

**MINUTES**  
**BUHL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**BUHL CITY HALL**  
**8/20/2024**

Tuesday, August 20, 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          X   Loeffler      X   Towner  
Mayor:           X   Carter

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

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/COUNCIL ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:**

Add two (2) items to the Agenda as Items 8.H. and 8.I.

1. Request from the Hydeaway to have Outdoor Music and Beverage Service.

2. Approve Hiring of Lead Library Technician.

**Motion by Towner to approve the agenda as amended.**

**Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**5. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

**Foreman Pink:**

Noted that all new park/playground equipment has been installed –

Highlighted that the tether ball (24 hours), the adjustable basketball hoops (12 hours), and the handicap-accessible picnic tables (less than 1 month) were all vandalized soon after installation –

Noted that this will be the last week of employing summer help, and one of the final activities will be the annual sewer flushing, which is presently ongoing –

- So therefore there is a possibility of discoloration of the water supply until this initiative is completed -

Indicated that alley dust control activities will resume after sewer flushing is complete -

#### **Engineer Jamnick:**

Presented an update on the status of remaining paving work within the city –

Indicated that paving which has been completed turned out “pretty good” –

Shouldering and clean-up work remains –

Question was raised regarding whether anything has been yet done with the curling club road (Mine St.) – not as of yet -

#### **Administrator Jeffries:**

Noted several items, including:

1. The FEMA/SLC Disaster Recovery Center has been established in Virginia in the St. Louis County Public Works Facility located at 7823 Highway 135 – open 7 days a week from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. –

Federal financial assistance is available for eligible homeowners and renters in the form of grants to cover costs of temporary housing and home repairs, low-interest loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals recover from the effects of the disaster.

2. Paving is done! Only Seville Ave. remains – no firm schedule yet -
3. Car wash on Pennsylvania Ave. has been dismantled!
4. Water tower has been structurally inspected! Report preparation now underway – anticipated by end of August or early September -

5. Demolition plans for the former Laundromat on State Street have been cleared and approved by the MPA; demolition activities scheduled to begin on August 26 - estimated duration is 3-4 days –
6. Civil Defense siren will have repairs made soon!

**6. CITIZENS FORUM:**

Cheryl Kivi, 612 Woodbridge Ave., Buhl

Noted the paving which has recently been done, especially that on the 600 block of Woodbridge Avenue –

Indicated that after talking with the construction crew foreman, that “curb fill-in and repair is needed” (on Woodbridge Ave.), and wondered whether that would be a contractor item or whether it will fall on the City (public works) crew –

(indicated the road will be affected by freeze/thaw issues if this is not addressed)

Inquired as to whether, and where, a federal match (mentioned in the August 8, 2024 City Council Working Session) is going to come from (the “match” being referred to here is \$750k) – and whether it has been sourced yet; and from where -

James Matthews, 600 Klinx Way, Buhl

Noted the paving which has recently been done, especially that on Klinx Way –

Highlighted that the work is not done where the cement gutter is settling and failing (on the south side of Klinx Way near the west edge of the driveway serving 600 Klinx Way) – so the project is not done – will need to be corrected in the future -

Engineer Jamnick explained the specific details of this area and the work scope – that it was intended as a mill and overlay (paving) - as well as a difficulty in mobilizing concrete contractor(s) -

The Administrator indicated it is his understanding that this curb/lifting was not a specific scope item contained in the planned activities on Klinx Way -

Mr. Matthews disagreed with that remark and Engineer Jamnick’s explanation(s), indicating he understood this to be a “restoration” of Klinx Way, and has past information, video, and statements available on tape -

Discussion ensued regarding what to potentially do here -

The Administrator spoke further regarding the decision as to the whys of construction specifics in this area –

Melody Staffaroni, 321 Culver Ave., Buhl

Requested an update regarding grants/loans that the City may be partner to –

Raised a number of questions as to the status of certain grant applications and other City initiatives (11 in total), and asked that the City Council address these at the next City Council meeting of September 3, 2024.

