

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Meeting
5:00 p.m., September 7, 2021
Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vlasisavljevich called the meeting to order at 5:01 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; Public Works Director Jerry Rosati; City Attorney Karl Sundquist; 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 Meeting held August 3, 2021;*
2. *Minutes of City Council Workshop held August 5, 2021;*
3. *Minutes of City Council Workshop held August 12, 2021; and*
4. *Minutes of Special City Council Meeting held August 19, 2021*

Ayes – All.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to approve the agenda. Ayes – All.

E. APPOINTMENTS/PRESENTATIONS

1. **City of Virginia Representative - Regarding Letter from City of Virginia regarding their application for financial assistance to USDA for the new regional Virginia Public Safety Center**

Virginia Deputy Police Chief Chad Nickila addressed the Council regarding the City of Virginia's request for a letter in support of their application for a new regional Virginia Public Safety Center. Nickila indicated the police department has outgrown their office and they are looking for a letter of support from the City of Eveleth. Nickila indicated that the new public safety center will have the space to offer training for the region. This will help to alleviate travel expenses for surrounding law enforcement as most of the training will be offered in house. They are planning to have a State-of-the-Art training center to include crisis intervention, taser training, defensive tactics, and new training as mandated by the State.

Virginia Fire Chief Allen Lewis said they are also hoping to offer regional training to include some simulation capabilities and medical side training. Lewis said that Eveleth and Virginia work together along with other area fire departments. He referenced a recent fire downtown Virginia which utilized 13 area fire departments. The Virginia Ambulance has also responded to Eveleth 109 times in the last year to offer advanced life support services to Eveleth residents.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said he was well aware of the partnership of the two ambulances working together as they were at his house of number of times over the years.

Councilor Lillis asked if the new facility would house an indoor firing range. Deputy Chief Nickila said he wished that was part of the plan, but the air exchange would be very expensive to incorporate into the project at this time.

Councilor Rauzi said a new facility is paramount as they cannot exist for much longer in their current situation. Rauzi questioned why the City of Virginia would need a letter of support from Eveleth. Chief Nickila indicated that letters of support from surrounding communities are required for USDA funding.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said that public safety and health should not be a competitive service. He would like to get input from Eveleth's Department Heads regarding the new center. Vlasisavljevich thanked Nickila and Allen for taking the time to explain the plans to the Eveleth City Council.

Police Chief Linde said the Eveleth Police Department currently sends officer to out of town training. The Hibbing College is no longer offering a lot of the training needed.

2. Commission & Board Application from James Baratta

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Koivunen to appoint James Baratta to the City Planning Commission for the term effective 9/7/2021 to 1/31/2025. Ayes – All.

3. Commission & Board Application from Barbara Judnick

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Rauzi to appoint Barbara Judnick to the City Planning Commission for the term effective 9/7/2021 to 1/31/2025. Ayes – All.

F. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Payroll – July 16-31, 2021 in the amount of \$153,895.29
2. Approval of Payroll – August 1-15, 2021 in the amount of \$122,404.97
3. Approval of Claims – August 2021 in the amount of \$1,509,773.85
4. Accept 2020 Annual Audit
5. Request for Deputy Chief Ness to attend a CLEO and Command Academy, January 31-February 4, 2022, Camp Ripley, Little Falls, MN

Motion by Councilor Lillis, second by Councilor Perpich to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes – All.

G. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. Letter from City of Virginia regarding their application for financial assistance to USDA for the new regional Virginia Public Safety Center

No action was taken. The Council will schedule a workshop meeting for further discussion on this item.

2. Resignation of Tony Anderson from the Joint Recreation Board

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve resignation of Tony Anderson from the Joint Recreation Board. Ayes – All.

3. Proclamation Direct Support Professional Recognition Week

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Perpich to adopt Proclamation Declaring September 12-18, 2021 as Direct Support Professional Recognition Week. Ayes – All.

The staff at the East Range Developmental Achievement Center (ERDAC) will be recognized for working with people with disabilities. Robin Harkonen, Executive Director of ERDAC, will be inviting media to capture the event. Representatives of the area will also be invited to attend.

4. Land Services Contract for logging of City property located on Station 44 Road & Highway 37

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to approve the Land Services Contract for logging of City property located on Station 44 Road & Highway 37 with Nelson Wood Products of Togo, Inc. Ayes – All.

City Engineer Alan Johnson said the contractors are planning to log the area as soon as they can fit the project into their schedule.

5. Pay Request No. 4 from Veit and Company in the amount of \$343,484.08 for Garfield Street Reconstruction

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Lillis to approve Pay Request No. 4 from Veit and Company in the amount of \$343,484.08 for Garfield Street Reconstruction. Ayes – All.

City Engineer Johnson reported that the contractors are hoping to complete pouring the bulk of the concrete this week depending on the weather.

6. Pay Request No. 1 from 3D Concrete and Construction in the amount of \$40,610.20 for 2021 Curb & Sidewalk Improvements

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Rauzi to approve Pay Request No. 1 from 3D Concrete and Construction in the amount of \$40,610.20 for 2021 Curb & Sidewalk Improvements. Ayes – All.

