

**CITY OF GRAFTON
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
MEETING OF JUNE 8, 2020**

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Grafton, North Dakota was held in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Grafton, North Dakota at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, June 8, 2020.

Mayor Chris West presided. Members present: Dave Fellman, Don Hutson, Chris Lipsh, Shane Mohn, Phil Ray, Brian Sieben, Mary Stark, and Greg Young. Others present: Nick Hall, Nick Ziegelmann, Tony Dumas, Tom Dusek, Rock Desautel, Stacie Sevigny, Dawn Mandt, Jayce Schumacher, Kristy Jelinek, Brad Wurgler, Maggie Suda, Jackie Thompson, Kerry Demars, Brad Burianek, John Aasand, John Dusek, Shirley Burns, Jon Markusen, and Todd Morgan.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor West asked if any Council member wanted to remove any item from the Consent Agenda. As no one did, it was moved by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Hutson to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 Approval of Minutes:

- a) City Council regular meeting of May 11, 2020.
- b) Ways and Means Committee regular meeting of June 1, 2020.
- c) Public Utilities Committee regular meeting of June 1, 2020.

4.2 Reports of Officers:

- a) City Auditor-Treasurer
- b) Municipal Judge
- c) Chief of Police
- d) Building Official
- e) Parks and Recreation
- f) Others, if any

4.3 Game of Chance applications:

- #1000 - Northern Lites Archery
- #1001 – Spoiler Boosters

On roll call vote the following voted in favor thereof: Mr. Fellman, Mr. Hutson, Mr. Lipsh, Mr. Mohn, Mr. Ray, Mr. Sieben, Ms. Stark, and Mr. Young. Those opposed: None. Mayor West declared the motion carried.

BILLS, CLAIMS AND ACCOUNTS

It was moved by Mr. Fellman and seconded by Mr. Ray that the General, Special, Capital Projects, Debt Service, and Enterprise Funds bills be approved for payment in accordance with

the listing submitted; said listing to be a part of these minutes as if herein set out verbatim. On roll call vote the following voted in favor thereof: Mr. Fellman, Mr. Hutson, Mr. Lipsh, Mr. Mohn, Mr. Ray, Mr. Sieben, Ms. Stark, and Mr. Young. Those opposed: None. Mayor West declared the motion carried.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Street/Wastewater Superintendent Rock Desautel reported he received the following three quotes for repairing the 19 frost boils throughout town: Knife River \$62,016 for 4" asphalt, \$91,153.50 for 6", Opp Construction \$82,200 for 4" asphalt, \$121,000 for 6"; and Tri-State Construction \$81,000 for 4" asphalt \$121,790 for 6". Mr. Desautel said the Street Dept would remove 2' of materials from the frost boil, fill with 20" of gravel and the contractor would lay 4" of asphalt. He recommends 4" asphalt because with a better base you can use less asphalt. This proposal does not include 11th Street between Hill Avenue and Manvel Avenue, which needs to be reconstructed. It was moved by Mr. Mohn and seconded by Mr. Hutson to accept the bid from Knife River for 19 frost boils repairs with 4" of asphalt at \$62,016 payable from the street resurfacing budget. On roll call vote the following voted in favor thereof: Mr. Fellman, Mr. Hutson, Mr. Lipsh, Mr. Mohn, Mr. Ray, Mr. Sieben, Ms. Stark, and Mr. Young. Those opposed: None. Mayor West declared the motion carried.

Following the discussion during the Public Utilities Committee meeting, Superintendent Desautel provided pictures of planters that could be placed along Hill Avenue in place of the trees that have died and need to be removed. Mr. Desautel explained that trees will not live well along the highway. Ms. Stark suggested this wait until next year due to the lack inventory of flowers at this time. It was moved by Ms. Stark and seconded by Mr. Ray to table the matter and return discussion to the Public Utilities Committee. All members were present and voted in favor thereof: Mayor West declared the motion carried.

On recommendation of the Public Utilities Committee, it was moved by Mr. Sieben and seconded by Mr. Young to approve the request of Polar Communications Mutual Aid Corporation for a 10' easement at 147th Avenue Northeast and 69th Place Northeast between 69th Place NE and 70th Street NE. The City Administrator said the City Attorney reviewed the proposal and had no concerns in granting the easement. On roll call vote the following voted in favor thereof: Mr. Fellman, Mr. Hutson, Mr. Lipsh, Mr. Mohn, Mr. Ray, Mr. Sieben, Ms. Stark, and Mr. Young. Those opposed: None. Mayor West declared the motion carried.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mayor West urged the City Council to vote in favor of the contract with Red River Regional Council to provide strategic plan development services. He said community response from a survey that was conducted last year was 84% or the respondents want to improve the community and 58% of the respondents of The Walsh County Record survey too also want to continue work towards improving the community. Mayor West said he believes it is time our community takes steps to be proactive about community development.

John Aasand of the Extra End said he has been doing business in town for 45 years, he is opposed to contracting with Red River Regional Council for strategic planning services, Grafton is a service town and he believes the businesses can sell the town themselves.

City Administrator Ziegelmann reviewed the history of this strategic planning process proposal explaining the Economic Development Committee has been working on this since the fall of 2017. The Economic Development Committee discussed whether it would be more beneficial to hire someone to develop this vision or partner with agencies that already exist within our area. The consensus was to contact Walsh County Job Development Authority and Red River Regional Council to consider options for contracting services; the Committee recommends partnering with the Regional Council for a proposal of \$60,000 this year and \$90,000 next year.

