

**CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
BACKUS, MINNESOTA
April 6, 2015**

Pursuant to due call and notice, the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Backus, Cass County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, April 6, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at the Backus City Hall, Mayor Kurt Sawyer presiding.

Members Present: Mayor Kurt Sawyer, Steve Braker, Ann Birge, Karl Flier and Rae Borst

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Ann Swanson, Clerk-Treasurer

Others Present: Lee Bundy, Jason Smith, Denton Newman, Jr., Travis Grimler, Mark Hallan, Jason Brogle

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & ROLL CALL

CONSENT AGENDA

The following Consent Agenda items were presented for approval:

1. Minutes of 03/02/2015 Regular Meeting
2. Bills, claims and payments including check numbers **25912** through **25960** and electronic payments 041501 through 041504 totaling **\$46,094.83**.
3. Monthly financial report.

Motion by Borst, seconded by Birge, to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. Motion carried.

POLICE REPORT

Sergeant Jason Brogle of the Cass County Sheriff's Department reported on law enforcement activity in the city during the month of March. There were nine calls and one cabin break-in that was still under investigation. Brogle informed that the non-emergency number for the Sheriff's Department could be called at any time to report speed complaints and parking issues and the like.

FIRE DEPARTMENT/FIRST RESPONSE

Fire Chief Jason Smith reported that planning was underway for the 50th Annual Smelt Fry which will be held at the Fire and City Hall on May 2nd. Smith asked for approval of a county mutual aid plan which would provide for coordinated efforts between the Backus and Longville Fire Departments in the event fire protection services are needed in Blind Lake Township. The agreement was drafted by the county, has no financial impact on the City of Backus and expires December 1, 2016.

Motion by Flier, seconded by Braker, to approve the *Cass County Automatic Mutual Aid Response Plan*, as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

WATER/WASTEWATER

Operator's Report

Public Works Director Lee Bundy provided a written report of March activity. The danger of freeze ups remains for a few more weeks until the frost is out of the ground so monitoring continues. Landscaping rock will be placed around the main lift station this spring.

Native Grasses Restoration

Prairie Restorations, Inc has provided a quote to map and measure the potential re-seeding areas in Backus for \$650.00.

Motion by Borst, seconded by Braker to approve the \$650.00 quote for Praire Restorations, Inc. to map and measure the re-seeding areas along the trail.

STREETS AND PARKS

Monthly Update

Bundy informed that sweeping of streets would be occurring after April 15th with crack filling and patching of up to \$3,000.00 to follow shortly thereafter. Mayor Sawyer indicated that the sweeping residue could be deposited on his property. Bundy further informed that the dock had been re-done as a cooperative effort between the city and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources with the city providing new boards for the dock and the DNR providing the bumpers. The dock will be removed each fall to help extend its life.

Leaves and Brush

Bundy informed that signs had been prepared to install at the old city drainfield on Wood Street North to identify the site as a place for residents to deposit yard clippings, leaves and other brush. The area is gated off and the gate will be locked with a key available at city hall during business hours to decrease the potential for other items and trash to be dumped there. Discussion on having the dumpster attendant open the gate during Saturday morning dumpster hours and possibly providing a council member with a key so that the gate could be unlocked on other occasions.

Tree Removal

Last year, a resident on Oak Street asked that a hazardous tree be removed in the boulevard of Grover Avenue. Since then, steps have been taken to accomplish this. Minnesota Power was contacted since the branches were close to power lines. Last fall, Minnesota Power trimmed, but did not remove the tree. On further inspection, a large tree adjacent to the original tree slated to be removed was identified as hazardous. A quote was obtained from Kory Crawford of "Hazardous Tree Removal" to remove these two trees and several other smaller ones near the townhomes for \$550.00. The resident on Oak Street asked that a large pine tree that was tilting be

removed rather than the second tree on Grover Avenue. Action on the matter tabled for further inspection of the trees in question and possible development of a written policy for tree removal guidelines.

AIRPORT

Beacon Replacement

A Grant Agreement for the beacon relocation and replacement has been received from the State of Minnesota. Pursuant to the terms of the grant, the total cost of the project will not exceed \$38,750.00 with the state paying 90% of the cost and the city responsible for 10%. Hallan informed that once the Grant Agreement has been signed by all parties, he will schedule a pre-construction meeting with Pine River Electric. Braker expressed concern that the city may have to pay back amounts spent to improve the airport in the event the airport ceases to operate.

