

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Meeting
5:00 p.m., February 7, 2023
Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vlasisavljevich called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Councilor Jim Perpich, Present
Councilor John Rauzi, Present
Councilor Brian Lillis, Present
Councilor Joseph Koivunen, Present
Mayor Robert Vlasisavljevich, 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; Benchmark Engineering, Alan Johnson

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Perpich to approve the following minutes:

- 1. Minutes of City Council Workshop held January 12, 2023;*
- 2. Minutes of City Council Meeting held January 17, 2023; and*
- 3. Minutes of Special City Council Meeting held January 31, 2023.*

Ayes – All.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve agenda with removal of the following:

I.7. Phase I proposal from Benchmark Engineering for lead & copper water line inventory inspections

Ayes – All.

E. APPOINTMENTS/PRESENTATIONS

1. Reappointment of Paul Muhich to the Planning Commission

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to reappoint Paul Muhich to the Planning Commission for term 2/7/2023 to 1/31/2027. Ayes – All.

2. Reappointment of Tom Cundy to the Planning Commission

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Perpich to reappoint Tom Cundy to the Planning Commission for term 2/7/2023 to 1/31/2027. Ayes – All.

F. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Claims – January 2023 in the amount of \$987,827.70
2. Approval of Payroll – January 1-15, 2023 in the amount of \$133,210.07
3. Approval of Payroll – January 16-31, 2023 in the amount of \$166,966.81
4. Travel Request for Firefighters

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

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Proposed Mediacom Franchise Agreement between the City of Eveleth and Mediacom Minnesota, LLC

Mayor Vlaisavljevich opened the Public Hearing at 5:02 p.m. for the Proposed Mediacom Franchise Agreement between the City of Eveleth and Mediacom Minnesota, LLC. No one from the audience spoke. The Public Hearing was adjourned at 5:02 p.m. and the regular Council Meeting reconvened at 5:03 p.m.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution Approving Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements Plan

Duane Hill, MnDOT, recapped the proposed improvements on Highway 53 to include a roundabout at Progress Parkway intersection; installation of a continuous T intersection at Bourgin Road/Old Highway 53; and a slip ramp off of Hat Trick Avenue. The improvement plan will also address bridge replacement and trail connections on US 53 with Minnesota Highway 37 and Fayal Road (CSAH 101). Hill reported that MnDOT and St. Louis County having been looking for funding to assist with the 40-million-dollar project.

Jim Foldesi, St. Louis County Public Works Director/Highway Engineer, said the improvements project on Highway 53 have been driven out of safety issues with increased traffic to the area from development of the new Rock Ridge Schools in Progress Parkway. Foldesi said the project is a once in a generation economic development opportunity. He said the project will include redoing frontage roads and adding updated and better connections that will complement existing and potentially new businesses. The County will continue to work with the City to implement a bike and pedestrian highway crossing plan. Foldesi reiterated that safety is first priority, but economic development is second.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said that this has always been a problem area. With the new schools, the highway intersections will now be improved. Vlasisavljevich said the biggest impact is safety and economic development will be drastically improved. Vlasisavljevich noted the positive impact the construction phase of the project may have on local businesses. Restaurants and other businesses could be full from contractors. The influx of money from the development phase would be welcome to the area.

Councilor Perpich expressed his concerns stating he does not agree with the roundabout. Perpich said that although he does not agree, he will not hinder the possible economic development. Perpich would rather see a stoplight in lieu of the roundabout as he is concerned for the students, and believes there will be accidents as people are in a hurry going to school. Perpich said he appreciates all the work on improving the highway.

Councilor Lillis thanked Duane Hill and Jim Foldesi for their consideration in dealing with Eveleth over the course of this project.

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Lillis to adopt Resolution No. 2023-02, "Resolution Approving Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements Plan." Ayes – All.

2. Resolution of Support Requesting Funding for US Highway 53 – Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements Plan

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second Councilor Koivunen to adopt Resolution No. 2023-03, "Resolution of Support Requesting Funding for US Highway 53 – Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements Plan." Ayes – All.

3. Letter of Support for Corridors of Commerce Grant Application for the Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements along US Highway 53 in Eveleth, MN

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve Letter of Support for Corridors of Commerce Grant Application for Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements along US Highway 53 in Eveleth, MN. Ayes – All.

4. Letter of Support for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Application for the Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements along US Highway 53 in Eveleth, MN

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve Letter of Support for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Application for the Rock Ridge School Transportation Improvements along US Highway 53 in Eveleth, MN. Ayes – All.

5. St. Louis County Rural Ambulance Service Assistance Funding Contract

Therese Elverum, EMS Operations Supervisor, noted the change in the agreement is to update reimbursement for out of Eveleth ambulance calls. The last updated reimbursement rates are from 1984.