Kristy Jelinek, a member of the Economic Development Committee, spoke in favor of the proposal for strategic plan development services with the Red River Regional Council. She pointed out that everyone present tonight is there because they believe in the community and they want to make it successful. Ms. Jelinek said whether we agree or disagree on the plan put forward her question to everyone is if not this, then what?

Brian Sieben expressed his opposition to contracting with the Regional Council because there are several entities in town who already assist new and existing businesses. He said he has a list of 31 businesses that have started, grown and expanded in the last 10 years in Grafton so he thinks the community is doing fine.

Dawn Mandt, Red River Regional Council Executive Director, said economic development may mean assisting in business creation, attraction, retention and expansion. She provided history on some of the projects the Regional Council has supported. She explained if the Regional Council's strategic plan proposal is approved, they wouldn't try to tell businesses how to be successful but rather they would want to learn what the issues are and help to solve them. Stacie Sevigny, also from the Regional Council, reported she and Ms. Mandt visited three main street businesses last week and the business owners felt the one on one visits with the Regional Council would be very beneficial as it would be an opportunity to share insight as well as education and assistance to those who need it.

Ms. Mandt reported the Regional Council submitted applications to the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. With their funding the Regional Council will be hiring one additional staff member for the next 24 months and they will also be creating a \$1.3 million loan program to assist with business recovery. Ms. Mandt also stated she serves as Vice Chair on the North Dakota Rural Development Council and they have been working with the ND Department of Commerce last week for a \$1.5 million pool to support community COVID recovery plans. That request is currently under consideration of the Governor's office and OMB; if it passes those two reviews it will go to the ND Emergency Commission on June 18th. These funds need to be allocated by the end of 2020. The Grafton project could be presented as a recovery plan which would make it eligible for a grant request.

Brad Wurgler, CFO of Unity Medical Center was present on behalf of Unity Medical Center. It is the belief of the administration at Unity Medical that although no one has all the answers, any plan is better than no plan. They understand the concerns about the cost with the proposal, but the investment is critical to achieve the goals outlined in the workplan.

Jayce Schumacher, a local business owner and member of the Economic Development Committee, said although the members are committed, too often ideas that arise from meetings remain just ideas as nothing is done to implement them. She believes any information we have

online is very inadequate to sell Grafton. She encouraged the City Council to vote in favor of the partnership with the Red River Regional Council.

Mr. Lipsh requested City Attorney Nick Hall advise whether his sitting on the Red River Regional Council Board and the City Council is a conflict of interest and Attorney Hall stated there is no conflict.

It was moved by Mr. Lipsh to approve the proposal for strategic plan development services submitted by Red River Regional Council. Mr. Ray seconded the motion. Mr. Hutson serves on the Economic Development Committee and he said the only reason the decision was made to hire Praxis was because the City received funding from the State. The survey showed the city should have web page and branding development and that is not even part of the proposal. Ms. Stark expressed her appreciation to all the people who have called her regarding this subject. Mr. Mohn also thanked everyone who spoke tonight as he feels it gave him more insight. Mayor West distributed letters of support for the work to be done by Red River Regional from the Cavalier Mayor and former City Administrator Mylo Einarson. Mr. Lipsh said the City Council needs to lead and if not now, when? On roll call vote the following voted in favor thereof: Mr. Lipsh, and Mr. Ray. Those opposed: Mr. Fellman, Mr. Hutson, Mr. Mohn, Mr. Sieben, Ms. Stark, and Mr. Young. Mayor West declared the motion failed. He stated he hopes we can make other plans for moving this Committee forward.

Administrator Ziegelmann reported the Storefront Improvement application submitted by Kieley Electric for the 106 East 5th Street (former Winter Sports Arena) was approved by the Economic Development Committee. Ryan Hanson plans to move his main office to this location.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Jon Markusen, KLJ Engineering, provided an update on the Flood Risk Reduction and Storm Sewer and Lift Station Projects. The contractor has already been able to get a lot of levee in place this year; he estimated there is about ½ mile left to finish. They have been placing topsoil as soon as they can as well as seeding and mulching. Mr. Markusen said they will be monitoring the control structure for settlement for the next 12 to 24 months. They will be making some modifications to the railings now.

The lift station on 18th Street was not working last night. Street/Wastewater Superintendent Desautel explained there was storm water on 15th Street because the lift station only works on manual as there is an electrical problem. Electric Pump is the supplier and they have not been here to fix it yet.

Mr. Markusen reported they had the third meeting on the CLOMR process. FEMA did get approval to use the gpu method. They have a few more meetings to go through some of the questions and comments they have. He said the CLOMR has been closed out and they are officially working on LOMR now.

The Code Enforcement Report from the Building Official was reviewed. Discussion was held about whether the city-wide cleanup will be held this year. The Administrator suggested not doing it this year or scheduling it the end of August.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor West reported he and Mr. Lipsh met with Walsh County Commissioners, Lauren Wild and Karen Anderson regarding the Law Enforcement Center contract. Walsh County still wants the \$150,000 contract annually without City tax money being credited. Another meeting will hopefully be held within a week or so. Mr. Hutson questioned if the City is billed for 1/3 of the expenses at the LEC in addition to what is paid annually. Mr. Lipsh reported the City gets a bill of approximately \$31,000 for expenses at the LEC and \$151,000 for the use of the LEC and dispatching services. The citizens of Grafton pay \$76,000 in taxes towards 911 and approximately \$70,000 to \$100,000 to 911. The deadline to work on a resolution has been extended to August.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The City and Primary Election will be held Tuesday, June 9, 2020. Ballots can be dropped off at the south door at the Courthouse until 4:00 p.m.

The Organization meeting will be held Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

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

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Chris West, Mayor

Connie A. Johnson, City Auditor