

May, 2009 Ashby City Council Meeting

The Ashby City Council met in regular session on Thursday, May 14, 2009 at Ashby City Hall. Mayor Thomas Grover called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with council members Carl Ulrich, George Jordan, Ronnie Jaenisch and Lynn Jensen present. Also present were Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer; Richard Walton, City Attorney, Alan Cassavant, Public Works Superintendent, Thor Tollefson, Chief of Police, and Dennis Helle. Visitors: Judy Helle, Tim Bayerl & Pat Conroy from WSN and Kathy Sletto.

The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Jensen moved to approve the agenda with additions. Ulrich seconded. MCU

Visitors

Housing Rehab Grant Items:

Kathy Sletto was here to present information on the Housing Rehab Grant. We have been told that we got the grant but we have not gotten the contract yet. We will prepare all information needed to get the program started. Jensen made a motion to allow Grover & Martin to sign contracts when they come in. Ulrich seconded. MCU

Ulrich moved to approve the Certificate of Exemption for HUD Funded Projects. Jordan seconded. MCU

Jordan approved the Certificate of Categorical Exclusion – Environmental Activities for SCDP Funded Projects. Jensen seconded. MCU

Ulrich moved to approve the Application Selection Procedure. Jaenisch seconded. MCU A mailing will go out to the 38 people who filled out the Intent to Participate form. First 11 applications received will be processed. A lottery (such as names drawn out of a hat) will be used if too many come in one day.

Jaenisch moved to approve the Plan for Use of Program Income. Jensen seconded. MCU

Jensen moved to approve the Administrative Services Agreement with Kathy Sletto. Ulrich seconded. MCU

Jensen moved to approve **Resolution #2009-12 Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan**. Jaenisch seconded. Roll call vote: Those voting for – Jensen, Jordan, Grover, Jaenisch and Ulrich. Those voting against – none. MCU

Jaenisch moved to approve **Resolution 2009-13 Certificate for a Drug-Free Workplace**. Jordan seconded. Roll call vote: Those voting for – Jensen, Jordan, Grover, Jaenisch and Ulrich. Those voting against – none. MCU

Jensen moved to approve **Resolution 2009-14 Prohibiting Use of Excessive Force**. Jordan seconded. Roll call vote: Those voting for – Jensen, Jordan, Grover, Jaenisch and Ulrich. Those voting against – none. MCU

The Council received information on policies and procedures. This will be tabled until the June meeting so they have some time to go through it.

Possible Utility Projects:

In an effort to see if the City would qualify for some type of "Stimulus Funds," WSN came up with some preliminary numbers for a water-main loop project, a stormwater project and a sewer replacement project. Tim Bayerl and Pat Conroy were here to discuss these projects and possible funding. An application was sent out a couple of weeks ago to get on the "Project Priority List." This is sent to MN Pollution Control Agency. Projects throughout the state are given a rating and ranked by priority. We have not received this information at this point. This rating helps with funding from several agencies. The watermain looping and stormwater project were not viable and applications were not submitted for those two items. The sewer project included replacing all clay piping throughout the City. Council was concerned about the cost associated with this project. It was decided that the Clerk could fill out a pre-application with Rural Development which would give the City an idea of possible grant opportunities.

DOT Roadside Program:

Chad VanSanten was in attendance to discuss a program available through MN DOT. They provide assistance and design for beautification projects in their road right-of-ways. The project is funded by DOT and they design it for you. The City would need to provide in-kind donations, mostly in the form of volunteers. The project can be up to \$20,000. Jordan moved to send a letter of application to DOT for this project. Ulrich seconded. MCU

Consent Agenda

Ulrich moved to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- Approval of all April minutes.
- Approval of bills: Prepaid: \$17,831.59 and Claims for Approval: \$26,557.83 for a total of \$44,389.42. Grover went through the bills prior to council and gave pre-approval.

Jaenisch seconded. MCU

There were two outstanding utility bills scheduled to be disconnected tomorrow.

Open Forum

There were no residents in attendance at the Open Forum.

