

Dawson City Council
March 7th, 2023
5:30 pm

Councilpersons present: Jake Bothun, David Hansen, Jeff Olson, Vince Adelman, Charlie Prestholdt and JT Schacherer. Others present: Mayor Randy Tensen, City Manager Jill Kemen, Public Works Superintendent Kurt Collins, Public Works Supervisor Colin Lee, City Attorney Rick Stulz, Dave Hickey, Lowell Tyler, Glenn Carlson, Marc McCormick, Rebecca Anderson, Liquor Store Manager Emily Polzine, Keith Knutson, Duane Hastad, and Evan Robertson.

Mayor Tensen called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and everyone repeated the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Tensen stated the meeting will be recorded for minute taking purposes.

Councilman Schacherer motioned to approve the agenda with a second from Councilman Prestholdt. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.

Councilman Schacherer motioned to approve consent agenda item 4, council minutes from February 21, council minutes from March 2 and item 12, February financials and January financials from Pershing/Ehlers. Second from Councilman Hansen. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.

10 Minute Public Forum

Glenn Carlson addressed Council. He explained the homes on the block he lives on. His concern is that Council is stretching a rubber band and the people of Dawson can only afford so much. He stated that his utility bill has risen 115%. He understands that there is a need to move forward but at what cost. He also stated his concern about policing and the need for part-time employees for this department. Glenn thanked Council for the opportunity to speak and the 10 minute public forum ended at 5:36 pm.

Reports of officers, boards and committees

Funding Committee reviewed rates of current and future bonds. Committee also inquired about receiving better interest rates on some investments they have that are currently held at Minnwest Bank. Committee recommended to Council to approve the transition of the Deputy Registrar Office to the City Office to continue the service in the community. To do this, City Office Staff would need to remove something from their current workload. Closing and selling the Liquor Store was discussed after reviewing the Liquor Store financials.

Enterprise Committee met with Ehlers regarding the proposed rate increases that are needed to pay debt payments. This information was also be presented at the Special Council Meeting on March 2. The Enterprise Committee recommended the rates as proposed. Committee also reviewed moving the Deputy Registrar Office to the City Office and closing the Liquor Store. The committee recommended that Council approve both.

Above Ground Construction Committee reviewed the 5th Street Crossing BNSF track and the offer from BNSF to update the crossing to concrete. Dawson would have to contribute half of the update, approximately \$53,000. Committee recommended approval of this update and bring it to full council.

The Snow Plow Policy was also recommended to be brought to full council. Hackberry Street was reviewed and required additional information as does seal coating streets. Additional follow-up information will be sought on both of these items.

Public Works Superintendent Kurt Collins' Report

Collins thanked the city crew and all the dependable snow haulers the city employs for their extra effort and work when he was on vacation.

The water main leak has been located at 5th and Locust. This repair has started and will be finished on Wednesday morning. This is in old infrastructure. He commented that this is the 3rd break in as many years on this stretch of infrastructure. Water breaks are costly and time consuming. No one likes digging in the winter months. This break was found due to the snow melt and considerable amount of extra water flowing into the storm drain.

City Manager Jill Kemen's Report

A. EDA Update. There are now 3 fix-up grants available from the Dawson EDA. There is one open apartment at Heritage Courts. EDA signed a letter of understanding with SWMHP again to continue to pursue a grant for duplex housing in the new addition. The Blandin Foundation Grant funds have been received. Bids for the project are due mid-March. The Board was reorganized.

B. City Office Staff are extremely happy with their new computers. As with all new things, there are kinks to be worked out, however, this was a nice update to help complete daily duties.

C. The squad is still coming. The new laptop for the squad has been delivered and set up.

D. Chief Stock has been advertising for a part-time position within the department. This is to fill shifts for vacations, etc. This position is on an as-needed basis. No scheduled hours are given. There is currently \$10,000 budgeted for this position. The current part-time officer has given his resignation.

Old Business

A. Councilman Prestholdt asked Council to take a hard look at paving the remaining streets in the City. He feels it is only fair that those residents and businesses along those streets are treated fairly and be offered the same cost share opportunity as the rest of the community. He feels dust control needs to be monitored better. Collins said there is chloride put down but that means limited maintenance can be done so that the chloride doesn't get removed. Councilman Olson stated that there are 14 blocks of gravel and they do indeed receive chloride treatment. Councilman Adelman asked about the diesel pumps at the Co-op and truck traffic contributing to additional dust. Stulz said the plan looks to have pavement where the truck traffic will be driving.

