

MINUTES
BUHL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
BUHL CITY HALL
6/11/2024

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

6:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER by Mayor Carter at 6:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Councilors: X Hadrava X Kealy ___ Loeffler X Towner
Mayor: X Carter

Administrator: X Jeffries
Public Works Foreman: ___ Pink
Attorney: X Kearney
Engineer: X Jamnick
Fire Chief: X Lehman
Police Chief: ___ Manner

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/COUNCIL ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Add three (3) additional business items to the agenda:

- 1) Consider Approving Purchase of Fire Department Communications Equipment as Business item A.1.;
- 2) Clarification of (internal) Audit Committee formation details as Business item A.2.; and
- 3) Establish summer labor repeat workers higher rate of pay as Business item A.3..

Motion by Towner to approve the agenda as amended.

Supported by Kealy.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:

City Engineer – John Jamnick; JPJ Engineering:

Updated the project schedule for the Damian 2nd Addition construction schedule – presently set for June 20 – may realize some additional delay due to the rainy conditions experienced thus far in 2023 -

Updated the status of the CIP punch list – three (3) items remaining on the list which the City Engineer, Administrator, and Prime Contractor Casper Construction are working on -

Sealing a roadway crack on Grant Location Road will be accomplished by injecting some flexible sealant, which will likely need to be re-applied on a periodic basis. No (performance) guaranty is anticipated to be included in tis item.

A bentonite seal will be implemented where the curling club meets the Mine Street pavement to mitigate moisture intrusion onto the curling club floor.

Alley D south of Woodbridge has a drainage issue – this area will be (partially) milled to create drainage flow patterns –

Buhl Business Block – pre-development work includes preliminary water line installation layout plans and corridor to cross U.S. Highway 169 –

The roadway adjacent to Burnett Park will not be paved by June 22 when the Buhl Independence Day Parade occurs –

Questions regarding repair of the steps at City Hall were discussed; staff continues to follow up, and noted that it would be best if the repair work can be accomplished with minimal historic preservation requirements.

Fire Chief – Stuart Lehman:

Noted that it has been a quiet year so far – this is good!

12 calls so far for the year (2024) – 6 general fire alarm calls; 2 vehicle fires; power pole call –

Continue to meet on a quarterly basis -

Administrator Jeffries:

Noted that the rain in May (13 days) has been the primary cause of and pushed back the construction schedule at Damian 2nd Addition – curb & gutter is needed first - Contractor (Knife Lake) mobilizing on June 18-19 -

Noted that returning Summer help needs pay additional amount – need to decide on this rate -

Re-visited the proposed frontage road at the Buhl Business Block and that ODC has indicated a willingness to allow the City an easement for this roadway -

Indicated that further meetings with St. Louis County regarding a potential new County/State Aid road will resume in mid-July -

Gave a broadband update – noted that Paul Bunyan Communications has begun work on the installation of fiber optic cable throughout the city; these activities are anticipated to be completed by September 30, 2024 - and

Gave an update on creating a Child Care facility – noted that the city will possibly partnering with an existing Buhl private entity, and that the City may be in a position to solicit public input by the fall of 2024 -

Noted that the internal Audit Committee may wish to consider establishing scheduling and scope details soon.

6. CITIZENS FORUM:

None.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes:

- i. Regular City Council Meeting – May 21, 2024

B. Claims:

i. Payroll #11	\$ 15,391.92
Payroll #5 (May 2024)	\$ 2,350.00
ii. A/P #1	\$ 23,748.67
A/P #2	<u>\$ 83,783.82</u>

TOTAL \$ 125,274.41

Motion by Kealy to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Supported by Hadrava.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. BUSINESS:

A. Consider Approving Fiscal Year 2023 Municipal Financial Audit.

Sterle & Company, LTD, the City's Independent Auditor, has completed their audit of the financial statements of the City of Buhl for the fiscal year period ending December 31, 2023.

Bonnie Sterle was in attendance and presented the findings of this audit period and answered any questions that arose.

