

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Meeting
5:00 p.m., March 2, 2021
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 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; Police Chief Tim Koivunen, Public Works Director Jerry Rosati; City Attorney Mitch Brunfelt; Alan Johnson, Benchmark Engineering

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

- 1. Minutes of City Council Workshop held February 11, 2021; and*
- 2. Minutes of City Council Meeting February 16, 2021.*

Ayes – All.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

- J12. Grant Temporary Access Agreement to Scenic Rivers Health Service for the Clinic Building*

Ayes – All.

E. APPOINTMENTS/PRESENTATIONS

1. Pollyann Sorcan to the Joint Cable Television Access Board

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Koivunen to reappoint Polly Sorcan to the Joint Cable Television Access Board for the term effective 3/2/2021 to 3/1/2023. Ayes – All.

2. Luke Bjorge to the Park Commission

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to reappoint Luke Bjorge to the Park Commission for the term effective 3/2/2021 to 1/31/2023. Ayes – All.

Councilor Lillis thanked both Ms. Sorcan and Mr. Bjorge for continuing their service for the City of Eveleth.

F. VISITOR/PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None.

G. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Payroll – February 1-15, 2021 in the amount of \$116,401.85
2. Approval of Claims – February 2021 in the amount of \$674,670.60

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

H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

J. NEW BUSINESS

1. Appointment of Council Member to fill seat vacated by Bradley Hadrava

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to appoint James Perpich as City Council Member for the remainder of the term 3/2/2021 to 12/31/2022 to fill the vacant seat created by Bradley Hadrava's resignation from the City Council. Ayes – All.

2. Retirement Notice from Police Chief Tim Koivunen

Councilor Koivunen made a motion to approve the retirement notice from Police Chief Tim Koivunen, Councilor Lillis supported the motion with an amendment to include an exemption from the retirement notice requirement in the collective bargaining unit.

Councilor Koivunen then rescinded his motion due to a conflict of interest based on the amendment to add the collective bargaining unit retirement notice exemption.

Councilor Koivunen said he was fortunate to be serving on the Council when his brother, Tim Koivunen, was hired as the Chief of Police, and feels privileged to accept his retirement. Councilor Koivunen said he is so proud to see the man and father that Tim has become. He said it has been a pleasure working with him and to see his professionalism. Councilor Koivunen said to Chief Koivunen, “I love you and good luck.”

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Lillis to approve the retirement of Police Chief Tim Koivunen effective March 12, 2021 and to also approve the exemption request to Article VII, Section C of current Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement with the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union on behalf of Local No. 6860-05. Abstain – Koivunen (due to conflict of interest); Ayes – Rauzi, Lillis, Vlasisavljevich. Motion carried.

Councilor Lillis congratulated Koivunen on his upcoming retirement and wished him the best of luck.

Councilor Rauzi referred to certain ambulance calls over the years where he witnessed Chief Koivunen’s leadership. Rauzi said he enjoyed serving together and congratulated Koivunen on his retirement.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said he is fortunate to have had two good police chiefs (referring to Councilor Brian Lillis and Chief Tim Koivunen). He said they both thought of the community and put the people first. He thanked both Lillis and Koivunen. He said he hates to see Koivunen go, but understands he has been in law enforcement for a long time.

3. Authorize posting for Police Chief position per the Agreement between the City of Eveleth and the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union on behalf of Local No. 6860-05

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Rauzi to authorize posting for the Police Chief position per the Agreement between the City of Eveleth and the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union on behalf of Local No. 6860-05. Ayes – All.

4. Letter from Councilor Lillis regarding Fire Department Shared Services Committee

Councilor Lillis serves on the Fire Department Shared Services Committee. He presented a draft letter to the Council to be sent to the Fayal Town Board. In that letter,

he asks the Fayal Board to address issues with their Shared Fire Services Committee Member, Matt Hoffman. Lillis stated that Hoffman has been contributing to a pattern of conduct that can be considered disrespectful to other committee members which has occurred at multiple meetings.

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to authorize the letter from Councilor Lillis regarding the Fire Department Shared Services Committee be sent to the Fayal Town Board. Ayes – All.

Councilor Lillis reminded everyone to be patient as this process takes time and has only been underway for a little over a year (and happening right in the middle of the COVID pandemic).

5. Temporary License for Tedd McCue for residential driveway on Eveleth-Virginia Airport Sky Harbor Seaplane Base property

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to authorize temporary license for Tedd McCue for a residential driveway on the Eveleth-Virginia Airport Sky Harbor Seaplane Base property. Ayes – All.

6. Travel Policy Meal Reimbursement Update

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Lillis to approve Travel Policy Meal Reimbursement Update. Ayes – All.