## 7. CONSENT AGENDA

### A. Minutes:

- i. Regular City Council Meeting – August 6, 2024

### B. Claims:

- i. Payroll #16 \$ 18,170.63
  
- ii. A/P \$ 81,662.88

**TOTAL           \$ 99,833.51**

**Motion by Towner to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

**Supported by Loeffler.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

## 8. BUSINESS:

- A. Resolution 24-21 Authorizing the City to Submit information to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (MPFA) and to Enter Into a Grant Agreement with the MPFA.

At the end of the 2023 state legislative session, the City of Buhl was awarded and appropriated \$ 2,000,000 -

“For a grant to the city of Buhl to design, construct, renovate, and equip publicly owned water infrastructure, including water storage and treatment

systems and other improvements to infrastructure required for an upgrade of the city's water system.”

The Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (MPFA) is the agency responsible for and tasked with administering this appropriation, along with all other appropriations included in the 2023 Special Appropriation Funds (General Obligation Bonds) passed by the 2023 state legislature and passed onto the MPFA in August 2023.

Recipients of a special appropriation grant from the 2023 Minnesota Legislature are required to enter into a grant agreement with the MPFA for project funding.

The MPFA needs information and documentation about the project before a grant agreement can be prepared, including but not limited to passage of a resolution authorizing the City to submit information and to Enter Into a Grant Agreement.

Resolution 24-21 has been prepared for consideration to accomplish this purpose.

**Recommendation is for the City to approve and adopt this resolution.**

**Motion by Loeffler authorizing the City to submit information to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (MPFA) and to enter Into a Grant Agreement with the MPFA.**

**Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

This is a standard practice with the MPFA to begin their process.

**Roll call vote: Hadrava – Aye, Kealy – Aye, Loeffler – Aye, Towner – Aye;  
Carter – Aye.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- B. Consider Approval of JPJ Engineering Invoice 22-059 #4 for Damian Addition Phase III Professional Engineering Services in the Amount of \$5,675.00.

The City has been invoiced for professional engineering services and other professional activities performed by JPJ Engineering, Inc., for services related to the Damian Addition Phase III project (JPJ Project No. 22-059).

This invoice is related to services rendered for the Invoice Period of May 2024 through June 22, 2024, and includes services related to the above-referenced project.

Specifically, these charges are identified as professional engineering services rendered under “Construction Management/RPR” (\$3,845.00) and “Staking” (\$1,830.00).

City Engineer John Jamnick, P.E., of JPJ Engineering, Inc., is in attendance and available to answer any questions that may arise with regard to these services and the associated invoicing.

This item was originally on the August 6, 2024 City Council meeting agenda, and was tabled, held over, and placed on this agenda in order to allow City Engineer John Jamnick to comment, as he was unable to attend the meeting of August 6.

**Recommendation is to remit to JPJ Engineering, Inc., invoice No. 4 for professional services related to Project No. 22-059 in the amount of \$ 5,675.00 upon validation of the services performed.**

**Motion by Kealy to approve payment of Invoice No. 4 for Project No. 22-059 to JPJ Engineering, Inc., in the amount of \$ 5,675.00.**

**Supported by Towner.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

C. Consider Naming an Individual to the Recreation Board.

The City presently has one (1) current vacancy on its Recreation Board.

Notice of this vacancy was previously posted, and the public was notified and requested that anyone interested in serving in this capacity should contact City Hall for potential consideration.

This posting remains in effect until the vacancy is filled.

Kelly Girgen is a resident of Buhl and has expressed an interest in joining the Recreation Board.

She is interested in filling the end of the current term and continuing into the next term.

Members of the Recreation Board are appointed for three-year staggered terms.

She has lived in Buhl for a number of years, and loves being involved with this great town. She has helped and participated with the Recreation Board with numerous activities and events in town in the past and present, and would like to join the board and be involved with more!

**Recommendation is to appoint Kelly Girgen to the Recreation Board.**

**Motion by Towner to appoint Kelly Girgen to serve on the City of Buhl Recreation Board for the remainder of 2024.**

**Supported by Hadrava.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Towner moved to appoint only until the end of 2024, and then, if Ms. Girgen remains interested, will move to re-appoint for a staggered 3-year term beginning January 1, 2025 and expiring December 31, 2027.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**D. Consider Approval of Describing the Creation of a New Parcel of Land from Existing Public Land Holdings to Offer to Sale to a Private Party.**

On June 1, 2021, the City Council of the City of Buhl approved a request from Buhl resident Mike Anderson to purchase a small piece of City owned land adjacent to his property, which he has maintained for some time (claimed as 25+ years) and intends to utilize as green space.