Motion by Flier, seconded by Borst to approve Resolution #2015-04, Authorization to Execute Minnesota Department of Transportation Grant Agreement for Airport Improvement Excluding Land Acquisition. Roll call vote: Birge (aye), Borst (aye), Braker (nay), Flier (aye), Sawyer (aye). Motion carried.

Motion by Borst, seconded by Flier to approve Grant Agreement for Airport Improvement Excluding Land Acquisition – Mn/DOT Agreement No. 1000415. Motion carried with Braker in opposition.

PUBLIC FORUM

Pine Mountain Gospel Hydrant

Bruce Eveland and George Oberfell were present representing Pine Mountain Gospel which owns and is located in the former school building. They asked if the city would take over the maintenance of the hydrant which is located behind the building as well as the water line from it to the street. It was suggested that Pine Mountain Gospel obtain a blanket utility easement which would give the city authority to maintain the hydrant and water line as well as other city utilities. Discussion on the need for Pine Mountain Gospel to hook up to city sewer in light of the fact that the school is now within city limits which would entail the payment of a sewer access fee and installing a line to the city sewer connection. Eveland and Oberfell further informed that efforts were being made to open a Christian school in the building with a target opening date of this fall or early 2016.

Clean-Up Day

The clerk-treasurer has learned that several organizations might be interested in helping with a city-wide clean-up day. Since representatives of the organizations were not in attendance, the matter was tabled.

OLD BUSINESS

Townhome Flooring

An estimate for replacing the flooring in one or three of the townhome units had been received from MCI carpeting over the past couple of months.

Motion by Flier, seconded by Braker to proceed with re-flooring the entire unit of Townhome #4 pursuant to the quote of MCI Carpeting to do the work for \$2,962.00.

Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Siren Maintenance Agreement

A proposed contract has been received from Frontline Warning Systems, Inc. for 2015 maintenance and battery replacement for the warning siren for a total of \$710.00.

Motion by Braker, seconded by Flier to approve the *Annual Service Proposal and Contract for Whelen Outdoor Warning Sirens with Frontline Plus, Inc.* totaling \$710.00. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Donation

Donations of \$300.00 and \$2,000.00 from Deerfield Township and Powers Township, respectively, were received for the Backus Emergency Responders.

Motion by Flier, seconded by Birge to approve Resolution #2015-05, *Resolution Acknowledging Donation from the Following Donors: Deerfield Township, Powers Township.* Roll call vote: Birge (aye), Borst (aye), Braker (aye), Flier (aye), Sawyer (aye). Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Emergency Operation Plan

Cass County has developed an Emergency Operation Plan and is providing municipalities within the county to be covered under a “Common Countywide Plan” for emergency operations in order to be in compliance with Federal Department of Homeland Security regulations pertaining to domestic incident management.

Motion by Birge, seconded by Borst to approve Resolution #2015-06, *Designation of the National Incident Management System as the Basis for All Incident Management in Backus, Minnesota.* Roll call vote: Birge (aye), Borst (aye), Braker (aye), Flier (aye), Sawyer (aye). Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Motion by Flier, seconded by Borst to adopt the *Cass County Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Backus.* Motion carried by unanimous vote.

City Sign Repainting

Swanson had requested quotes from Upland Advertising, the company which constructed the City’s sign on Highway 371, for repainting the sign. They provided quotes for repainting the existing panels, a billboard wrap and new, painted Alumicore panels ranging in price from \$1,150.00 to \$2,650.00. Council directed that just the red, “welcomes you” part of the sign be painted at this time.

Softline Credit Card Payments

Softline Data, Inc., the company which the city uses for utility billing, has an agreement with another company to accept credit or debit card payments for water and sewer bills. There is no charge to the city for this service as a service fee is added to each bill a customer would pay using this service.

Motion by Borst, seconded by Braker to approve contracting with eNetPay for city water and sewer billing payments. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Other

Discussion on several nuisance issues within the city including a chimney standing alone in a yard and a commercial building in disrepair. The property owners will be notified and asked to address these issues.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the Mayor adjourned the April City Council Meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Swanson, Clerk-Treasurer