

MINUTES
Eveleth City Council Workshop Meeting
8:30 a.m., August 5, 2021
Council Chambers, City Hall, Eveleth, MN

Mayor called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

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

1. Public Safety Committee Police Department Responsibilities– City Attorney Mitch Brunfelt

City Attorney Brunfelt was asked to provide a legal opinion on the role of the Public Safety Committee's responsibilities concerning the Police Department. Brunfelt advised that the Council may want to make a determination on how the Public Safety Committee will proceed. He asked the Council to consider the following:

1. Since they are not a formal board or commission, would the committee operate more informally? Or do you want it to operate under formally defined responsibilities?
2. What do you want its general responsibilities to be?
3. Would you want to have the Public Safety Committee to deal with personnel issues or the Council's Personnel Committee?

Attorney Brunfelt stated that typical committees do not operate under formal guidelines. The committee takes each issue on a case-by-case basis. They review the situation as a committee and make a recommendation to the Council.

Councilor Lillis stated that the Fire and Police Commissions were abolished on September 17, 2019. At that time, the Council wanted the Public Safety Committee to take over some of the responsibilities. Lillis serves on the Public Safety Committee and said he does not want to be in a position to take on authority that is not allowed. He requested legal advice from Attorney Brunfelt. Lillis referred to the Police Commission having some statutory authority over every employee of the Police Department, except for one. The Police Commission did not have authority over the Police Secretary. The Police Secretary falls under the AFSCME Union. Although the current Police Secretary, Sheri, is his spouse,

Lillis does not feel there is conflict of interest since that position is not under the Public Safety Committee's authority.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich said the Public Safety Committee has been running smoothly. He suggested the Public Safety Committee could make a recommendation to the Personnel Committee if the need arises. Councilor Lillis agreed that it is a good idea to refer any issues the Public Safety Committee feels they should not address to the Personnel Committee. Lillis feels there should be a designated group for the Police Department to go to with concerns. This would be the Public Safety Committee. If the situation warrants involvement from the Personnel Committee that issue will be referred to them.

Attorney Brunfelt clarified that he was asked to give his legal opinion. It is up to the Council to decide how to proceed.

The Council is in favor of keeping the Public Safety Committee operation as is.

2. 2022 CSAH project – Roosevelt Ave. & Douglas Ave.

Public Works Director Rosati updated the Council on the County's plan to work on the 2022 CSAH projects involving Roosevelt Avenue and Douglas Avenue. One option would be to change out the Minnesota Power light poles from the existing wooden poles to metal poles. Currently, Minnesota Power maintains the wooden poles. If the City were to change over to metal poles, the City would be responsible for maintenance.

The County would also like to widen the street on the east side of Douglas Avenue. This would involve removing the boulevard to have the sidewalk on the back of the curb.

The Council does not want to take the responsibility of metal poles and is in favor of keeping the wooden light poles. They also do not have any issues with removing the boulevards on Douglas to widen the street.

3. Discuss WAC & SAC fees

Public Works Director Rosati discussed the utility WAC & SAC charges related to connecting into the City's water and sewer. Currently the City of Eveleth charges \$75 minimum for tapping into the water. Rosati gave examples of other communities: Gilbert - \$1,000; Fayal - \$3,000 (water) and \$9,300 (sewer). Rosati will continue to review figures from other communities and report back to the Council. The Council would like to consider raising these fees.

4. Scheduled at 9 a.m. - Closed session pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.05, subd. 3(b) – Attorney-client privilege

The Council went into closed session at 9:00 a.m. pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.05, subd. 3(b) – Attorney-client privilege to discuss litigation regarding Eveleth Save Our Schools. The

following were present at the closed session: Mayor Vlasisavljevich, Councilor Koivunen, Councilor Lillis, Councilor Rauzi, Councilor Perpich, City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek, Attorney Brunfelt.

The closed session ended at 9:30 a.m. and the regular workshop meeting reconvened.

