

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Meeting
2:00 p.m., January 7, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Roen called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Councilor Jim Perpich, Present
Councilor John Rauzi, Present
Councilor Brian Lillis, Present
Councilor Joseph Koivunen, Present
Mayor Adam Roen, Present

Also present: City Clerk Administrator Jackie Monahan-Junek; Deputy City Clerk Stephanie Friebe; Public Works Director Jerry Rosati; Police Chief Jesse Linde; City Attorney Joel Lewicki; Alan Johnson, Bolton & Menk Engineering

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Lillis to approve the following minutes:

1. *Minutes of City Council Workshop Meeting held November 13, 2024;*
2. *Minutes of City Council Workshop Meeting held December 12, 2024;*
3. *Minutes of City Council Workshop Meeting held December 16, 2024;*
4. *Minutes of City Council Meeting held December 17, 2024; and*
5. *Minutes of City Council Special Meeting held December 27, 2024.*

Ayes – All.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Lillis to approve agenda with the following revisions:

Add:

- 1.15. *Discuss New Time and Location for Future City Council Meetings*
- 1.16. *Ad Hoc Committee to Discuss the Upcoming Vacancy of the City Administrator Position*

Ayes – All.

E. APPOINTMENTS/PRESENTATIONS

None.

F. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Approval of Payroll – December 1-15, 2024 in the amount of \$191,201.58**
- 2. Approval of Payroll – December 16-31, 2024 in the amount of \$226,242.78**
- 3. Approval of Claims – December 2024 in the amount of \$983,194.78**

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes – All.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Mayor Roen announced that moving forward, he would be opening the door to the community to provide information. Roen said this would not be a time for discussion with the City Council, but a time to provide the Council with information (at a three-minute maximum per person).

Glen Spruell, 1012 Elba Avenue, addressed the Council regarding his living conditions at the Eveleth HRA Clay Court Apartments. Spruell held up a jar of insects he claimed were collected from the site. He said that anyone is welcome to look at his apartment which also contains mold. Spruell said he tried attending an HRA Board Meeting, but was verbally assaulted when he entered the room. He left as it made no sense for him to continue attending the meeting. Spruell provided his contact information to Mayor Roen.

Polly Sorcan, West Eveleth, asked the Mayor and Council to make the agenda and minutes available to the public electronically. Sorcan also requested that emails and contact numbers for the Mayor and Council be made available on the City's website.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. Appoint Acting Mayor

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Rauzi to appoint Councilor Joseph Koivunen as the Acting Mayor in Mayor Roen's absence. Ayes – All.

2. Designate Official Newspaper

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Koivunen to designate Hometown Focus as the City’s Official Newspaper for 2025. Ayes – All.

3. Designate Depository

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to designate the Miners National Bank of Eveleth, Minnesota as the depository for the City of Eveleth for the year 2025 and to authorize Adam Roen, Jackie Monahan-Junek and Stephanie Friebe as authorized signatories on the account. Ayes – All.

4. Resolution Appointing a Responsible Authority and Assign Duties

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Perpich to adopt Resolution No. 2025-01, “Resolution Appointing a Responsible Authority and Assign Duties.” Ayes – All.

5. City Council Board, Committee & Liaison Appointments

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Perpich to approve the following City Council Board, Committee & Liaison Appointments:

- Building and Grounds Mayor Roen & Councilor Koivunen*
- City Owned Land Committee Mayor Roen & Councilor Lillis*
- Donations Committee Councilor Lillis & Councilor Koivunen*
- Eveleth Cemetery Committee Councilor Koivunen & Councilor Rauzi*
- *Eveleth-Virginia Airport Authority Councilor Perpich & Councilor Koivunen
..... (Mayor Roen – alternate)*
- Eveleth-Virginia Airport Authority Zoning Board Councilor Koivunen*
- *Economic Development Authority Councilor Rauzi & Councilor Lillis*
- Council Economic Development Committee Mayor Roen & Councilor Perpich
..... (Councilor Koivunen – alternate)*
- *Golf Course Commission Councilor Koivunen*
- *Joint ATV/OHM/Snowmobile Trail Board Councilor Rauzi*
- Joint Cable Commission Mayor Roen*
- *Parks Commission Councilor Perpich*
- Personnel Committee Councilor Perpich & Councilor Koivunen*