New Business

- A. 5th Street Railroad Crossing. – Recommendation from the Above Ground Construction Committee to use funds available from the design change on Phase 2 to pay for City half of a concrete crossing of the BNSF line on 5th Street. No further maintenance of the current track crossing is possible. There is nothing left to re-anchor the rail ties to underneath the top ones. After discussion, on motion from Councilman Olson with a second from Councilman Schacherer to approve the update on 5th Street Crossing to concrete. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.
- B. Liquor license for DB Baseball – All documentation is complete. This is for strong beer. Motion by Councilman Bothun with second from Councilman Hansen. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.
- C. Pay estimate #9 Ryan Construction. – Additional change order work from Phase 2 has been approved by the engineers for payment. Motion by Councilman Olson, Second Councilman Adelman to approve payment. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.
- D. Bill received from Rural Solutions. – Budgeted items from 2022 and 2023 for a new server and 3 new computers for City Office. Motion Schacherer, second Hansen to pay the presented bill to Rural Solutions. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.
- E. Resignation Part-time Officer. Office Jagger Anderson has accepted a position with Stevens County and thus needs to resign from part-time work for the City. Motion by Olson, second Bothun to accept the resignation of Anderson. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.
- F. Deputy Registrar Office. – Presented with financials and expectations on staffing and office duties, Kemen presented a plan to transfer the Deputy Registrar Office, now located at Miller Services, to the City Offices. Kemen sees the need to keep it in the community. The City office does receive calls asking where to purchase tabs in Dawson. This would be run as an enterprise fund. It isn't anticipated that extra staff would need to be hired to complete the needed duties. Councilman Olson doesn't like the idea of competing with a private business. Kemen stated they would use the current printer and computer that is in the office. Discussion molded into item G. Liquor Store Wind down discussion. Councilman Olson stated it takes him 3 hours at Miller Services to transfer the title when he purchases a new truck. After discussion, Councilman Prestholdt motioned to table the transfer to the next meeting. Second by Councilman Olson. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.

G. Liquor Store Wind down discussion. – Kemen said to add the Deputy Registrar Office some workload removed. Kemen was sure to state that considering the wind down has nothing to do with Liquor Store Manager, Emily Polzine or her staff. Polzine discussed reasons a stand-alone liquor store has benefits. Rebecca Anderson, Liquor Store Clerk, asked how many off sale licenses would be sold by the City. She feels that if there isn't a stand-alone, people may leave town to purchase their products and do other business while they were in that community. Kemen did state that it is the intent to keep the building and fixtures as a stand-alone store. This could be done within the development agreement. Councilman Olson stated throughout the years the liquor store has been very good at giving donations back to the community. Polzine states she is honored when her customers ask for donations. Councilman Adelman made note about all the additional activity that has been happening in Dawson over the last several years that the liquor store has benefited from. Anderson asked about other work items that the manager can do at the liquor store instead of depending on the City Office to complete tasks. Kemen gave some examples of what might be possible. On motion by Councilman Olson with a second by Councilman Hansen to table the discussion until the next meeting. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.

H. Utility Rate Increases. – Kemen referred to the Special Council Meeting that was held to inform the public and Council of what rate increases Dawson needs to make. The increase insures that the bond payments are covered and also have the reserve income needed to be in compliance with PFA funding the City received. Kemen had the slide show presentation available for public to take home as well as the examples of utility bill increases. Kemen appreciated AGP need to understand where the rates are coming from and more details behind the numbers. Councilman Olson asked if Noah's Ark was aware of the discussions happening. Kemen stated they had been called. Councilman Adelman doesn't agree with the 250 BOD and would prefer the City to do some grab samples and send in to see where the domestic BOD was at. Collins stated the samples have been grabbed and will be sent in to test on Wednesday. Councilman Hansen said first and foremost recognize that with our bonds, we have to increase rates. He said he is concerned with putting too much on the back of our residents. He said it is a fine line wanting both AGP to continue in Dawson and allow people to continue to live here. Marc McCormick, AGP, does recognize that AGP does have a stronger back than some of the residents to be able to absorb the rate increases. He reiterated the change to AGP can't be excessive either. Councilman Adelman stated that we had a professional rate structure done to try to bring things in-line with residents, commercial and industrial. He recognizes that it will hurt our industrial consumers more. More discussion was held amongst the board and present community members. On motion by Councilman Hansen with a second by Councilman Schacherer to table the motion to continue to move forward with the recommended increase in utility rates. Voting in favor Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: Councilman Adelman. Motion passed.

I. Snow Policy – Kemen explained why the City would be benefited by implementing a policy like the County has. Kemen explained City equipment must have contact with objects and thus create damage. This type of situation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After discussion, on motion

by Councilman Schacherer with a second by Councilman Hansen to implement the snow policy for Dawson. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.

Miscellaneous Announcements

A. The next Council meeting is Tuesday, March 21st at 5:30 pm.

B. Upcoming meetings: If you can't make a meeting, please let Kemen know. Meetings coming up are Employee/Volunteer Committee and Enterprise Committee Meeting.

Hearing nothing else, on motion by Councilman Schacherer with a second from Councilman Hansen to adjourn the meeting. Voting in favor Councilman Adelman, Councilman Prestholdt, Councilman Hansen, Councilman Olson, Councilman Bothun and Councilman Schacherer. Against: None. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm.



Jill Kemen City Manager



Randy Tensen, Mayor