Of important note is that the City received an Unmodified "clean" audit opinion –

Noted that the City has (as of 12/31/23) Assets and deferred outflows of \$20.2 million and liabilities and deferred inflows of \$6.1 million –

Also noted that the City has approximately 19 months of operating funds available as compared to 17 months in the prior year (3-4 months is recommended, at minimum) -

Subsequent to this presentation, the City Council should act on the acceptance of this Independent Auditor's Report and Supplemental Information.

The following information was included from Sterle & Co., LTD regarding this matter:

- 1) 2023 Buhl Governance Communication;
- 2) 2023 Buhl Management Letter; and
- 3) 2023 Buhl Financial Statements.

Recommendation is to accept and approve the Independent Auditor's Report, Financial Statements, and Supplemental Information for the fiscal year period ending December 31, 2023.

Motion by Kealy to accept and approve the Independent Auditor's Report, Financial Statements, and Supplemental Information for the fiscal year period ending December 31, 2023, prepared by Sterle & Company, LTD.

Supported by Towner.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

A1. Consider Approving Purchase of Fire Department Communications Equipment.

The Buhl Fire Department has identified a need for additional communications equipment to assist in providing its services.

The equipment consists of a Motorola APX6500 single-band mobile radio and accessories required to make it functional on a fire engine.

This equipment is intended to be deployed on Fire Engine #2.

DSC Communications has been contacted and has provided a quotation for this system in the amount of \$ 5,667.84.

The Fire Department presently has \$ 8,662 in designated funds (in the City General Fund) to support this acquisition.

Fire Chief Stuart Lehman was in attendance to address this item and answer any questions which may have arisen.

Recommendation is to accept and approve the quotation from DSC Communications to supply a single-band mobile radio system to the City for use in Fire Engine #2.

Motion by Towner to accept and approve Quote 2583374 from DSC Communications for a Motorola APX6500 Single-Band Mobile Radio and other related and associated equipment and accessories, for an amount of \$ 5,667.84, PLUS \$250.00 for installation, to be sourced from Fire Department designated funds.

Supported by Kealy.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

This will be a dual-head installation, with one unit at the new truck and another at the pumper truck, in order to free up portable hand radios for direct person-to-person communications needs -

Motion carried unanimously.

A2. Clarification of (internal) Audit Committee Formation Details.

Conversation resumed from the previous meeting regarding how duties will be split up –

Councilor Kealy proposed 6-month rotations for active oversight of claims; Councilor Towner proposed 1-year rotations. Further conversation ensued.

Motion by Kealy to establish a 6-month rotation with two (2) city councilors per rotation, followed by a 6-month rotation with two (2) (alternate) city councilors, for active oversight of all City financial transactions and claims, effective July 1, 2024, to be repeated on a yearly basis.

Supported by Towner.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Towner to appoint Councilor Denise Kealy and Councilor Randy Towner to serve in the Internal Audit Committee oversight rotation effective immediately, until December 31, 2024.

Supported by Hadrava.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

A3. Establish Summer Labor Repeat Worker(s) Higher Rate of Pay.

There have been previous discussions considering additional wage rates for those individuals employed as seasonal summer workers that have previous employment experience with the City of Buhl.

Motion by Kealy to set wages for Summer Labor positions at \$0.50 per hour additional for each year of previous employment with the City of Buhl, up to a maximum of four years (4-years) of additional wage rate(s) applied.

Supported by Towner.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Consider Purchasing New Riding Mower for Public Works Department.

The City Public Works Department presently maintains and operates a fleet of three (3) riding mowers to service Department and City needs. An additional non-operational unit is also in inventory, serving as a parts machine.

The Department is in need of obtaining a new similar mower, which is intended to replace a Toro mower placed in service in June 2011, and a Toro mower placed in service in June 2014.

These existing machines are planned to be placed for auction and the proceeds from their sale returned to the City General Fund.

Attached were quotes on acceptable machines from three (3) vendors, for consideration.

This item has been budgeted at \$12,000 for 2024.

Recommendation is to accept a quotation from one of the vendors and approve the purchase of a new riding mower for the Public Works Department.