Planning Commission *Councilor Rauzi*

Property Acquisition & Public Safety Committee..... *Councilor Lillis & Councilor Perpich*

Public Safety Committee..... *Councilor Lillis & Councilor Koivunen*

Public Utilities Committee.....*Mayor Roen & Councilor Lillis*

**Quad Cities Joint Recreation Authority Board*..... *Councilor Koivunen*

Streets & Alleys Committee *Councilor Koivunen & Councilor Perpich*

**VEEDA Board*..... *Mayor Roen*

Marketing Committee.....*Mayor Roen & Councilor Rauzi*

**HRA Board* *Councilor Rauzi & Councilor Lillis*

Administrative Hearing Officers..... *Mayor Roen & Councilor Perpich*

City Clerk/Administrator Search Committee*Mayor Roen & Councilor Lillis*

** Councilors are voting members*

Ayes – All.

6. Independent Contract Between City of Eveleth and Anthony Jeffries for Zoning Administrator Services

The Council discussed opening up this position to allow for other interested applicants to apply. It was the consensus of the Council to move forward with approving the contract with Jeffries this year, but advertising for the position next year.

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve the Independent Contract Between the City of Eveleth and Anthony Jeffries for Zoning Administrator Services with the plan to advertise for the position next year. Ayes – All.

7. Independent Contract Between City of Eveleth and Therese Elverum for EMS Operations Supervisor Services

Councilor Perpich said that Therese Elverum has been doing an excellent job for the City of Eveleth. Councilor Koivunen said that he, along with Councilor Lillis, had the privilege of meeting with Elverum yesterday. Elverum has been working for the City for a few years and knows the direction of the Council in not wanting to spend money the City does not have. Councilor Lillis said that since Elverum has taken the helm, filling

shifts has not been a problem any longer. Mayor Roen suggested the City should also open this position for applicants next year.

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve the Independent Contract Between the City of Eveleth and Therese Elverum for EMS Operation Supervisor Services with the option of revisiting this contract next year to possibly open up for advertising the position. Ayes – Koivunen, Perpich, Lillis, Roen; Abstained – Rauzi (due to conflict of interest). Motion carried.

8. Alice Location Land Licenses – Altobelli & Peterson Construction, Sleeves Sportsmans Bar Inc., OSI Environmental, Inc.

City Clerk-Administrator Monahan-Junek said the Alice Location has contaminated soils. The City has a Response Action Plan which will involve working with the tenants to redevelop the area using State grant money.

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve the Alice Location Land Licenses with Altobelli & Peterson Construction, Sleeves Sportsmans Bar Inc., and OSI Environmental, Inc. Ayes – Rauzi, Lillis, Perpich, Roen. Abstained – Koivunen (due to conflict of interest). Motion carried.

9. Second Reading of a Proposed Ordinance – An Interim Ordinance Temporarily Establishing a Planning Moratorium on Clubs and Lodges

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Perpich to approve Second Reading and Adoption of Ordinance No. 84, 2nd Series, “An Interim Ordinance Temporarily Establishing a Planning Moratorium on Clubs and Lodges.” Ayes – All.

10. Request from Police Chief to hire Michelle Harju for the Police Administrative Assistant position

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Koivunen to authorize Police Chief to hire Michelle Harju for the Police Administrative Assistant position. Ayes – All.

The start date is yet to be determined.

11. Authorize posting and advertising for a Utility Clerk

The appointment of Michelle Harju to the Police Administrative Assistant position creates a vacancy for the Utility Clerk position.

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Rauzi to authorize posting for the Utility Clerk Position in AFSCME 484 for 7 days, and if no applications are received, to advertise publicly for the position. Ayes – All.

