

**MINUTES**  
**Eveleth City Council Meeting**  
**5:00 p.m., May 18, 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 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; Police Chief Jesse Linde; Eveleth Police Officer Anthony Goulet; Public Works Director Jerry Rosati; City Attorney Mitch Brunfelt; Alan Johnson, Benchmark Engineering

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1. Minutes of City Council Meeting May 4, 2021**

*Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve the Minutes of City Council Meeting held May 4, 2021. Ayes – All.*

**D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

*J11. Change the June 1, 2021 City Council Meeting to June 8, 2021*

*Ayes – All.*

**E. APPOINTMENTS/PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**F. VISITOR/PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

None.

## G. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Payroll – April 16-30, 2021 in the amount of \$140,724.44
2. Employment status change from probationary to regular for Scott Lossing
3. Life Link III Collaboration Agreement

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

## H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 1. To receive, hear, and consider evidence and information that property located at 1104 McKinley Avenue is a nuisance and constitutes a hazardous and unsafe condition that poses a danger to the health, safety, and welfare of neighboring property owners, residents, and citizens of the City of Eveleth.**

Mayor Vlaisavljevich called the public hearing to order at 5:03 p.m. to discuss declaring the property located at 1104 McKinley Avenue a nuisance and health and safety hazard, and to order that these conditions immediately be abated.

Mayor Vlaisavljevich stated that the neighbors have put up with a lot over the years. Councilor Koivunen said a few neighbors have come forward, but they are afraid of repercussions. Koivunen reported that the utilities are shut off, and individuals at the property have been using 5-gallon pails and dumping human waste in the front yard.

Attorney Brunfelt explained that this is an evidentiary hearing which allows evidence to be revealed. Police Chief Linde distributed a three-page list of police calls since 2008 which totaled 136 police responses over the years. Linde listed examples of the calls to include people claiming they live at the property but cannot show proof of ownership, blight, disturbances, over doses, etc. The police just responded to a loud noise complaint on May 8<sup>th</sup> due to a generator running in the garage for power. The occupants have been burning wood for heat over the winter. The police have responded in the past to remove children from the premises with the help of social services. Animals have also been removed from the property.

Attorney Brunfelt reiterated that there have been numerous blight citations and persistent effort by blight enforcement has been unsuccessful. The property is continually in a state of complete disrepair. Brunfelt described a situation where health and safety has become an issue. There is no electrical service running into the building, and the occupants are running a generator for power. There is no running water or sewer for proper disposal of human waste. Brunfelt repeated that this property is not fit for human habitation.

Attorney Brunfelt explained to the Council that this action would abate the nuisance and hazardous condition. This action would order the police department and public works

department to ensure that no one is living on the premises. All doors and windows will be boarded up as the City does not want squatters occupying the house. Brunfelt has been trying to work with the current deed owner to have the property transferred to the City. The prior owner, Dorothy Chambeau, passed away before officially turning the property over to Mike Sailor. Mike Sailor is the apparent owner of the property, but does not have a deed. The attorney's office is trying to track down the heirs of the prior owner to finish the title work. The main issue of the hearing tonight is to secure the property and make sure no one is living in the structure. This will hopefully also eliminate the criminal activity taking place at the site.

Councilor Koivunen sympathized with the neighbors for putting up with so much over the years. He said, "It takes time, but we are going after it."

Mayor Vlasisavljevich apologized to the residents for length of time it has taken to find resolution. He also voiced his frustration for the huge amount of police energy consumed by this property.

Councilor Lillis said the past blight citations did not get the City anywhere with the homeowners. Lillis considers the problem to extend city-wide to repeat offenders. He said a lot of homeowners will address a blight problem immediately, but the repeat offenders do not. Mayor Vlasisavljevich concurred that the City should also look at other problem properties.

Public Works Director Jerry Rosati noted that the utilities to the property were shut off due to nonpayment. However, one of the occupants obtained a key and had turned the water back on without the City's permission.

Attorney Brunfelt distributed an email from previous Police Chief Tim Koivunen and a documentation of the property's utility account history. Attorney Brunfelt noted that a notice of hearing was served. No one from the opposing side was in attendance at the Public Hearing.

Eveleth Police Officer Anthony Goulet speculated the number of calls to that house are even higher. He said the neighbors have personally requested extra police patrol in the area.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich concluded the public hearing at 5:26 p.m. and reconvened the regular Council Meeting.

## **I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **J. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Action to declare property located at 1104 McKinley Avenue a nuisance and health and safety hazard, and order that these conditions immediately be abated**

*Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to adopt the Eveleth City Council's Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and Order; to declare property located at 1104 McKinley Avenue a nuisance and health and safety hazard; and to order that these conditions be immediately abated. Ayes – All.*

**2. Carter Circle lots building requirements**

The Eveleth City Council approved the following prices for Carter Circle lots in December 2020:

Lots 1 & 2 together	\$4,000
Lot 4	\$2,000
Lot 5	\$2,000
Lot 6	\$2,000

The Council had discussed these lots at a recent workshop meeting as a request was made to purchase a lot, or partial lot, for construction of a garage only. In order to clarify the City's intent for these lots purchase stipulations will be added to future agreements.

*Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to approve the following purchase stipulations be added to purchase agreements for Carter Circle:*

- *A house with an attached or detached garage will be substantially completed within 2 years from the date of the purchase closing. Failure to complete the foregoing will result in the reversion of the lot(s) back to the City.*
- *A minimum value of the new house and garage will be \$175,000.*

*Ayes – All.*

**3. Approve name for City of Eveleth and Town of Fayal combined fire department**

Councilor Lillis reported that the Fire Shared Services Committee has been meeting for several months. As part of the process, the committee chose a new name for the potential joint fire department. There are some copyright and logo measures which require the entity name in order to proceed. The committee has chosen "Taconite Ridge" as the new name. Fayal Township Board has approved the name. Councilor Rauzi pointed out that this opens up the opportunity for the public to come forward with questions. Naming the project does not guarantee it will happen, but it is a vital step in the whole process.

*Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve Taconite Ridge as the name for the City of Eveleth and Town of Fayal combined fire department. Ayes – All.*

**4. Minnesota Lawful Gambling Premises Permit Application for Eveleth Elks Lodge at Johnny D's, 301 Grant Avenue**

*Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Perpich to approve Minnesota Lawful Gambling Premises Permit Application for Eveleth Elks Lodge at Johnny D's, 301 Grant Avenue. Ayes – All.*

**5. Minnesota Lawful Gambling Premises Permit Application for Eveleth Elks Lodge at The Rink Sports Bar & Grill, 301 Hat Trick Avenue**

*Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve Minnesota Lawful Gambling Premises Permit Application for Eveleth Elks Lodge at The Rink Sports Bar & Grill, 301 Hat Trick Avenue. Ayes – All.*

**6. Consider quotation for a 2021 ½ ton pickup truck**

Director Rosati received a quotation from Lundgren's Motors on April 21, 2021 for a new 2021 Ford F-150 4x4 pick up truck. The estimated delivery time is September 2021.

*Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Lillis to accept quotation from Lundgren's Motors for a 2021 ½ ton pick up truck in the amount of \$29,147 plus tax, licenses and fees. Ayes – All.*

**7. Consider quotation for a 2022 1-ton chassis cab**

Director Rosati received a quotation from Lundgren's Motors on May 5, 2021 for a 2022 F-450 Chassis Cab. The earliest delivery time would be November 2021.

*Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Perpich to accept quotation from Lundgren's Motors for a 2022 1-ton chassis cab in the amount of \$41,676.68 plus tax, license, and fees. Ayes – All.*

**8. Consider quotation for a utility service body with crane**

Director Rosati received a quotation from Crysteel Truck Equipment on May 6, 2021 for a utility box and crane.

*Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to accept quotation from Crysteel Truck Equipment for a utility service box with crane in the amount of \$42,399.27 plus tax. Ayes – All.*

**9. Request to Hire Full Time Patrol Officer**

The number one candidate for the patrol officer position declined the job offer due to unforeseen complications. Police Chief Linde requested the Council consider candidate Ryan Luce for the position.

*Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to hire Ryan Scott Luce as a full-time patrol officer with the Eveleth Police Department contingent upon successful completion of all necessary physical, psychological and background examinations. Ayes – All.*

#### **10. Donations request from 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee & announce 2021 Grand Marshal**

The City has donated \$5,000 in the past, and more recently \$2,500 to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee. The Council discussed increasing the donation this year due to COVID restrictions which did not allow for the traditional 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration last year.

*Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Rauzi to donate \$7,500 to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee. Ayes – All.*

Bill Lavato is the Grand Marshal this year.

#### **11. Change the June 1, 2021 City Council Meeting to June 8, 2021**

The City Council will meet once a month during the summer. Mayor Vlasisavljevich suggested the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in June be moved to the second week.

*Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to change the June 1, 2021 City Council Meeting to June 8, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Ayes – All.*

### **K. COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mayor Vlasisavljevich reported that the Airport Board has been holding successful meetings.

Councilor Rauzi announced that it is EMS Week this week. The usual public activities will not take place this year due to COVID precautions. Rauzi encouraged the public to reach out to ambulance staff, “Wave to an ambulance crew member and tell them ‘good job’!”

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said he was glad the Council took action on the 1104 McKinley property. Vlasisavljevich hopes the situation can be rectified for everyone involved, including the property owners.

### **L. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS**

Public Works Director – Director Rosati reported on the Garfield Street Improvement Project. The contractors are working hard on the project. They are currently digging the top

block of Adams which is about a 20-foot-deep opening. They will be running into rock as they come down the hill. The new lines will be insulated which will hopefully eliminate the need for customers to run water continuously throughout the winter.

City Engineer – Alan Johnson, Benchmark Engineering, said the Garfield Project is looking good. They are planning to set up weekly meetings with the contractor which will continue throughout the summer.

#### **M. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m.