Motion by Kealy to accept the quotation of Martin's Snowplow and Equipment and approve the purchase of a new riding mower for the Public Works Department at a cost of \$ 10,959.00.

Supported by Towner.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

It was noted that the retail price for this equipment is \$15,206.00.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Consider Closing City Hall on June 21, 2024 for Required Election Training.

With 2024 being an election year, St. Louis County has reminded City Administrative staff of mandatory required election training which must be attended in order to maintain current Election Official status with the County and the State of Minnesota.

These training sessions are being offered on three (3) consecutive Fridays, June 7 in Virginia; June 14 in Duluth; and June 21 in Virginia. These are the only training sessions available to City staff.

The Administrator attended this training on June 7; Finance Manager Thronson needs to attend one of the remaining training sessions.

Finance Manager Thronson is unavailable for the June 14 session, so will need to attend the June 21 session in Virginia.

The Administrator is out of the area and unavailable on June 21, and as such is unable to provide coverage at City Hall on that day.

With that being the only opportunity for Finance Manager Thronson to attend, and with the training beginning at 9:00 a.m. and running until 4:00

p.m., no coverage at City Hall will be available from 8:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on June 21.

Recommendation is to approve the closing of City Hall beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, June 21, to allow staff to attend State of Minnesota required election training.

Motion by Towner to approve the closing of City Hall beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, June 21 to allow staff to attend State of Minnesota required election training.

Supported by Hadrava.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Discussion ensued regarding the position that City Hall should remain open during this time, if at all possible.

It was also discussed as to whom this training is mandatory for.

The Administrator will follow-up with St. Louis County to obtain clarification on who is required to attend this training.

The City Attorney inquired as to what if the Administrator is unavailable for election duties at any time during the election process.

Motion RETRACTED until clarification of attendance can be obtained, and then call a Special Meeting of the City Council should this action ultimately be required.

Motion by Towner to table the motion to approve the closing of City Hall beginning at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, June 21 to allow staff to attend State of Minnesota required election training, and directing staff to check with St. Louis County to obtain clarification as to whether this training needs to be attended and call a Special Meeting of the City Council should this training does need to be attended.

Supported by Hadrava.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Consider Procuring and Implementing CampLife Reservations Software Application for Stubler Beach Campground.

The City operates, manages, and maintains a rustic campground adjacent to Stubler Beach. The campground is becoming more and more popular in recent years.

In the last few years, the City has implemented an in-house reservation system to manage attendance at the campground, and insure campsite availability for all throughout the spring, summer, and autumn.

Managing these activities requires noticeable time and effort from City administrative staff. Although the system works well, automated improvements are welcomed.

In an attempt to streamline these processes and increase efficiencies, staff has researched available software products to computerize campground management and reservations.

CampLife (formerly Campground Automation Systems) has been identified as having a product which staff finds workable and affordable, and suggests this platform be employed to manage the activities at Stubler Beach Campground.

Information regarding CampLife and this product is included for consideration.

Recommendation is to accept and approve the proposal from CampLife for reservations software to assist in managing the Stubler Beach Campground, at their Standard Plan level.

Motion by Towner to accept and approve the proposal from CampLife for reservations software to assist in managing the Stubler Beach Campground, at their Standard Plan level.

Supported by Kealy.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

This service will allow reservations to be made at the campground at any hour –

The monthly fee will apply only on the months the campground is open –

A reservation fee will be applied only for online reservations, not for in-person reservations –

Motion carried unanimously.

- E. Recommendation from BEDA re: Conveyance of Property Parcel No. 115-0010-00010 to North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity.

North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity (NSLCHFH) recently completed two (2) single-family residential homes on the east side of State Street north of Jones Avenue, and is presently in the process of developing and

constructing two (2) additional single-family residential homes on the west side of State Street north of Jones Avenue.

The City of Buhl was instrumental in contributing to the success of these developments by providing the building sites to NSLCHFH to allow this to happen.