Mayor's Report

Grover attended the following:

- Small Town Mayor's Meeting in Ashby
- Park Board Meeting
- County Commissioner's Meeting

Administration

There were no council reports.

The Clerk/Treasurer's Report was accepted. The report details work done by the Clerk/Treasurer for the previous month such as:

- Central Lakes Trail meeting, along with preparation of balance sheet.
- Meeting with banker/nursing home.
- Work comp audit.
- Area business meeting.
- Attended election official meeting in Alexandria – Mark Richtie, Secretary of State was there.
- Ambulance reimbursement to FEMA.
- COPS Grant application – joint effort with Tollefson.
- Did the program for Community Club – survey results and other related City activities.
- Budget meeting/Public Works Commission.
- Quarterly comparison for wages and budgets YTD.
- Finished up items for fire truck purchase.
- Pet Clinic.
- Country View Estates Promo Committee and with Contractors.
- Items needed for application – wastewater project.
- Meetings/spreadsheets and information for FEMA – flood reimbursement.
- Park Board meeting.
- Economic Development meeting.
- Meeting with administrator from Freeport to get ideas on industrial park development and commercial growth opportunities.
- TFC Poultry Abatement items prepared.
- Regional safety meeting.
- Council packets.
- Monthly bills and reports.
- Utility bills and receiving payments.
- Waiting on customers, all financials including deposits, checks, reports; posting and publishing notices; payroll; minutes; policies, and more.

Public Safety

The City has applied for a COPS grant. If we receive the grant, it will pay for Tollefson's wages for three years. The only condition is that the City must pay his wages for an additional year. We should hear back sometime this summer.

The Police Report was as follows:

- Motorcycle Accident – 1
- Unsafe Equipment-1
- Welfare Check-6
- Open Door-1
- Animal Complaints-3
- Burglar Alarm-1
- Driving Complaint-1
- Traffic Direction-2
- Education (DARE)-6
- Motor Vehicle Accident-1
- Ordinance Violation-3
- Speed-1

There was a discussion on the Transient Merchant Ordinance. It needs to be updated. Martin, Tollefson, Walton and the Police Commission will work on amending and updating the ordinance before the June council meeting.

There have been complaints of junk vehicles around the City. Tollefson will notify owners of the ordinance violation. This applies to residential and commercial property owners.

Martin and Grover attended the County Commissioners meeting requesting pedestrian crosswalk signs for the County Roads. The commissioners gave the City permission to put them up but will not pay for any of them. Ulrich moved to purchase 2 signs at this time. Jaenisch seconded. MCU Tollefson will talk with the school to see if they are going to purchase another one.

The Equity has made a request for a crosswalk down by the fertilizer plant. Cassavant will talk with the County.

The emergency management policy is in need of updates. It will be worked on before the next council meeting.

The Fire Dept. report was presented:

- 17 ambulance calls – 4 within the City
- 2 fire calls – one grass fire and one clothes dryer fire

The fire truck committee had met and opened up proposals for the new grass rig. Nelson Auto Center was the lowest bidder. After sending information to USDA Rural Development and Richard Walton for review, the truck was ordered. Expected delivery date is 2-4 months.

Jaenisch moved to approve **Resolution 2009-9 Fund Transfer for Fire Protection and Truck Fund**. Ulrich seconded. Roll call vote: Those voting for – Jensen, Jordan, Grover, Jaenisch and Ulrich. Those voting against – none. MCU

Jensen moved to approve **Resolution 2009-10 Grant County Mutual Aid**. Jaenisch seconded. Roll call vote: Those voting for – Jensen, Jordan, Grover, Jaenisch and Ulrich. Those voting against – none. MCU

Council received information on new radio equipment for the move to 800 MHz system. A FEMA grant has been received for the County Fire Departments with a 5% matching cost share. The Grant County Commissioners have voted that the County will pay this 5%. New radios will still be needed for police and public works. More funding will be sought for this equipment.