The land(s) in question constitute a portion of existing Parcel No. 115-0040-00185.

Staff has met with Mr. Anderson and proposes that the easternmost approximate 156 lineal feet of Parcel No. 115-0040-00185 be removed from this parcel and a separate new parcel be created describing these land(s).

Subsequently, the newly created parcel would be offered to Mr. Anderson, and conveyed to him contingent upon fulfilling the previously approved sale purchase and applicable fees.

The “applicable fees” will include, but not necessarily be limited to, surveying fees (if necessary), (re)platting fees, and St. Louis County recording fees.

**Recommendation is for the City to approve the describing of a newly created parcel of land, in order to allow for the creation of this new parcel and subsequent platting of the parcel and conveyance of the land to Mr. Anderson.**

**Motion by Kealy to approve describing the creation of a new parcel of land from existing public land holdings to offer to sale to Mr. Mike Anderson, a private party.**

**Supported by Towner.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

The Administrator described the specific details of this proposal.

The parcel will be described with the “nub” in the southeast corner of Parcel No. 115-0040-00185 not to be included, but to remain as City lands.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

E. Update on Request from FEMA for Facility Use of a Space to Serve as a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC).

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had been seeking the use of space for a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC), intended to be a one-stop-shop for homeowners and businesses to seek financial and other forms of assistance from the June flood disaster. St. Louis County plans to have only one DRC in operation, which will be open 6-7 days/week for 12 hours/day until the demand has subsided.

On August 6, 2024, the City Council voted to approve offering the use of the Buhl Community Center to FEMA and its partners as a DRC for a period not to extend beyond October 31, 2024.

Subsequent to this action, FEMA has reached an agreement with St. Louis County to locate the DRC at the St. Louis County Public Works facility located at 7823 Highway 135 in Virginia, beginning August 15, 2024.

Thus utilizing the Buhl Community Center for this operation will not occur.

The Disaster Recovery Center will be open seven days a week from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., with all appointments on a first come, first served basis.

It will be staffed by FEMA representatives, as well as the state of Minnesota and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). People will be able to get help applying for federal disaster assistance, upload documents, get their questions answered in person, access other types of help that may be available and learn ways to make their property more disaster resistant

Federal financial assistance is available for eligible homeowners and renters in the form of grants to cover costs of temporary housing and home repairs, low-interest loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals recover from the effects of the disaster.

**Informational only.**

F. Update on Application for Compeer Rural Feasibility Study Grant for a Child Care Facility Feasibility Study.



Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), through a recently awarded Rural Capacity Program Grant, has been assisting the City in exploring siting a childcare facility in the community.

One of the outcomes of an initial project milestone - the compiling and preparation of a First Impression Report – was to suggest the City consider conducting a child care feasibility study and analysis, and that the City apply for additional CEDA grant funding to assist in this effort.

On August 6, 2024, the City approved CEDA's conducting a Child Care Feasibility Study and to apply for additional CEDA grant funding to support this initiative.

Joshua Schuetz, Community and Business Development Specialist with CEDA, is the point contact and CEDA representative working with the City on this initiative.

Along with the above initiatives, Mr. Schuetz has coordinated working with Compeer Financial to request consideration of being awarded a Rural Feasibility Study Grant to assist funding the preparation of this feasibility study; a grant application has been submitted requesting consideration of a \$5,000 award.

Compeer Financial is a member-owned, Farm Credit cooperative serving and supporting agriculture and rural communities. They provide loans, leases, risk management and other financial services throughout 144 counties in Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin. With 37 upper Midwest office locations, 8 in Minnesota, Compeer Financial exists to champion the hopes and dreams of rural America.

Subsequent to the hopeful receipt of this award, the project will continue to proceed with conducting the child care feasibility study and analysis, along with associated activities identified in an estimated eighteen (18) week timeline for Master Planning.