Meal Expenses have been increased to the following:

Breakfast: \$20.00
Lunch: \$25.00
Dinner: \$30.00

7. Spring 2021 Refuse Collection and Yard Waste Pickup Schedule

Director Rosati reminded the Council that last fall the refuse collection was reduced from four weeks to two weeks with extended hours. Rosati said this worked out well for the Public Works Department and the public. The public was very appreciative of the extended 6:00 p.m. drop off time.

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve the Spring 2021 Refuse Collection and Yard Waste Pickup Schedule. Ayes – All.

The City will accept trash and rubbish for disposal at the City Garage from April 26 to May 7, 2021 from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Yard waste pick up will begin on May 10, 2021. This service is available to Eveleth residents only.

8. Resolution Authorizing the Preparation of Plans, Specifications, and Field Work by Benchmark Engineering for the 2022 Roosevelt Avenue & Douglas Avenue Utility Replacement Project

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Lillis to adopt Resolution No. 2021-11, “Resolution Authorizing the Preparation of Plans, Specifications, and Field Work by Benchmark Engineering for the 2022 Roosevelt Avenue & Douglas Avenue Utility Replacement Project.” Ayes – All.

9. Authorize Director of Public Works to call for quotes for 2021 curb and sidewalk replacement

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to authorize Director of Public Works to call for quotes for 2021 curb and sidewalk replacement. Ayes – All.

The County will be offering \$15,000 in funding this year towards the curb and sidewalk replacement.

10. Authorize staff to submit a request to the MPCA for priority scoring and placement on the Clean Water Revolving Fund Project Priority List for stimulus funding for the Roosevelt Avenue & Douglas Avenue Sanitary Sewer Replacement project

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to authorize staff to submit a request to the MPCA for priority scoring and placement on the Clean Water Revolving Fund Project Priority List for stimulus funding for the Roosevelt Avenue & Douglas Avenue Sanitary Sewer Replacement project. Ayes – All.

11. Authorize staff to submit a request to the MN Department of Health for priority scoring and placement on the Drinking Water Revolving Fund Project Priority List for stimulus funding for the Roosevelt Avenue & Douglas Avenue Water Replacement project

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Koivunen to authorize staff to submit a request to the MN Department of Health for priority scoring and placement on the Drinking Water Revolving Fund Project Priority List for stimulus funding for the Roosevelt Avenue & Douglas Avenue Water Replacement project. Ayes – All.

12. Grant Temporary Access Agreement to Scenic Rivers Health Services for the Clinic Building

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Rauzi to authorize City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek to work with Scenic Rivers Health Services for a temporary access agreement to the Clinic Building. Ayes – All.

Scenic Rivers Health Services is planning to use the Clinic Building to set up a COVID vaccination site. Councilor Koivunen said it would be good for Eveleth to get a clinic back in town.

K. COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Koivunen reported that the RRCC received a grant in the amount of \$106,000. Koivunen said that normally that would seem like a lot of money, but due to COVID they are \$247,000 in the negative. He said the grant does not solve the problem, but certainly helps.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich hopes the opening of a vaccinations clinic with Scenic Health Services will provide peace of mind. He said that Jon's Drug has also started giving vaccinations.

L. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

Police Chief – Police Chief Koivunen thanked the City Council, all City staff and the Eveleth Police Department. He said it has been an honor to serve as the Eveleth Police Chief and appreciated the opportunity to end his career in his home town and retire after 30 years of service in law enforcement. Koivunen thanked the community and surrounding communities for their support; especially during these times of criticism. He went on to thank all those who are protecting and serving. He said they will be in his thoughts and prayers every day. He encouraged them to, “Hold your heads high and remember you are making a positive difference.” Koivunen thanked his wife and family for their support over the years. He said he looks forward to the next chapter.

Clerk-Administrator – Monahan-Junek said she will really miss working with Tim.

Attorney Mitch Brunfelt wished the best to Chief Koivunen on behalf of the Law Firm. He said it has been a pleasure to work with Koivunen.

Director Jerry Rosati said that Chief Koivunen has always been professional. Rosati said, “The City was better with you here,” and thanked Koivunen for his years of service.

Councilor Rauzi asked if the City Wide Rummage Sale will be held this year. Monahan-Junek said that it is in the works.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said that with a small community it is more like working with friends. He said it makes it a lot easier to find solutions to problems. Vlasisavljevich said the City is fortunate to have a staff and City Council in this town that prioritizes the community.

Bill Aho, Eveleth EDA, said that Chief Koivunen was a great gentleman who has served the City of Eveleth extremely well. He wished him luck in the future.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich wished Chief Koivunen “Good Luck” and said, “We will miss you.”

M. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.