

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Workshop
October 6, 2015
Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN
5:45 p.m.

Mayor Robert Vlasisavljevich, Present
Councilor Brian Hoag, Present
Councilor Brad Hadrava, Present
Councilor Brian Lillis, Present
Councilor Joseph Koivunen, Present

Staff present: City Clerk Administrator Jackie Monahan-Junek; Deputy City Clerk Stephanie Friebe; City Attorney Bonnie Thayer; Chief of Police Timothy Koivunen; Director of Public Works Michael Wiskow; Assistant Public Works Director, Jerry Rosati; Rodney Flannigan, Benchmark Engineering; Deputy Chief of Police, Jesse Linde; Officer Brandon Elias; Officer Rick High

Also in attendance: Commissioner Keith Nelson

Mayor Vlasisavljevich called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m.

1. Police Canine Unit Proposal

Chief of Police Koivunen voiced his support for a canine unit. Koivunen said officers have gathered information in order to submit a proposal to the Council. Koivunen said, "Eveleth is a smaller entity, but it does not mean that we cannot be cutting edge." A canine would assist with narcotics, finding a lost child, vehicle searches, day to day interaction with the community, etc.

Koivunen believes a canine would benefit the police department and the community. The start-up expense is around \$21,000 to \$22,000. The cost to purchase and train the dog is \$12,500. The dog would be ordered from Coon Rapids, from a specialized trainer. The training would start in March and continue for 12 weeks. The Quad Cities area does not currently have a canine unit. The St. Louis County Sheriff Department has canine units in Tower and Hibbing which Eveleth has utilized. If Eveleth moves forward with a canine unit, the dog could be used in the Quad Cities area. Police Chief Techar of Gilbert has committed \$3,000 to \$6,000 towards purchase of the dog. The Eveleth-Gilbert School is also interested in the dog. The canine unit could be scheduled for use at the school.

Councilor Hadrava asked how long the dog would be in service. Koivunen said the dogs work for about 7 to 10 years. The annual upkeep cost is about \$2,000 to \$6,000.

Councilor Koivunen asked if the other entities would pay a fee to use the dog. Chief Koivunen said that all communities share the problems. If another City needs to use the dog, Chief Koivunen or Deputy Chief Linde would give authorization.

Councilor Lillis said it would be a mutual aid situation. Lillis said he advocated for the canine, but questioned whether or not the canine unit would be doing any “random activities on our dime.” Chief Koivunen said there would be policies in place. Lillis asked if LELS had been considered, and whether this would create a new position. Chief Koivunen said this would be an assignment with no need to create a new position. Other area canine handlers and the trainer (of the canine) would help to determine which Eveleth Police Officer would be the best fit to handle the dog.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said the forfeited vehicle sales would cut down on expenses. The chances of missing something during a search, and the time spent for officers searching would be greatly diminished by utilizing a specially trained canine. Chief Koivunen indicated the officers have a list of individuals already willing to donate towards the dog.

Councilor Koivunen said, “There is a lot of dope in this town. We all know it.” Koivunen said he had no problem with moving forward towards the purchase of the dog.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich proposed the services provided will end up paying for the dog.

Councilor Lillis reiterated his support for the canine position. Councilor Hoag suggested the canine might be the best deterrent for drug activity.

Chief Koivunen will proceed with ordering the dog.

2. Bob Manzoline, Regional Rail Authority, Trail Re-Routes

Bob Manzoline, Regional Rail Authority, explained the proposed changes they have been working on to reconnect the trails (with relocation of Highway 53). The bicycle trail and snowmobile trails are in progress. At this point, it has not been determined how to join the ATV trails. Councilor Hadrava (serves on the Joint ATV/OHS Trail Board) said the Board has been working on this issue. Mayor Vlasisavljevich would like to hold a public meeting to discuss the trail re-routes. Manzoline offered that he would also be willing to attend a Joint Trail Board meeting. Councilor Hadrava will contact Manzoline to inform him of the meeting times.