12. Pay Application 03/Final from George Bougalis and Sons Co. in the amount of \$10,618.05 for Leonidas Overlook Project

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Lillis to approve Pay Application 03/Final from George Bougalis and Sons Co. in the amount of \$10,618.05 for Leonidas Overlook Project. Ayes – All.

13. Proposal from Abdo Solution for audit services for YE 2024

The City received a notice from Walker, Giroux & Hahne indicating they no longer have the capacity to perform audit services for the City of Eveleth. The Council discussed the proposal from Abdo Solution. The Council agreed that a two-year agreement would allow the City to determine if their auditing services are acceptable, and if not, allow time to find another provider.

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Rauzi to accept proposal from Abdo Solution for audit services for YE 2024 and enter into a two-year agreement. Ayes – All.

14. Proposal from Bolton & Menk for engineering services

Alan Johnson, City Engineer, revealed that Benchmark Engineering has merged with Bolton & Menk. They will keep the same staff, but have additional support from offices in Duluth, Hibbing and Grand Rapids. They will also be able to offer extended services. Johnson will continue to attend the City Council Meetings, at no charge. The Council requested the contract be reworded to state the City Council Meetings are held twice a month.

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to approve proposal from Bolton & Menk for 2025 engineering services. Ayes – All.

15. Discuss New Time and Location for Future City Council Meetings

Mayor Roen said he would like to change the time of the City Council Meetings to 5:30 p.m. He would also like to move the meetings to the City Auditorium in order to be handicap compliant and give the public easier access to meetings. Roen said when he was campaigning for office, he heard many reasons why people could not attend meetings, such as the time not working or not being able to get up the stairs. Roen would like to make meetings accessible for people to attend, if they choose.

Councilor Lillis concurred with transparency, but voiced his concerns with moving the meetings to the Auditorium. Lillis said the logistics of moving the meetings were reason for his concern. He said the meetings are televised (with station equipment housed at City Hall); the City just spent a large amount of money to upgrade the City Hall building; and the staff time to set up for a meeting at the Auditorium. Lillis said that safety was also a concern at the Auditorium. There is a controlled environment at City Hall where the Council can plan for safety measures as well as cameras throughout the building. Lillis said he would be more

of an advocate to keep Council Meetings at City Hall and hold a town hall type of meeting (in which the Council can converse with constituents) either monthly or bi-monthly.

The City Attorney represents other entities and would not be available on Tuesday evenings.

Motion by Mayor Roen, second by Councilor Perpich to change the time of the City Council Meetings to the first and third Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. beginning the first Monday of March 2025. Ayes – All.

Councilor Rauzi would like the Council to continue seeking a way to hold the meetings at the Auditorium.

16. Ad Hoc Committee to Discuss the Upcoming Vacancy of the City Administrator Position

Mayor Roen requested the Council create a committee to look at the City Administrator position which will be vacant upon City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek's retirement in December of 2025.

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to appoint Mayor Roen and Councilor Lillis as the Ad Hoc Committee to fill the City Administrator position. Ayes – All.

J. COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board & Liaison Updates

Councilor Koivunen reported on a Public Safety Meeting that he, along with Councilor Lillis, attended yesterday. Koivunen said the purpose of the meeting was to focus on ways to alleviate some of the expenses Eveleth incurs when providing services outside of Eveleth's city limits. Councilor Lillis reported that Eveleth now has a waiting list for Ambulance Service applicants and no longer has difficulty filling shifts as in the past.

Mayor Roen requested the following items be added to the next City Council Agenda:

1. Discuss Community Meetings to be held at the Auditorium
(Determine the day, monthly or bi-monthly, etc.)
2. Discuss the Purchase of the former School Property
(Consider whether or not the Council wants to move forward with what Consultant Bob Streetar has proposed)

Councilor Rauzi wished everyone a Merry Serbian Christmas!

Mayor Roen thanked those in the audience for attending the Council Meeting. Roen said he looks forward to working with the Council to continue what they have already started and to make the changes the City needs and the public desires.

K. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

None.

L. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 3:29 p.m.