

## **Dawson City Council Minutes**

**May 17, 2016**

**5:30 p.m.**

The Dawson City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, May 17, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Councilpersons present: Steve Tufto, Becky Bothun, Jeff Olson, Dave Lien, Heather Myers and J.T. Schacherer.

Councilpersons absent: None.

Others present: Mayor Merlin Ellefson, City Manager Crystal Hansonl, Administrative Assistant Kristi Kvaal, City Attorney Rick Stulz, Maintenance Superintendent Brent Powers, Lance Stoeber, Don Perkins, and Jeff VanBuren with the USDA.

Declaring a quorum present Mayor Ellefson called the meeting to order and the group repeated the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Ellefson asked for approval of the agenda with the stipulation that Item #6 will require no action and Item #7 will be tabled. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Bothun to approve the agenda with the noted stipulations. Voting in favor: Tufto, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Lien seconded by Councilman Tufto to approve the May 3<sup>rd</sup> Council Meeting Minutes. Voting in favor: Tufto, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Ellefson opened the 10 minute public forum. Councilwoman Bothun indicated that she will abstain from voting on future issues involving the DSI Small Cities Grant indicating she has applied for said grant. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Ellefson closed the public forum.

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Mayor Ellefson called on AGP Manager Lance Stoeber to discuss the street repairs planned near the Ag Processing Plant. Lance indicated that the plan is to tear out and resurface Seventh Street and Elm Street (62' x 68') to the property line with asphalt. The vacated street will have Class #5 gravel applied, as this street will have minimal traffic once the project is completed. Merlin asked for a timeline for the project's completion, to which Lance indicated the end of August.

Jeff VanBuren of the USDA was introduced by Mayor Ellefson to discuss the two projects that he is working on with the City of Dawson, namely the squad car cameras and the new early warning sirens. Jeff explained the application and grant process. Mayor Merlin signed Form RD 1942-46, the "Letter of Intent to Meet Conditions" and Form RD 1940-1, the "Request for Obligation of Funds" for both projects. This will set aside and obligate the money for future use. The sirens are to be placed on Tenth Street near the Stevens Elementary playground and at the Water Treatment Plant. Jeff also stated that the City can cancel both projects at any point. Lance asked if the current siren will stay at AGP, to which Brent replied yes, it will.

Mayor Merlin then discussed the Pay Study Information, noting that there is a \$10,000 difference in the two quotes. Crystal explained that she did not request a quote from Springstead, indicating that a nearby city had recently hired them for the same purpose and did not recommend their services. Merlin stated that he felt that the City needed to move forward in establishing job descriptions and pay scales. Crystal noted that the last job descriptions were established in the 1970's, and that the City needs a non-biased party to establish pay equity. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilwoman Bothun to recommend the lower of the two quotes, namely George Gmach Compensation Consulting, LLC. Voting in favor: Tufto, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Schacherer to approve the second reading of the Rezoning Ordinance. Voting in favor: Tufto, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

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On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Schacherer to approve the Official Summary of Zoning Amendment. Voting in favor: Tufto, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Mayor Merlin then brought up the proposed 6% water/wastewater increase. Councilman Schacherer explained that the Water/Wastewater Committee had met and discussed the current rates. The fund has been operating at a deficit and cannot continue to show a loss in revenue. Councilman Schacherer explained that the costs to operate the fund have remained constant but that a substantial loss in commercial usage, namely AGP, has contributed to the deficit. He further went on to explain that the current wastewater plant is now running at less than 50% capacity. Jim Bullert had recommended a 3% increase for the next two years, but the committee is asking for a 6% increase to bring the fund more in line with expenses and lost revenue. Mayor Merlin also commented that it is important for the fund to show a positive balance, or at least break even, when applying for grants for future street projects. If the fund continues to operate under budget, it could negatively impact our ability to receive grant monies. Lance asked if it was a water and wastewater increase, to which Councilman Schacherer replied yes. On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Olson to approve the first reading of the Water and Wastewater Rate Increase Ordinance. Voting in favor: Tufto, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: Bothun; absent: none. Motion carries.

On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Tufto to approve the Utility Billing Fee Schedule. Voting in favor: Tufto, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Crystal explained the membership request letter from the Minnesota Association of Small Cities. The City's contribution would be \$801.60 and has been approved in past years. Mayor Merlin stated that the Association helps to promote smaller cities within the state. On motion by Councilman Olson seconded by Councilman Lien to approve the Minnesota Association of Small Cities Membership Request. Voting in favor: Tufto, Bothun, Olson, Lien, Myers and Schacherer; voting against: none; absent: none. Motion carries.

Councilman Olson from Olson Sanitation spoke on the recent City Wide Clean Up and the increase in fees for pre-paid items from \$15 to \$20. He explained that the market for scrap iron has decreased in recent years, and it now costs more to dispose of items such as televisions, washers, dryers, etc. He went on to explain that the City could apply for grants to help with the collection of electronic waste. Jeff indicated he would volunteer to provide a roll-off and transport it to Madison if the City would organize the collection. City Attorney Rick Stulz volunteered to contact Jennifer Breberg from the LQP County Environmental Office to discuss options for an electronic waste collection in Dawson.

City Mtn Supt. Brent Powers' report.

1. Brent updated the Council on the swimming pool repair work. The contractor is expected within the next week, after which they will fill the pool. They hope to have it operational by June 1.
2. Two part-time workers have been hired for the summer to help with the mowing, etc.
3. The campground is busy, with Dennis Hullstrom providing on-site supervision as camp host. Work will begin on the new campsite once the City receives approval from the plumbing inspector.
4. The contractors are scheduled to complete repairs to Pine Street in Riverview Estates. The City has retained 8% of the project cost until completion. Dust coating at Riverview Estates will be completed to coincide with the repair work.

City Manager Crystal's report.

1. Jordan Baldwin has been hired as the new full-time officer. Sabrina Skold has completed Highway Patrol officer training.
2. There will be a meeting on Thursday, May 26, at the Multi-media Room in Madison with representatives from the Army Corp of Engineers to discuss Ditch #4.
3. Citing concerns raised by local residents, Crystal stated the City of Dawson would like to approach the County Commissioners to discuss the possibility of changing the county ordinance regulating the placing of hog barn facilities near city limits. The current ordinance limits their location to one mile, but the City would like to see it increased to two miles. Rick Stulz said a change in ordinance would affect the entire county, and he would contact Jennifer Breberg to discuss options.

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A question was raised as to the deadline to file for office, to which Crystal replied August 2. It was also noted that the Council will only meet once a month during June, July and August.

On motion by Councilman Schacherer seconded by Councilman Olson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carries and the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

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Administrative Assistant Kristi Kvaal

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Mayor Merlin Ellefson