

CITY COUNCIL WORKING SESSION

NOVEMBER 23, 2020

203 Broadway Ave N

PRESENT:

Tom McCauley	Mayor	Elizabeth Barker	Treasurer
Michael Higbee	Council President	Regie Finney	Public Works Director
Pam McClain by phone	Council Member	Jeremy Engbaum	Police Chief
Sue Gabardi	Council Member	Autumn Jones	Billing Clerk
Kelly Peterson	Council Member	Teresa Robbins	Asst. P & Z Clerk
Andrew Wright	City Attorney	Concerned Citizens	
Karen Drown	Clerk		

Because of the recent COVID-19 pandemic Buhl City Council made this meeting available telephonically.

PUBLIC HEARING opened at 6:00 PM

CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM:

Karen Drown confirmed a quorum.

Doug Gietzen stated the only concern that came from the Planning and Zoning hearing was about the dead-end water line. Regie noted it will continue the loop and help the city by allowing a right-of-way for the lift station and access to the future John Barker Park.

It was noted the subdivision will create a cul-de-sac for Applewood and the sewer will gravity feed to the west. It was confirmed this application had been approved by planning and zoning.

Mayor McCauley asked for testimony in support of the applicant. There was none.

Mayor McCauley asked for testimony against the applicant. There was none.

Mayor McCauley closed the public hearing at 6:06 PM.

CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM:

Karen Drown confirmed a quorum.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes of November 9, 2020 – Regular Meeting
2. Bi-Monthly Claims for Payment

3. Clerk Report
4. Treasurer Report

Michael Higbee moved to approve the consent agenda. Sue Gabardi seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Tables motion of Appeal of Variance Application from October 26, 2020 meeting: Mayor McCauley noted there had been discussions with attorneys and based on information the applicant had withdrawn their appeal request. Mayor McCauley stated the item dies for a lack of an item because the request had been rescinded.

NEW BUSINESS

Review and Consideration of Public Hearing Testimony for Gietzen Subdivision: Michael moved to approve the Gietzen Subdivision. Kelly seconded the motion. Michael noted the traffic onto Milner then onto Burley and this would add more traffic to a busy intersection. Michael applauded Gietzen's for having larger lots. There was a vote on the motion with all voting yes. Motion passed.

Presentation of 2019-2020 Audited Financial Statements: Brady Workman, with Workman and Company, presented the completed 2019-2020 Audited Financial Statements. He stated the city received and unmodified opinion which is the highest you can get. He stated since the city had received over \$750,000 in federal funds the city was required to have a Single Audit done on those funds which also received and unmodified opinion.

There was a discussion about property taxes and through August property tax revenue was good. The check in September was 1/3 of last years amount. Brandy also discussed the requirements of the bond covenants and the requirements for the debt ratio, he cautioned to review those if looking at utility rates. The bond holders want to make sure the city is able to pay for repairs without having to obtain more bonds. Brady concluded by noting the importance of Council to review the budget and the expenses and ask questions.

Michael moved to accept the 2019-2020 Audited Financial Statements as presented. Pam seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

Review and Consideration of Fund Transfer from Joint Fire Suppression Fund to General Fund: Elizabeth stated the Joint Management Agreement required to disperse anything over \$100,000 in the Joint Fire Suppression Fund. That would return \$74,437.02 to the Buhl Rural Fire Protection District and \$56,008.23 transfer to the general fund.

Elizabeth asked Council if there was any interest in committing the funds instead of to the general fund to put towards future purchases. There was a discussion about different options for the funds and what council members felt was appropriate. It was noted the direction of the district has switched so having some set aside would be a good idea.

Michael moved to commit \$20,000 to future fire purchases and the remaining \$36,008.23 to the general fund. Sue seconded the motion. Mayor McCauley stated he would be more comfortable with this idea if there was a specific purchase needed for the department. Kelly stated he felt the city was some what at odds with the district and the direction each are headed and stated the city might need funds available if plans change.

There was vote on the motion with Michael, Sue and Pam voting yes and Kelly voting no. The motion passed.

Michael moved to approve writing a check to the Buhl Rural Fire Protection District for the amount of \$74,437.02. Sue seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

Discussion and Consideration of Training Reimbursement Agreement in the Police Department:

Chief Engbaum presented the information at recouping costs that are put into the training of new officers. The agreement would address if the employee left within 3 years an amount that they would be required to pay. There was discussion of the details in the presented agreement that had been drawn up with Andrew Wright. Michael asked if this would have a negative affect to the hiring pool and Chief Engbaum felt it would help weed out those who are not serious. Chief Engbaum would like the new hires to stay so he can help guide the officers into specific areas in the law enforcement field that suits their interests.

There was a discussion of possibly lowering the hourly wage during training and FTO time. Consensus Council was to keep the hourly rate at the base salary because they didn't want to disincentivize the positions.

Michael moved to approve the reimbursement agreement with the first year at 100%, second year at 75%, third year at 50% and after training completion it would be 0%, which is three years from post academy certification. Kelly seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed with four yeses.

It was asked about the recent hiring pool and the applicants. Mayor McCauley noted it wasn't a strong pool.

Council Concerns – There were none.

MEETING ADJOURNED – Kelly Peterson moved that the meeting be adjourned; Sue Gabardi seconded the motion and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 pm.

Minutes prepared by Karen Drown, City Clerk