Chris West presided. Members present: Phil Ray, Brian Sieben, Mary Stark, and Greg Young. Others present: Dave Fellman, Don Hutson, Chris Lipsh, Shane Mohn, Nick Ziegelmann, Tony Dumas, Russ Geddes, Tom Dusek, Rock Desautel, and Todd Morgan.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

It was moved by Mr. Young, seconded by Ms. Stark and carried to accept and order filed the Balance Sheets, Income and Expense Statements, and subsidiary reports for all Enterprise Funds for the month ending April 2020.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Police Chief Dumas reported the Department has resumed enforcement of parking and traffic violations. They had lessened that due to COVID-19 since people could not be brought into the Law Enforcement Center to pay fines, etc. Chief Dumas has several staff getting training. All 4 patrol vehicles are currently fully equipped and in service.

Electric Superintendent Geddes reported the Power Department will be making upgrades to the electric distribution system in the following areas this summer: 1) Courthouse – change out some high voltage switches, 2) Fernwood complex – upgrade as it is all single phase, 3) Power Plant – they have done a major amount of renovation as the equipment was obsolete and the breakers were very dangerous, 4) street lights – they are having a lot of problems along Hwy 17 to Marvin's; underground rodents are damaging the power lines. Mr. Geddes reported they also have a couple bores to do in NStarr to repair streetlight power lines damaged by rodents. Mr. Geddes said the City is very fortunate to have received considerable used equipment from Minnkota at salvage prices.

City Administrator Ziegelmann reported he, Acting Water Dept. Superintendent Dusek and Electric Dept. Superintendent Geddes will be visiting Valley City Thursday to see their AMI system.

Street/Wastewater Superintendent Rock Desautel proposed a plan to repair the many frost boils that showed up this year. The Street Department will cut the asphalt, remove the materials, compact the fill, and a contractor will overlay with asphalt. Knife River quote \$91,000 for a 6" overlay which would be 2 3" lifts and a 4" lift was \$62,000. Gravel prices will depend on how deep we dig out the frost boils. KLJ Engineering advised the thicker the base, then you can use a 4" lift. Mr. Desautel expects the gravel prices will range \$16,000-\$27,000 as the gravel bid awarded this year was at \$8.74/ton. There are 20 frost boil locations, but he obtained quotes to repair 19 of them as the 11th Street and Manvel Avenue location needs reconstruction. Mr. Desautel is also obtaining bids from Tri-State Construction and Opp Construction so we could address the issue at the City Council meeting next week. Mr. Lipsh said he has heard some cities

are using a 12” auger to dig out the frost boil and then filling it with pea rock. Mr. Desautel would like to start digging them out next week. He said if we go 24” deep and go with a 6” asphalt and 18” of gravel, then the gravel costs would be \$24,000. He recommends digging out a minimum of 18”.

Street Superintendent Desautel said that at previous Department Head meetings they had discussed replacing the trees on Hill Avenue with planters. He has obtained prices from Grafton Floral on 2 different size plastic planters filled with flowers. The planters have a 10-year warranty. Currently there are 9 empty spots due to the trees dying. To fill in the base with concrete and purchase the flowerpot and materials the first year’s cost would be between \$700-\$1,000. The annual price for flowers would be approximately \$2,000. A picture of the planters will be provided at the City Council meeting.

Mr. Desautel reported the generators for Master, Mobile, Boeing and Legion lift stations are wired and he is hoping to have Interstate here this week to put them online.

Water Department Acting Superintendent Tom Dusek reported the Water Department has seen a couple service lines need repairs due to the frost. Jeremy Sabin has been hired for summer help and will begin June 8th. He does have water distribution experience as well.

Mr. Dusek said the Water Department staff is waiting to make repairs inside home due to the Covid-19 virus; they will wear gloves and masks for a while. City Administrator Ziegelmann reported the Power Department is not required to wear masks when disconnecting power at residences as that work is outside the home, but some staff choose to wear them. The new service line for the car wash on 12th Street was started today. Acting Superintendent Dusek reported new employee Jeremy Praska is doing very well.

There was damage to the Red River pump house railing caused by ice or logs during the spring flood. He will see if Gene Loftsgard can weld it.

The Water Department will be advertising for the vacant Water Department position in July.

Montana Dakota Utilities has implemented a meter reading system using itron meters and they have asked to place an antenna on the north water tower. Mr. Ziegelmann requested a picture of the equipment and the dimensions. He did not discuss a price with MDU but did advise that Midco (formerly Invisimax) has an antenna on the water tower and they pay \$1,000 per year plus provide free Wi-Fi to Armory, Water Plant and Street Department buildings. Power Dept. Superintendent Geddes expressed concern about the frequency MDU is running and the power as it could cause potential interference with AMI. It was agreed MDU should submit a request in writing with more information.

City Cemetery Sub-Committee Chairperson Young reported the Committee has not met recently however he did receive information from another columbarium provider in South Dakota. The cemetery has been mowed at least twice so far this season. Fertile Grow was contacted to spray for weeds. The cemetery looked very nice for Memorial Day.

NEW BUSINESS

City Administrator Ziegelmann discussed a request from Polar for a 15' easement along 147th Avenue NE and 69th Place NE. He discussed the request with Jon Markusen from KLJ Engineering who suggested a 10' easement would be sufficient. Polar has requested the easement as part of the rural expansion grant project they were awarded. It was moved by Mr. Sieben and seconded by Mr. Young to recommend the City Council approve the request from Polar for a 10' easement at 147th Avenue Northeast and 69th Place Northeast between 69th Place NE and 70th Street NE. All members present voted in favor thereof; Chairperson West declared the motion carried.

Mr. Young asked when City Hall would be reopened to the public after closure due to COVID-19. Mayor West said likely July, but he is waiting for installation of plexiglass at the reception counter. He also wants to see if the active COVID-19 case numbers increase now that restrictions have been eased.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Young, seconded by Mr. Sieben and carried to adjourn the meeting.

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Chris West, Chairperson

Connie A. Johnson, City Auditor