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve St. Louis County Rural Ambulance Service Assistance Funding Contract. Ayes – Perpich, Koivunen, Lillis, Vlasisavljevich; Abstained – Rauzi (due to conflict of interest). Motion carried.

6. Request to hire additional EMTs

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to authorize City Administrator Monahan-Junek and EMS Operations Supervisor Elverum to hire five (5) additional EMTs. Ayes – Lillis, Koivunen, Perpich, Vlasisavljevich; Abstained – Rauzi (due to conflict of interest). Motion carried.

7. Phase I proposal from Benchmark Engineering for lead & copper water line inventory inspections

This item was removed from the agenda.

8. Resolution Authorizing the City of Eveleth to Make Application to and Accept Funds from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Fayal Pond trails)

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to adopt Resolution No. 2023-04, “Resolution Authorizing the City of Eveleth to Make Application to and Accept Funds from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Fayal Pond trails).” Ayes – All.

9. Authorize Public Works Director to submit request for placement on the Project Priority List (PPL) for the Drinking Water (DWRF) & Clean Water (CWRF) revolving funds for 2024 projects

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Rauzi to authorize Public Works Director to submit request for placement on the Project Priority List (PPL) for the Drinking Water (DWRP) & Clean Water (CWRP) revolving funds for 2024 projects. Ayes – All.

10. First Amendment to Letter of Intent for Purchase, Sale and Development of Real Property within the City of Eveleth (between City of Eveleth and Bois Forte Band of Chippewa)

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve First Amendment to Letter of Intent for Purchase, Sale and Development of Real Property within the City of Eveleth (between City of Eveleth and Bois Forte Band of Chippewa). Ayes – All.

11. MOUs between the City of Eveleth and Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc. (Police Officers Local #20) regarding new officer vacation and 401k contributions

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve MOUs between the City of Eveleth and Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc. (Police Officers Local #20) regarding new officer vacation and 401k contributions. Ayes – All.

12. Introduction and First Reading of an Ordinance Repealing and Replacing Ordinance No. 71, 2nd Series, Cable Franchise to Mediacom Minnesota, LLC

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to approve Introduction and First Reading of an Ordinance Repealing and Replacing Ordinance No. 71, 2nd Series, Cable Franchise to Mediacom Minnesota, LLC. Ayes – All.

13. 2023 Council Board & Committee Liaison Appointments

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve the following updated 2023 Council Board & Committee Liaison Appointments: (Ayes – All)

- Building and GroundsMayor Vlasisavljevich & Councilor Koivunen
- City Owned Land Committee Mayor Vlasisavljevich & Councilor Lillis
- Donations Committee Councilor Lillis & Councilor Koivunen
- Eveleth Cemetery Committee Councilor Koivunen & Councilor Rauzi
- *Eveleth-Virginia Airport Authority Mayor Vlasisavljevich & Councilor Koivunen
.....(Councilor Perpich – alternate)
- Eveleth-Virginia Airport Authority Zoning BoardCouncilor Koivunen
- *Economic Development Authority Councilor Rauzi & Councilor Lillis

- *Golf Course CommissionCouncilor Koivunen
- *Joint ATV/OHM/Snowmobile Trail Board Councilor Rauzi
- Joint Cable CommissionMayor Vlasisavljevich
- *Parks Commission Councilor Perpich
- Personnel Sub-CommitteeMayor Vlasisavljevich & Councilor Koivunen
- Planning Commission Councilor Rauzi
- Public Safety Councilor Lillis & Councilor Koivunen
- Public Utilities Councilor Lillis & Mayor Vlasisavljevich
- *Quad Cities Joint Recreation Authority BoardCouncilor Koivunen
- Streets and Alleys Councilor Koivunen & Councilor Perpich
- *VEEDA BoardMayor Vlasisavljevich
- Marketing Committee Mayor Vlasisavljevich & Councilor Rauzi
- *HRA (1 permanent; 1 temporary)Councilor Rauzi & Councilor Lillis (temp)
- *Councilor is voting member

J. COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Lillis reported on the recent EDA meeting in which the board authorized calling for bids for the Pocket Park Project and Lincoln Place Apartment improvements.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich reported on a recent Airport Meeting. There will be another meeting on Thursday.

Councilor Rauzi praised the Fire Department for their involvement. Rauzi commented that the Fire Department does a lot more than put out fires. The Ambulance Service often relies on the Fire Department for help in getting people out of the house and traffic control at accidents. Rauzi thanked the Department for the help they provide. He said together we are helping to make the town safer and better for those that need us.

Councilor Lillis thanked the volunteer fire department for all the services they provide.

Councilor Koivunen thanked all employees of the City of Eveleth. Koivunen said, “We have a great crew.”

K. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

None.

L. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.