

Ashby City Council Meeting and Assessment Hearing for Birch Ave. and The Wastewater Project– March 8, 2012

Mayor Grover called the hearing to order at 6:00 p.m. with council members George Jordan, Jim Karl, Jim Rylander and Ronnie Jaenisch present. Also present was Val Martin-Clerk/Treasurer, Richard Walton, City Attorney Dennis & Judy Helle. Visitors were Dwight Walvatne, Trent Froemming, Darrin Froemming, and Jeff Kuhn from WSN. Those in attendance for the hearing were: David Ford, Margaret Ford, Charles Holte, Robert Boren, Lon J. Rylander, Jane Kruize, Corrine Dahlen, Marjorie Thompson, Vern Foner, Ricky Leitch, MaryAnn Torgrimson, Edith Johnson, Winnie Thompson, Alden Thompson, Judy Stierlen, Wayne Stierlen, Vikki Adams, Janet Hamer, Marie Shores, and William Shores.

The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Jeff Kuhn described the wastewater project in general including the proposed assessment calculations. A spreadsheet was distributed to those in attendance. Some of the items discussed and questions presented were:

- Personal service – the project will replace the sanitary sewer line to the property line and those wanting their service to the house replaced will have the option to do that. It will not be a part of the City project but available contractor contact information and procedure will be sent to residents receiving new service. There will also be a permitting process for this replacement. This cost will be the responsibility of the property owner. Someone asked if this could be assessed. The council has not made that determination at this point.
- There were a few general questions on easements and some property owners had questions specific to their property.
- The construction will be done in phases and we will work with the contractor to eliminate construction on both sides of someone's property at the same time so they have access. We will also work on minimizing inconveniences for business and residential properties. Contact information will be requested from property owners so contractors and the City can notify them of what's going on.
- Assessments were discussed and how they were determined. This will be assessed to property taxes after the project is complete. Property owners also have the other option of paying the assessment up front.
- Trees will not be replaced if they need to be taken out.
- A resident had some specific questions on past drainage issues and if that would be remedied.
- General assessment information on Birch Ave. was presented.

The Public Hearing was closed and the Council meeting was opened.

Visitors

Jeff Kuhn from WSN was at the meeting to update the council on the wastewater project.

Nonresident connections were discussed. The City does not have authority to assess those property owners that have sanitary sewer outside of the City limits. Jim Karl and Ron Jaenisch will meet with them to discuss the option of paying an amount equal to the amount assessed to residents.

Jim Karl and Ron Jaenisch will also meet with Lon Rylander to discuss some concerns with the easement and the project going on the back side of the bank. This affects their drive-through window.

An engagement letter for an appraisal opinion for the wastewater and Birch assessments from Nagell Appraisal and Consulting was considered but tabled for more information and some firm numbers on the cost.

The council discussed the option of assessments for those people replacing their personal sanitary sewer service. The cost to the City and the lack of funds for the up-front cost determined that it was not viable. Karl moved to not provide financing for personal service related to the sanitary sewer project but the City will provide the information to the residents on how to get it done including contractor contact information and the permitting process. Jaenisch seconded. MCU

The grant application was approved and the money received from WC Initiative Fund for the Capital Improvement Plan. Public Works will meet to discuss the options for this and to review the Pretreatment Agreement for TFC Poultry. A meeting will take place towards the end of March.

Trent and Darrin Froemming were in attendance and the council voiced a couple concerns from residents. TFC does give employees training on animal welfare and policies are in place for issues related to handling of the birds. They asked to be informed immediately if an issue is brought to anyone's attention so it can be handled immediately. They are also working with a local contractor for future hauling of waste containing high levels of BOD.

Jaenisch moved to approve the agenda with additions. Jordan seconded. MCU

Consent Agenda

Jordan moved to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- Approval of minutes from the previous month.
 - Approval of bills: Prepaid Bills: \$19,774.70, Claims for Approval: \$45,714.99 and Additional Claims for Approval: \$1,886.20 for a total of \$67,375.89. Rylander went through the bills and the bank statement ahead of time and gave prior approval.
- Karl seconded. MCU

Mayor's Report

Regional Mayor's Meeting

The mayors will be meeting with legislators at the Capital in March.

