

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Workshop Meeting
9:00 a.m., March 24, 2021
Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN

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 Mitch Brunfelt; Alan Johnson, Benchmark Engineering

Mayor Vlasisavljevich called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

1. Police Patrolperson interview committee (11th position)

Police Chief Linde reported that the Police Department is down two officers. They have a second round of interviews for the patrolperson. Linde would like to eventually hire two officers. The applications for the internal posting for Deputy Chief close today at 4:30 p.m.

2. Deputy Chief interview committee

This item was not discussed.

3. 2022 health insurance update

City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek explained that the City's insurance is through the Northeast Coop. The Coop has gone through BlueCross Blue Shield for a very long time. The proposals for next year came back with Medica being the most cost efficient. Monahan-Junek said the providers and networks should remain the same. Attorney Brunfelt said the Coop is aware that there are certain benefits employees expect as they have negotiated contracts.

4. 408 Fayal Avenue update

City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek reported on 408 Fayal Avenue, formerly occupied by Clark Blackwoods. Upon Mr. Blackwoods' death, the Court had issued an order for one of his daughters to gain access to remove personal items from the property. Monahan-Junek described the premises as being untidy and messy before the daughter

gained access. After a long weekend of the daughter getting into the building, the property was left in worse condition. Some of the valuables were taken and sold; however, the daughter left many items (including vehicles) on site. Windows were left open, a sink was removed, etc. The family would like to gain access to the building again for a week. Communications with the City and family are being handled through the family's attorney and the City's attorney. The City has a requirement that the family pay for an insurance liability policy, utilities and an escrow before getting back into the building. Monahan-Junek fears the building could be left in even worse shape than before and the insurance and escrow are imperative. Councilor Koivunen suggested that either there is a compromise with the family to have everything cleaned up or the family be sent a bill for the cleaning process.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said there are a lot of parties (who have resources to be successful) who interested in that building.

5. School district properties update

Monahan-Junek explained the City right of first refusal in the event anyone is interested in purchasing the school buildings. Now that the Eveleth-Gilbert School district is joined with Virginia, Eveleth's City Attorney will remind the district about the City's right of refusal.

6. Project Updates

Monahan-Junek gave project updates to the City Council.

Clinic Building - Scenic Rivers is now in the City owned clinic building and will need to replace some fixtures. They are planning to open a COVID vaccine clinic in the very near future.

Air Quality – The project is in the planning stage. Monahan-Junek has been meeting with ARI. The bonding bill does not require a match and is in the amount of \$1 million dollars.

Carter Circle Lots – The Council has been wanting to sell the remaining buildable lots in Carter Circle. Sam Koivunen has requested the City sell to her Lot #5 to build a 30 x 30 garage. The Council asked if some lots could be split into separate lots for houses and garages.

Convenience Gas Station – Mayor Vlasisavljevich revealed a recent meeting that he along with Monahan-Junek, and Chris Kubich had with Bois Forte Tribal Woman Chavers and several members of the tribal board to discuss partnering with the City of Eveleth to construct a gas station convenience store on Station 44 Road and by Highway 37. The City needs a fuel station and Bois Forte has the resources and is very interested in serving the area.

Parking – Monahan-Junek is working with Benchmark Engineering to layout some parking on Grant Avenue. They will also be looking at the parking lot across from City Hall to designate assigned parking. The Auditorium parking lot will also be discussed with the possibility of adding permit parking only to that City owned lot.

COVID Stimulus Funds – The City is slated to receive \$410,000 from the new stimulus plan. The League of Minnesota Cities will be setting forth guidelines on how the funds may be used.

7. Discuss Refuse Rate

Public Works Director Rosati reminded the Council that there are two refuse charges on the utility bill, the City's charges and the County's charge (which we collect and send to the County). Director Rosati reported that the County had indicated they would not be raising anything this year, but have now increased their residential fee by \$15.00 per year per resident. The commercial fee will also go up depending on the value of the business property. Rosati reiterated that this fee has nothing to do with the City and is a pass through on the utility bills from the customer to the County. Councilor Koivunen asked the Council to consider raising the utility bills to \$2.00 per month rather than \$1.25 a month in order to avoid the constant increases.

The meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.