5. WWTP phosphates & mercury

Public Works Director Rosati, Mayor Vlasisavljevich and City Engineer Johnson have been meeting with the MPCA to discuss new standards they are requiring the City to meet. The MPCA is imposing the phosphate and mercury guidelines for any outflow into Elbow Lake. Rosati recommend the City work with Bonestroo (company who designed the Waste Water Treatment Plant) to come up with a modeling system which needs to be complete next summer. The MPCA will draft a permit and at that time the City will have 5 years to test various models to determine how to make the changes and modifications to the plant. Each model is estimated at \$50,000. Money will have to be put into the plant to comply with the MPCA's conditions. There are grants available which could possibly cover around 80 percent of the costs. Director Rosati recommended the City hire Tom Guy from Bonestroo as a consultant to help with the project.

The Council is in favor of moving forward with Rosati's recommendations.

6. Biosolids & St. Louis County

Director Rosati reported that he meets with other communities to discuss biosolids. The County is finding it problematic to dump biosolid material as they are running out of land. The County has proposed buying a belt press and twice a year the City would take the press to its plant to remove the biosolids and dump into the landfill. This would eliminate the permits currently needed. The City would have some preparation for the press such as installation of a concrete pad and electrical work. Director Rosati recommended moving forward with this project.

7. City RV, camper, and boat parking lot

City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek distributed some handouts from Benchmark regarding the City's proposed RV, camper, and boat parking lot. The site is zoned appropriately for storage. Monahan-Junek will be asking the Council to take action to approve the agreement at the September meeting. Some of the neighbors are concerned about the parking lot bringing their property values down.

Attorney Brunfelt suggested that the agreements require the parking lot spaces to be used for storage only. The City does not want people living in the campers or camping on the site.

8. Gravel pit – driveway trespass, RV camping concept, are development plans required from potential purchaser to purchase the property?

At a workshop meeting some months ago, City Engineer Alan Johnson provided a map of the City's gravel pit which specified some potential development possibilities. There is a driveway trespass with an unusual looping into the property. A temporary land license has been offered (but not yet returned to the City) to the current owner for a nominal fee which would allow the property owner to have a year to develop a new driveway off of the City's property.

Attorney Brunfelt explained that the City has the whole piece of land listed with the broker. The driveway is a pretty significant trespass issue which needs to be addressed. The initial plan was to issue a land license to give official permission to use the corridor for a period of time while the owner constructs a new driveway. Brunfelt projected this could be an issue with selling the land as the trespass will show up on the survey. This may stand out as a red flag for the buyer's lender when they proceed with the title work which could cause the buyer to back out of the deal.

Mayor Vlasisavljevich would like the full City Council to meet with driveway property owners, Gerry Vito and his children, to discuss the trespass issue.

City Engineer Johnson estimated the cost at around 1 million dollars to develop an RV campground at the site. The City would need water and sewer as well as costs associated with developing the shore line to include putting in a beach and docks. The estimated cost for a shower house is \$250,000.

Attorney Brunfelt left the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

9. Fencing – Alice Location and gravel pit

Prices are coming in high right now for fencing. The Council will consider calling for bids again in January.

10. 408 Fayal Road – soils removal

City Engineer Johnson estimated around \$50,000 to clean up the soil around the former Blackwoods site at 408 Fayal Road. City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek will be bringing some information to the Council on interested buyers for this site.

The Council would like to meet with Brian Zadnikar to discuss plans for expanding his current business adjacent to 408 Fayal Road.

11. Station 44 Road logging proposal

City Engineer Johnson discussed the proposed contract for logging the property on Station 44 Road. The proposal is very similar to the quote provided to the City back in July. The

City has decreased the logging acres to 10. This will change the scope of the wood to be taken from the site and may increase the price for clean up by the contractor.

12. Commission and Board application

There is an applicant for City Commissions. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

13. Hippodrome ice logo

Director Rosati and City Clerk Administrator Monahan-Junek will be meeting with Rockridge School District today. The Council is in favor of putting the City's logo in the center of the ice at the Hippodrome (as it is a City building) and suggested a small Rockridge on one side of the logo and a Golden Bear on the other side.

The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.