3. Discuss application to IRRRB for Chicagami and Auditorium Improvements

City Clerk Monahan-Junek discussed the application for the new Chicagami building. The City will receive a development agreement for approval.

The assisted living project is on hold. The IRRRB Commissioner has informed Monahan-Junek that the City may be able to reallocate those funds to the Auditorium building.

4. Discuss submitting a grant application for the FY2016 St. Louis County Community Development Grant Program

Director Wiskow distributed updated information for potential projects for the FY2016 St. Louis County Community Development Grant Program application.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich asked about street overlays. Wiskow informed him that street overlays would not qualify for this program.

The Council concurred with Director Wiskow's suggestion to apply for CDBG funding to replace 8" of sanitary sewer main in the 700 & 800 blocks of Pierce Street. The cost is estimated at \$140,369.

Commissioner Keith Nelson gave an update on joining the trails. He said they have been meeting for quite some time, and the bicycle and snowmobile trail plans are now ready. Councilor Hadrava said, "Spandex doesn't pay anything." He expressed his frustration with the bike trail taking precedence over an ATV trail. Commissioner Nelson said, as a business owner, he appreciates that the economic value of snowmobile and ATV riders far out way the bicyclist. However, the most successful way is to cooperate and see how to incorporate all of the groups. He said, "We have achieved ATVs over the bridge into Virginia." Nelson said they need to move on the bicycle and snowmobile trail right now. He asked the City Council to schedule a public hearing.

City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek will schedule the public hearing for November 3, 2015 at the regular City Council Meeting. Nelson promised not to forget about the ATVs, and believes there will be a future opportunity to achieve the box culvert under Highway 53. However, the new bridge development outweighs any other current discussions or improvements by MnDOT at this time.

Nelson informed the Council of a future policy change. St. Louis County will begin to allow ATVs to drive on all the shoulders of roads. This will provide connectivity to drivers. The County also plans to incorporate a bike trail from West Eveleth to Eveleth when Highway 101 is reconstructed.

5. Discuss establish hiring committee for filling Mechanic vacancy and discuss starting date for new Assistant Public Works Director

The following will serve on the hiring committee to fill the Mechanic position: Mike Wiskow, Jerry Rosati, Scott Smith, Councilor Brian Lillis and Councilor Brian Hoag. The deadline for applications is tomorrow. The City has received eight applications to date.

6. Discuss regulatory issues at the Water Treatment Plant

This item was not discussed.

7. Discuss replacement of fountain at Fayal Pond

The fountain at Fayal Pond was stolen earlier this year. Director Wiskow distributed a quotation from Lake Fountains & Aeration, Inc. in the amount of \$6,177.00 to replace the Fayal Pond fountain. The City would be responsible for a \$500.00 deductible. The City's insurance will cover the remaining amount.

Chief of Police Koivunen suggested installing some type of alarm system that would send out notification to Police Department cell phones in the event the power is cut.

8. Discuss possible change order for 2015 Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project

Director Wiskow advised the Council that two planned items did not need to be replaced for the work in the 400 block of Jackson. The savings is around \$68,000. The Council discussed authorizing the following projects:

Add/Alternate #1 – replacing a section of sanitary sewer adjacent to the section being replaced on Monroe Street (bid cost of \$20,925.00);

Add/Alternate #2 – Replace the sanitary sewer in the 300 block of Jackson Street (bid cost of \$48,327.00).

This item was added to the agenda.

9. Discuss Tobacco-Free Vehicles and Equipment Policy

Not discussed due to lack of time.

10. Discuss Prohibiting Long Guns at Work Policy

Not discussed due to lack of time.

11. Closed Session – Labor Negotiations under PELRA

The Council reconvened the Workshop after the regular meeting at 7:37 p.m. The Council went into closed session to discuss Labor Negotiations under PELRA. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

12. Agenda Q&A

Added to the Agenda:

J14. Authorize J & S Excavating to complete add/alternates for the 2015 Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project

J15. Purchase new snow blower attachment for John Deere Riding Lawn Mower to be used at the Hippodrome