Public Works

Public Works Report:

- All hydrants have been flushed and are in good working order.
- Dead-end sewer lines have been flushed. Many manholes have been checked for infiltration, which there is plenty of. Some line cleaning will be done this summer. Some have not been cleaned before.
- The shelter in the park has been reshingled. Scott Gullickson did a wonderful job. Most of the trees that needed trimming have been done. Mowing has started and will soon be in full swing.
- The secondary ponds have been discharged once and a second discharge will be done soon.
- The City received another award for MPCA. The Certificate of Commendation is the 5th year in a row that Ashby has been recognized.

There was a discussion on the purchase of an Arc welder for the shop. It can be used by the Public Works Department for many different types of repairs. Jensen moved to approve the purchase. Ulrich seconded. MCU

Summer help was discussed. Staff had applied to Rural MN CEP for youth help but it does not look like there is any interest. Grover will check with the County for someone who needs to perform some community service.

The Budget Committee and Public Works Commission held a joint meeting on April 21, 2009. Wage comparisons for the first quarter were distributed. Part-time hours have been reduced by 40% from last year. Other items to cut from the budget were discussed. The budget is very tight as we cut many items in December before the final levy was sent in. Some items related to part-time police were discussed. We need to wait and see if we get the COPS grant. The committee will meet again in July and the Chief of Police will be asked to attend. Mowing and summer work was also discussed. Cassavant will spend as much time as he can on the mower to alleviate part-time help but it depends on what else is going on.

The Council received a report for the Parks Board. An update on the horseshoe pits was given. A league has been started and porta-potties will need to be ordered. The Garden Club is donating two benches for Memorial Park. Ashby Community Club and Ashby Lions have both donated \$500 to the Central Lakes Trail Shelter. A letter will be sent to area businesses for those interested in donating. Metal donation signs will be displayed in the Park Shelter.

The City has been notified that the Wellhead Protection Plan needs to be updated. The process needs to start by August. More information will be available at another Council meeting.

Martin has attended several meeting regarding reimbursements from FEMA for flood issues. Grant County was declared a disaster county and any expenses related to flooding and water issues can be reimbursed. The lift station failure in March qualifies for reimbursement and Martin has composed a worksheet of employee hours and equipment used for the reimbursement. Martin has also applied for Mitigation Grant Funds for storm sewer replacement and for larger lift station pumps.

The council discussed the contract that we still hold with Utility Services for the water tower for wireless antennas. The contract entitles them to a percentage of the proceeds of an agreement with a wireless provider for water tower space for antennas. Jaenisch moved to cancel this contract. Ulrich seconded. MCU

Old Business

Otter Tail Power will pay for a billboard advertising the residential development. It was decided that the best spot for the billboard would be on the development, along Highway 78.

The nursing home building was discussed and some ideas that were brought up at the last Economic Development meeting. This group thought that a Community Center may be a good use for the facility and possibly the City should seek grant funds for this to happen. This group has also been working on the idea of an Industrial Park and seeking grant money. The council decided that they would like some feedback from residents on these two items and will hold an "Idea Session" instead of the Open Forum in June.

New Business

County Road 19 was discussed and how the paving may affect the City as far as people using a different route and not coming into Ashby. Grover has discussed this with the County Commissioners and it has been planned for several years. There is really nothing that we can do about it.

Jensen moved to approve **Resolution #2009-11 Accepting the Following Donations: \$200 from Ashby Lions and \$200 from Community Club for the Central Lakes Trail Group; \$20 from Elizabeth Overman for the Fire Department; \$500 from Ashby Lions for a Shelter located on the Central Lakes Trail; \$1000 from Otter Tail Power for the New Fire Truck.** Jaenisch seconded. Roll call vote: Those voting for – Jensen, Jordan, Grover, Jaenisch and Ulrich. Those voting against – none. MCU

A letter was received from the Fergus Falls Girls Hockey Team thanking everyone for support when they went to state.

Ulrich moved to approve an outdoor permit for the Ashby Legion on August 1, 2009. Jaenisch seconded. MCU

Adjourn 8:20 p.m.

Valerie Martin, Clerk