7. Proposal from MSA for engineering services for Wastewater Treatment Plant lead and phosphate requirements project

City Engineer Alan Johnson said the plan is to prep on some of the beginning steps including a preliminary budget for bringing the Wastewater Treatment Plant into compliance. Public Works Director Rosati reminded the Council that he requested a permit from the MPCA in 2017. Rosati said it has taken this long to determine the next steps for the City. Within five years, the City will need to be able to make the lead and phosphate level requirements. Models will be used to conclude the changes necessary such as chemicals, filters, etc. in order to come into compliance.

Motion by Councilor Perpich, second by Councilor Koivunen to approve the proposal from MSA for engineering services for the Wastewater Treatment Plant lead and phosphate requirements project. Ayes – All.

8. New ambulance Change Order #1

The Council acknowledged the information on the change order for the ambulance. No action was taken as the changes were minor.

9. Resolution Ratifying Resolution No. 2020-38, Adopted by the City Council on December 15, 2020, Awarding the Sale of a General Obligation Improvement Bond, Fixing Its Form and Specifications; Directing Its Execution and Delivery; and Providing for Its Payment

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Lillis to adopt Resolution No. 2021-20, “Resolution Ratifying Resolution No. 2020-38, Adopted by the City Council on December 15, 2020, Awarding the Sale of a General Obligation Improvement Bond, Fixing Its Form and Specifications; Directing Its Execution and Delivery; and Providing for Its Payment.” Ayes – All.

10. Resolution Authorizing the City of Eveleth to Make Application to and Accept Funds from the Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation (Countryside Apartments)

Motion by Councilor Rauzi, second by Councilor Koivunen to adopt Resolution No. 2021-21, “Resolution Authorizing the City of Eveleth to Make Application to and Accept Funds from the Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation (Countryside Apartments).” Ayes – All.

11. Approval of Letter to the FAA regarding Phase 2 Apron Construction Project Disadvantaged Business Enterprise participation

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to approve letter to the FAA regarding Phase 2 Apron Construction Project Disadvantaged Business Enterprise participation. Ayes – All.

The City of Virginia has already approved the joint letter regarding efforts made by Mesabi Bituminous to complete the Phase 2 Apron Construction.

12. Approve City, RV, Camper, and Boat parking lot project

Motion by Councilor Koivunen, second by Councilor Perpich to approve the City RV, Camper and Boat Parking Lot Project. Ayes – All.

This parking lot property is located behind Douglas Avenue and leased from the mining company.

J. COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Lillis serves on the Fire Shared Services Committee and indicated the Council recently received a letter from Fayal Fire Chief Steve Shykes indicating the Fayal Fire Department is no longer interested in pursuing the shared venture with the City of Eveleth. Lillis said he was unsure of where the Fayal Town Board sits on this issue. Lillis said he is still in favor of the project. He knew it would take time and there would be pain involved in the process.

Councilor Rauzi also serves on the committee. Councilor Koivunen said he was surprised by the letter and would like to hear from the Fayal Town Board. Councilor Lillis implied that some political things are happening which involve some people who have wanted to waylay this plan from the beginning. Lillis said that Eveleth entered into this in good faith, wanting to provide a high level of care to both entities. He would like an answer from the Fayal Town Board, the people that represent the Town of Fayal, and would hope they will step up and give this some consideration. He would hate to think that a handful of people can derail this undertaking. Lillis said this is a worthwhile project which out of the blue, without any warning, should not be arbitrarily yanked by one person.

Councilor Rauzi said he does not have a problem with any decision that Fayal makes. He does not have an issue if they do not think this will be beneficial to their residents. Rauzi stated, that in his opinion, the letter was totally unnecessary and derogatory. He said that it is pointless to beat Eveleth down and to put the blame on Eveleth was a slap in the face of Eveleth's Fire Department. Rauzi said he used to be a firefighter and will always stand up for Eveleth – 100 percent.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said the big losers in all of this are the people getting served in the area.

Councilor Koivunen, referring to the letter, said, "You could have come and talked to us before you cut our fingers off." He would like to discuss this with the Fayal Town Board as this "came out of the blue."

City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek will work on setting up a joint Council Meeting with the Fayal Town Board.

Councilor Rauzi reported that the EDA had a wonderful meeting recently.

Councilor Lillis reminded the public that school is open and to watch for young kids.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich reported on the recent Rock Ridge Football game at the Eveleth High School on Thursday evening. This was the first football game as the Virginia and Eveleth-

Gilbert High Schools have combined football teams and are playing as one under the Rock Ridge School District. Vlaisavljevich said the field was packed, and that it was good to see the involvement from fans and students. Councilor Koivunen agreed and said a lot of good things came out of that game.

K. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS

Public Works Director – Director Jerry Rosati reported on a pump that recently went down at the Wastewater Plant. The seals were blown out and it is taking about five weeks to get replacements. After the seals were blown the other pump also went down at the plant. The Public Works Department is trying to rush the order and rectify the situation. Rosati anticipates some repair requests will be coming for Council approval. The transmission on the golf course vehicle also went out. It will cost more than the vehicle is worth to repair the transmission.

City Engineer – Alan Johnson from Benchmark Engineering said that progress is moving forward on the Garfield Street Project.

L. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.