

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Workshop
October 20, 2009
Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN
5:45 p.m.

Council present: Kuoppala, Kallevig, Koivunen, Hoag, Matos

1. Grant Avenue & Park Avenue Improvements – Special Assessments

Discussion took place on whether or not the City will assess property owners for County-State Aid Highway (CSAH) projects. Director Wiskow discussed the potential feasibility study for Grant Avenue and Park Avenue improvements. Portions of the special assessment policy were reviewed.

2. Central Iron Range Initiative Brownfield Assessment Program

Rick Crum, NTS, addressed the Council on behalf of the Central Iron Range Initiative (CIRI). Crum explained that CIRI is a nonprofit organization that has pulled together several Iron Range cities and townships to seek funding for redevelopment of damaged property. The Brownfield Assessment Program focuses on properties that are currently not being redeveloped due to historical damage. Contamination is not a requirement for the property to be considered. Crum said that any entity choosing to attend a CIRI meeting can become a member. If awarded a grant, a cooperative agreement would be formed with the City of Chisholm to distribute funds. CIRI will know if the grant is awarded in June or July of 2010.

3. Update on City Hall Lift

City Clerk/Administrator Monahan-Junek and Director of Public Works Wiskow gave an update on the City Hall lift. Natasha Wiener, Minnesota Historical Society, visited the City Hall on October 14th after Representative Tom Rukavina sent a letter to the Historical Society requesting a visit be made to the City Hall. The City of Eveleth was awarded a CDBG grant for the installation of the lift. The grant is inapplicable based on the Historical Society's decision that a lift would disturb the space. Ms. Wiener suggested the City Hall be placed on the National Register of Historical Places. This would potentially allow the City to apply for grant money for the installation of an elevator. The downfall of being placed on the National Register is that all major building improvements must be approved by the State Historic Preservation Office.

4. Rental Housing Code

Councilor Koivunen said the most blighted properties in town are rental properties. Discussion took place on establishing City Code and fees for rental units. Chief Lillis

advised that prior to adopting an ordinance; enforcement would need to be considered. Monahan-Junek will remind the Council to follow up on this issue at another workshop meeting.

5. Chicagami Day Care Facility – Councilor Kuoppala

Councilor Kuoppala discussed the concerns of the Chicagami Day Care Facility. Currently they rent the former junior high building. They will be allowed to continue renting until the heating system malfunctions. Councilor Kuoppala reported that 58 percent of the children at the daycare are from Eveleth. The other 42 percent are coming from other communities. Kuoppala said she felt the center is an economic benefit to the community. She suggested a consultant, like Dave Salene, be hired to look into other building options. Monahan-Junek will add this item to the EDA's list for consideration at their next planning session.

6. Microenterprise – Councilor Kuoppala

Councilor Kuoppala said A Minnesota Without Poverty, based out the Twin Cities, has been helping people start up businesses. They are interested in a project for rural Minnesota. Kuoppala suggested Eveleth participate.

7. Sanitary Sewer Ordinance Revision

In June of 2009, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency issued the City a Letter of Warning which included the requirement that the City Code be revised to prohibit septic haulers from discharging into the sanitary sewer system.

This item will be removed from the regular Council Agenda this evening to allow the City Attorney more time to review the draft ordinance.

8. COPS Grant Update

Chief of Police Lillis said that the City of Eveleth has not been denied the COPS Grant and is in a pending status. One of the provisions the City had to fall under, in order to qualify for the grant, was that a police officer would be laid off. Lillis questioned the Council's position on laying off an officer. Councilor Kuoppala said that budget discussions would need to take place before determining which department will need to cut an employee.

9. Mental Health Lease Renewal

Monahan-Junek was told by the Regional Director that the State would be paying for the step/ramp repairs. The State has indicated the City should pay for the repairs made to the steps at the Eveleth Health Service Park Mental Health Unit. The money is in the City's Hospital Building Fund, but the lease rate would need to be renegotiated if the repairs are paid by the City.

10. Agenda Q & A

(Removed from the Agenda)

J3. Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance Amending Chapter 3, Section 3.30 of the City Code Entitled Rules and Regulations Related to Sewerage Service