Council Reports

None

Administration

The Clerk/Treasurer's Report was accepted. The report details work done by the Clerk/Treasurer for February 3rd – March 5th:

- 2011 Financial Report to Council.
- Lobby Report to State.
- Police Commission – prepared background information and attended meeting.
- Assessments for wastewater and Birch – prepared list, mailed and published notice, affidavit of mailing, spreadsheet for public hearing.
- Easements – sent letters with sample easement, held meeting with Walton to sign easements, and sent follow up letters, background information on Ash Ave., answered questions.
- Wellhead Protection meeting.
- Police and Fire Aid reports submitted to State.
- Prepared Fire Contracts with Townships – attended meeting.
- Invoicing for Fire Dept./Arrow EMS.
- PERA Annual Exclusion.
- MN W-2's submitted to State.
- Waiting on customers, all financials including deposits, checks, reports; posting and publishing notices; payroll; minutes; policies, compiling and delivering agenda packets to council members and more.

Public Safety

Police Report was presented by Cederberg:

The Police Report was as follows:

- Speed – 4 Warnings
- Civil Matter – 1
- Harassing Communication – 1
- Unsafe Equipment – 1 Warning
- Fire – 1 Warning
- Property Check Requests – 1
- Motorist Assists – 3
- Stop Sign – 1 Warning
- Vehicle Checks – 3
- Welfare Checks – 1
- No Proof of Insurance – 2
- Suspicious Activity – 1

Cederberg submitted a letter of resignation to the Council. Jaenisch moved to accept Karl seconded. MCU The council wished him well in his new position and appreciated the time to the City of Ashby.

Police protection options were discussed for the future. A sample survey was presented to the council that could be sent out to the residents. This survey included budgets and actual cost to maintain the police department. The option of contracting with the County was further discussed. Sheriff Walvatne was present to answer some questions. The Sheriff's Department suggested that the City of Ashby could not be covered by 2 hours a day like Herman, Barrett and Hoffman. There is more business activity and we have our own school. Someone suggested that the physical location of the City can be an issue for call time as we are at the NE corner of the County and this could mean a long response time for a 911 call. The council was in agreement that the City should advertise for a replacement of Cederberg but would hold a public informational meeting on April 12th to present general and financial information on the police department. The meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. The police commission will meet to review the information that will be presented at the public meeting.

The council discussed what to do in the interim. Whether to pursue hiring a part-time officer that is available and could fill in for a short period of time. Jordan moved to approve a part-time interim officer chosen by the police commission, if they could find someone available. Karl seconded. Discussion followed with Sheriff Walvatne suggesting that the Sheriff's Department help with calls and there is a possibility that one of the part-time deputies might be available for extra hours through the Sheriff's department. Walvatne also said that he would help out on a short term basis. After further discussion, Jordan rescinded his motion and Karl seconded. Motion to rescind carried unanimously.

Jaensich moved to approve the advertisement for a full-time police officer including the ad, job description and pay scale with a deadline for applications of March 26th. Jordan seconded. MCU

Arrow EMS Report:

The students enrolled in the initial EMT course are working very hard with about 1/3 of the course remaining. These classes have given the instructors the opportunity to develop individual styles and upcoming classes will continue to give them experiences for ongoing instruction. Several community classes are pending but not confirmed.

Public Works

Regular monthly activities for wastewater and water have been ongoing. There has been very little need for snow removal. Baseline testing for TFC has been done on 3 different occasions and will continue to help develop that baseline needed for the pretreatment agreement.

Old Business

The Personnel Committee met with part-time personnel and concluded that the wage increase requested was fair and asked the council to reconsider. Jaenisch moved to approve the Step-Grade plan as presented for part-time personnel. Jordan seconded. Jaenisch and Jordan voted yes. Rylander and Karl voted no. Grover abstained. Motion did not pass.

The council continued to discuss part-time wages. Rylander moved to give the part-time employees a 3% increase per year for 2012-2014 with no step increase. Karl seconded. Those voting for – Karl, Jordan and Rylander. Jaenisch voted no and Grover abstained. Motion carried.

Karl and Rylander will meet with the Borgrud's to come up with some recommendations for the council. They are no longer retaining an attorney. Attorney Walton advised Karl and Rylander to record the meeting and to make no agreement with them. A report will be brought back to the next council meeting.

New Business

The council discussed the possibility of paying overtime to Tollefson for sewer testing on the weekends, possible police overtime due to the absence of another officer and the upcoming sanitary sewer project. The council tabled this discussion.

Board of Appeals is set for April 12th at 5:30 p.m.

There is a League of MN Cities Loss Control Workshop for those councilmembers interested in going. Staff usually attends, along with the mayor.

Adjourn 9:45 p.m.

Valerie Martin, Clerk/Treasurer