**Informational only.**

G. Update on Great River Energy – Mesabi Trail Tour of August 10, 2024.

The City had previously been requested by Club Mesabi to consider hosting a portion of their 2024 Great River Energy Mesabi Trail™ (Bike) Tour, which the City approved earlier in 2024.

The tour was a fundraiser for the Mesabi Trail and Club Mesabi, the “Friends” of the Mesabi Trail.

New for 2024 was an iconic tour route - riding between Buhl & Calumet, which showcased the mining and historic sections of the Mesabi Trail.

The tour date was set for Saturday, August 10, 2024, with Buhl serving as the Start-Finish headquarters for all the tour events.

Several hundred riders congregated at Burton Park on the morning of August 10 to enjoy this event, which continued into late afternoon.

Five (5) different tour routes were established, covering from 12 to 70 miles, with Buhl serving as the originating and ending location for all routes.

Many activities and events were offered, including watersports activities, disc golf, and live entertainment, and food & refreshments throughout.

The City made its facilities available to the riders and Club Mesabi personnel, including some limited overnight tent camping for tour participants.

The event was well-received and successful, with minimal issues experienced.

Club Mesabi and The Mesabi Trail wishes to extend thanks to the City for its hospitality and partnership in assisting putting on this worthwhile family-oriented event.

**Informational only.**

It was noted that the Tour and its staff had cleaned up the areas of Burton Park that they had uses, and left the areas "spotless" -

H. Request from the Hydeaway to have Outdoor Music and Beverage Service.

The City has received a request from Nora Zgonc of the Hydeaway for permission to have outdoor music on its property on Saturday, August 24, 2024.

The establishment intends on holding a one-day (1-day) karaoke contest and benefit for Tami Gruenhagen, whom has contracted breast cancer.

The Hydeaway intends on serving keg beer outdoors on its property, and to conduct a karaoke contest, with proceeds being directed to help Ms. Gruenhagen.

The event is anticipated to start around 2 p.m., and conclude around 11 p.m.

**Recommendation is for the City to approve the request of the Hydeaway.**

**Motion by Kealy to approve the request of the Hydeaway to have outdoor music on its property on Saturday, August 24, 2024 until 11:30 p.m. during its Fund Raiser for Tami Gruenhagen.**

**Supported by Loeffler.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

It was noted that the proposed motion intentionally is scheduled until 11:30 p.m.; no barricades are intended to be utilized.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

I. Approve Hiring of Lead Library Technician.

The City of Buhl Library Board has extended an offer of employment for a Lead Library Technician.

Phantajia Duty has received an offer to join the Buhl Public Library.

The City Council needs to approve and accept this offer prior to the beginning of fully extended employment (it would be considered a subbing position until such time as the City Council takes action).

Ms. Duty has accepted the offer of employment.

**Recommendation is for the City to approve and accept the hiring offer of the Library Board.**

**Motion by Loeffler to approve and accept the offer of employment by the City of Buhl Library Board to Phantajia Duty as Buhl Public Library Lead Library Technician.**

**Supported by Towner.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

J. Other Business.

None.

K. Councilor's Comments.

Councilor Kealy –

Noted that the efforts to dismantle and remove the former car wash by its present owners was a very good job, and those individuals deserve to be commended for their efforts –

Noted that recent items on the (non-official) Buhl Facebook page mentioned noise, speed, reckless driving behavior – and indicated that these instances seem to be accurate –

Wondered whether public safety should be requested to provide more coverage to the City in this regard –

Councilor Towner –

Noted that the Beach Blast, which just concluded a couple of hours ago, was great, and packed with people!

Highlighted that B2 Bank should be highly commended for their awesome participation – they provided a ton of items for this event!

And THANK YOU to all who came out and all who helped!

L. Mayor's Comments.

Stressed that summer will be coming to an end before we know it, and everybody should get outdoors and enjoy it while there is still time!

**ADJOURN:**

**Motion by Towner to adjourn.**

**Supported by Loeffler.**

**Motion carried Unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.**



Brandin Carter, Mayor

**ATTEST:**



Tony Jeffries, City Clerk