

**MINUTES**  
**Eveleth City Council Workshop Meeting**  
**9:30 a.m., June 9, 2020**  
**Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN**

Councilor John Rauzi, Present  
Councilor Brad Hadrava, Absent  
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; City Attorney Mitch Brunfelt; Police Chief Tim Koivunen, Public Works Director Jerry Rosati

Mayor Vlasisavljevich called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

**1. Discuss tax forfeit property**

The following history was provided to the Council on the tax forfeit property at 1290 Industrial Park Avenue:

On August 21, 2018, the City's wastewater operators noticed a green color to the influent (flow in) coming into the wastewater plant. The effluent (flow out) quality also looked discolored and dirty instead of being clear. The operator ran a chlorine residual test on the influent and received a reading indicating excess chlorine. The operators learned that chromium can interfere with a chlorine test. The operators begin checking the lift station and found green color flowing into Adams Avenue list station. The operators along with the Public Works Director began checking manholes and the source was traced to 1290 Industrial Park. As required, the operators reported the discharge to the MPCA immediately.

In order to avoid damage/killing the organisms in the plant needed to treat wastewater, the operators had to bypass the influent to the plant for about 10 hours. It took at least one month to get the wastewater treatment plant to run properly again.

Eveleth City Administrator Monahan-Junek has made numerous calls to the MPCA requesting information regarding any enforcement action taken by the MPCA against the business that dumped Chromium in the sanitary sewer. In early March of 2020, the MPCA advised:

- They are working with the property owner to get rid of the waste.
- The property owner had cleaned up the spill on the shop floor.
- The property owner was given an administrative penalty order.

- The property owner advised MPCA that he was planning to close his business in March 2020.

The City is aware of a party interested in purchasing the property who has been in contact with the current owner.

The Council discussed potential future plans for the site. The City would be interested in acquiring the property to resell to another party and get it back on property taxes. The former owner was fined, but that information has not been made public. The Mayor would like a Phase I done at the site and would like the City to be reimbursed \$18,000 for damages done to the wastewater treatment plant.

The property is in forfeiture; however, the County may be granting the property back to current owner. Attorney Brunfelt indicated there could be a possible contingency added that if the owner gets the property back he must sign a release to allow the City to see the MPCA report and pay the \$18,000 in damages back to the City. The Council would like to see the following conditions added before the owner can secure the property:

- Phase I & II clean up
- Escrow Money for potential MPCA violations resulting from the chromium spill
- No floor drain allowed into the sanitary sewer
- Sign a release to MPCA allowing City to obtain report
- Pay \$18,000 in damages to the City

## 2. Discretionary capital expenditures

City Clerk Administrator Jackie Monahan-Junek distributed a 2020 Discretionary Capital expenditures list to the Council. Discussion took place on the possibility of leasing portable radios for the fire department. The Council would like to explore the lease option and possibly extend it department wide to also include the ambulance and police departments.

Public Works Director Rosati distributed a Capital Improvement Plan. The Council prioritized the following items:

Replace Boulevard and Park Trees	\$ 5,000
Northside Park Christmas Decorations (+ install outlet)	\$ 5,000
2 VFDs for Wastewater Plant Air System	\$11,000
Flygt Sludge Mixer Pump	\$11,000
Replace #18 2002 Ford ½ ton Pickup Truck	\$30,000

The Council will consider upgrading the Fayal Pond Walking Trail (which includes four stages) in 2021 at an estimate of \$132,964.

The Council is also considering reimbursement to liquor license holders for part of their license fees as they were required to be closed by the Governor's COVID Orders.

### **3. Shared utility service lines**

Public Works Director Rosati discussed multiple areas that have common utility service lines. It has been difficult for the City to get payments on some of these properties as the water is connected to two separate homes and cannot be shut off due to nonpayment. Rosati wanted to make the Council aware of the situation. The cost is estimated up to \$5,000 per property to add a line.

The Council will meet again on June 16, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m.