

City of Long Prairie
7:00 P.M., Tuesday, January 22, 2019

The Long Prairie City Council met in regular session at City Hall, 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 22, 2019. Mayor Jodi Dixon called the meeting to order with the following present: Council members David Blanchard, Bob Byers, Lilah Gripne, and Interim City Administrator David Venekamp. Council member Randy Mechels was absent.

Council member Gripne motioned Blanchard seconded to add the following items to the council agenda which included the discussion on city fund balances, EDA appointment of Mayor Dixon to the EDA and a request for additional borings by Terracon. Motion unanimously carried.

Council member Byers motioned Gripne seconded to approve the council minutes of January 7, 2019. Motion unanimously carried.

Council member Gripne motioned Byers seconded to approve the bills as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Nancy Potter presented the annual library report to the council. The circulation at the library was up almost 2% over 2017. There were more than 21,000 videos and over 36,000 books and audio books checked out from the library during 2018. Potter stated they do have a parking problem during the days that the state driving bureau is open. Mayor Dixon stated there is a parking problem for the senior citizens during that time period also.

Teresa Sorenson the President of the Todd County Coalition of Aging informed the council of the coalition's purpose and programs. The council is designed to represent all senior citizens of Todd County and they meet on a monthly basis. The council has a newsletter, The Senior Echoes, which started in 1977. There are senior centers in Bertha, Browerville, Clarissa, Eagle Bend, Grey Eagle, Long Prairie and Staples.

Council member Gripne motioned Blanchard seconded to approve the application for a Bingo License for Midwest Outdoors Unlimited for March 30, 2019 at the American Legion. Motion unanimously carried.

The council discussed the advertising for a new city administrator. The council could take applications and do the interviews or they could hire an outside firm to do that for the city.

Council member Byers motioned Blanchard seconded to contact David Drown and Associates as a possible firm for advertising and hiring the city administrator. Motion unanimously carried

Interim City Administrator Venekamp indicated that some of the city's TIF reports which have been reported to the state do not balance to the city audit reports. Venekamp suggested the council may want to use a firm to do future reports instead of the city administrator doing them. The fee charged by the firm could be paid for by the 10% administrative fee the city can retain from the TIF districts. Venekamp presented the following two proposals for preparing the TIF reports for the city:

Ehlers and Assoc. \$2,205 for the initial report and \$980 each year thereafter per TIF district (based on hours spent/district)

Schlenner, Wenner & Assoc. \$400 to \$700 per district base upon hours spent preparing the reports

Venekamp stated the first year's report would be more expensive since the company would need to correct past TIF reports to the state. Ehlers and Assoc. would also provide a more in debt analysis of the TIF districts under their fee proposal.

Council member Byers motioned Gripne seconded to have Schlenner, Wenner and Associates prepare the TIF reports for the City. Motion unanimously carried

Council discussed a water and sewer rate study. Ehlers and Associates had presented proposals for doing the sewer rate study at \$16,000 and the water study at \$11,500. Venekamp stated in the past he has done the water and sewer rate proposals for the city; however, due to the complexity of the sewer rate, he would not be interested in doing that. Venekamp suggested that he could do the water rate study for the city thereby saving the \$11,500 fee.

Council member Gripne motioned Blanchard seconded to hire Ehlers and Associates to do the wastewater study for the city at a fee of \$16,000. Motion unanimously carried

Council member Gripne motioned Byers seconded to have Venekamp do the water rate study. Motion unanimously carried.

The council reviewed a request by Terracon to place additional soil borings along Central Avenue and some of the side streets. Terracon did a few borings at the end of 2018 and noticed some contaminants in samples from those borings. Because of that, they would like to install some additional borings for testing.

Council member Gripne motioned Blanchard seconded to allow Terracon to install additional borings along Central Avenue and the side streets for monitoring of soil contamination. Motion unanimously carried.

Administrator Venekamp stated in reviewing the fire department's and the fire department capital project fund the cash balances, the fire department's fund balance has decreased by approximately \$100,000 over the last five years. Venekamp indicated that some of that is due to additional expenses within the department and the fact that the revenues were not increased to cover those expenses. It was also noted that the fund balances presented to the township officers at the annual township meeting did not match the auditor's annual report. Venekamp suggested that the council transfer \$50,000 out of the fire capital projects fund into the fire general fund to help offset the fund balance loss within the general fund.

Council member Byers motioned Blanchard seconded transfer \$50,000 from the fire capital projects fund to the fire general fund. Roll call: Yes; Byers, Gripne, Blanchard, Dixon. Motion unanimously carried.

Council member Blanchard motioned Byers seconded to appoint Mayor Dixon to the Long

Prairie EDA. Motion unanimously carried.

Council member Byers stated the park department is discussing possible improvements to Riverside Park. Pat Schultz was appointed to the Park Board and he has been involved in doing some cleanup as well as preparing the ponds for skating at the park. Byers also indicated that they are looking at holding a Frisbee golf tournament on May 18th at the Frisbee Park.

Council member Blanchard stated he did a ride along with the Long Prairie Police Department.

Fire Chief Kreemer indicated the department had 1,070 man hours in 2018. They were involved in mutual aid 10 times and the department received mutual aid four times in 2018.

Council member Gripne stated the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed a TIF report for John Timmerman. Mr. Timmerman was present to discuss the housing apartment project. The Planning and Zoning Commission approved of the TIF district and the council will be reviewing the TIF proposal at their next council meeting.

Mayor Dixon stated she is working on trying to get a punch card system for individuals visiting the Christie House and other places throughout the area.

Councilor Byers motioned Blanchard seconded to adjourn. Motion unanimously carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

David Venekamp
Interim City Administrator/Clerk

Jodi Dixon
Mayor