NSLCHFH additionally had communicated its desire to potentially obtain property located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Forest Street and Culver Avenue (PIN No. 115-0010-00010) for future development of one (1) single-family residential home on this parcel.

Staff met with NSLCHFH and inquired whether this parcel could adequately house any additional structures, given its size. As a result, NSLCHFH indicated that this parcel could adequately provide for two (2) single-family residential homes.

This parcel No. 115-0010-00010 is currently held by the Buhl Economic Development Authority (BEDA).

This item was on the agenda for discussion at the May 30, 2024 BEDA meeting, with consideration for a recommendation from BEDA to the City Council regarding potential conveyance of this parcel to NSLCHFH.

BEDA is recommending to the City Council that this parcel not be conveyed to NSLCHFH at this time, in order to revisit the best potential use of this parcel. More information regarding the suitability of this site may become available upon the issuance of an updated City of Buhl Comprehensive Plan, which is tentatively anticipated by the end of 2025.

Informational only.

It was suggested to revisit this item before the end of 2025.

F. Update on EMS Operations in the City of Buhl from Essentia Health.

The City enjoys a relationship with Essentia Health EMS (“Essentia EMS”) for providing BLS (Basic Life Support) EMS services to the City, through an existing Ambulance Services Agreement.

This Ambulance Services Agreement currently in effect provides for an expiration date of April 21, 2027.

Simultaneously and concurrently, the City has also leased certain premises to Essentia EMS to conduct their ambulance service, namely the property located at 201 Forest Street (the old Buhl Fire Hall/Ambulance Hall). This Lease Agreement also provides for an expiration date of April 21, 2027.

Staff has previously met with representatives of Essentia EMS, and per the Lease Agreement, has completed a financial review to determine subsequent rent payments due after the two (2) year mark.

Staff does not recommend any changes or alterations to the Lease Agreement, including a modification of the rent of the premises, at this time.

Essentia EMS has recently provided an update to the City regarding these operations. It should be noted that Essential EMS has reported that things have been going well for their Buhl operation, including improvements to their staffing levels and needs, which has helped with staffing a second ambulance, and the overall success of the operation at this location.

Staff further recommends that the City and Essentia EMS continue a regular dialogue in order to keep the City informed on Essentia EMS' potential further needs with regard to their Buhl EMS operations.

Informational only.

G. Summary of 2024 Election Candidacy Filing.

2024 is an election year including Federal, State, County, and local elections.

Locally, two (2) City Council seats and one (1) mayoral seat are up for election in Buhl and will be on the ballot.

The municipal general election shall be held on Tuesday November 5, 2024.

The primary election will be held on Tuesday, August 13, 2024; a local municipal primary election is not required to be conducted at that same time.

The filing period for candidacy for a Buhl municipal office (both councilor and mayor) closed on Tuesday, June 4, 2024, and candidates had until Thursday, June 6, 2024 to withdraw their candidacy.

There were six (6) Affidavits of Candidacy submitted for local Buhl elections; two (2) for the position of Mayor, and four (4) for the position of City Councilor.

The following individuals have filed for candidacy for local office:

MAYOR

Jim Matthews
Shari Swanson

CITY COUNCILOR

Renee Loeffler
Taunya Teska-Erickson
Susan Trunk
Linda Woods Pulford

Informational only.

H. Other Business.

None.

I. Councilor's Comments.

Councilor Kealy –

Noted that CIRSSD indicated that I&I numbers appeared to be up again during the recent rain events -

Inquired as to the status of I&I (inflow and infiltration) initiatives -

Asked when is smoke testing happening? (August 2024 – if its dry)

Councilor Towner –

Reminded all of events planned for the Independence Day celebration on Saturday, June 22, including

Parade at 3 p.m. (line-up at 2 p.m.);
Activities in the park (Burnett Park) afterward; and
Politicians in the dunk tank!

J. Mayor's Comments.


Thanked all candidates for public office for stepping up and announcing their intention to run for public office –

9. ADJOURN:

Motion by Towner to adjourn.

Supported by Kealy.

Motion carried Unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.



Brandin Carter, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tony Jeffries, City Clerk