

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, an Avon City Council Meeting was duly held at City Hall on the 6th day of April, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:

Hugh Knox – Mayor; Jim Stang, Jeff Manthe, Chuck Pelkey – Councilors
Jim Thares, City Clerk/Administrator

ABSENT: Jeff Meyer, Councilor

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Pledge of Allegiance

PRESENTATION OF AWARD: Police Officer, Jason Luethmers, was presented the Life Saving Award by Police Chief, Corey Nellis, for his efforts during and at the conclusion of a vehicle pursuit event in March 2015.

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM: Matt Imdieke, Central Minnesota Realty, told the Council that he is willing to assist the City if it determines that it wants to list the Public Works facility property at the end of Chinook Ave. North. He is ready to guide the City with pricing and marketing assistance.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- #1 Council Minutes – March 2, 2015
- #2 Claims Register
- #3 Capital Expenditures, Legal Fees, Engineering Fees and Detailed Reports
- #4 Blattner Energy Job Creation Fund (JCF Application – Resolution of Support)
- #5. Outdoor Event Permit – St. Benedict’s Church (Summer Parish Festival)
- #6. Outdoor Event Permit – Avon Lion’s Club (Spunk Days Music Concert)
- #7. Temporary (One-Day) Liquor License Permit – St. Benedict’s Church (Summer Parish Festival)
- #7. Authorize Fire Department to Apply for CenterPoint Energy Community Partnership Grant Funds (\$2,500)

Motion by Councilor Manthe to approve the Consent Agenda. Second by Councilor Pelkey. Motion passed unanimously.

OTHER MINUTES:

Planning Commission Minutes – March 17, 2015

COUNCIL BUSINESS:

Stearns County Attorney Annual Report, Janelle Kendall

Janelle Kendall, Stearns County Attorney, provided reports to the Mayor and Council. She pointed out Avon’s declining criminal prosecution case numbers in contrast to the County’s overall caseload which is back up to the level where it was in 2008. She encouraged the City to utilize individuals who are in the diversion program and assigned to work off their criminal activity through community service projects.

Albany Area School District #745 Proposed School Expansion/Bond Issue, Greg Johnson, Sup’t. and Matt Kreuzer, School Board Member

- Superintendent Johnson and Board Member Kreuzer handed out information about a tax neutral expansion concept. The concept would address growing enrollment needs and allocate space for the longer-term by creating a true middle school (grades 6-8) in the Albany building. The move would free up space to grow the K-5 enrollment in the Avon and Albany elementary schools. It would also address building security issues and expand the technology and theatre components of the facilities. Finally, a sizeable athletic/community center with multiple gyms, an elevated walking track and locker facilities would be added on to the Albany H.S. It would be open to the public and better accommodate, gym classes, tournaments and other school activities. The Albany District performance measures and student to space ratios were compared with

other districts. The history of vote outcomes in bond issues was also reviewed. The plan is to further refine the expansion concept and take it to the voters in August. Enrollment growth may be conservative but the District wants to be careful with taxpayer funds. A key item they want to reduce is the number of building transitions that the youngest students currently go through.

Stearns County Assessor Update, Deb Haus

Deb Haus, Stearns County Assessor's Office, provided an update on the valuation trends in Avon. She noted that the few sales that occurred with lakeshore were valued on average at 96.40 percent of the final sale amount. The commercial-industrial valuations are increasing slightly and apartments came in flat. The overall tax value for Avon is up about 2 percent. She will be attending the Local Board of Appeals and Equalization (LBAE) meeting in Avon on May 4, 2014

Denis McGuinness, Avon Area Lakes Association (AALA)

Denis McGuinness reported that the Avon Area Lakes Association (AALA) has been successful in obtaining a grant from Stearns County in the amount of \$6,300 for a survey of Middle Spunk Lake to determine if the milfoil treatment last fall had an impact and then to proceed with a new effort to mitigate the aquatic invasive species (ais) hotspots. There is a small amount of funding remaining for signage. Councilors indicated that the lakes are an important feature in our community and they support the AALA getting their group reorganized again and its efforts. The City can help the AALA by applying to the DNR for another round of treatment grant funds. Denis reported that the infestation of milfoil requires an annual effort to keep it from spreading into a thick mat of floating vegetative growth. He said Avon Township has committed \$2,000 to the effort to treat the milfoil in the Middle and Lower Spunk Lakes in 2016. He then asked if the City would be willing to annually budget for a small contribution to the efforts? Councilors indicated that it might be possible to promote the AALA on the City website and on the marquee sign. The consensus is that this is an issue that needs to be monitored and studied more to better understand the scope of the problem. Councilor Stang asked staff for an update on the possibility of having an aquatic invasive species expert come into educate the Council on issues and treatments methods in the near future. City Clerk/Administrator Thares indicated that staff had talked to a professor at St. John's University about presenting information at a future workshop or council meeting.

Blattner Energy, Inc. Variance Request

Peter Styx, AECOM and John Blattner, Blattner Energy, Inc. provided an overview of the Blattner headquarters office building expansion. It will be a two story building with the same materials, stone and glass, and will be approximately 100 feet long, adding 23,000 sq. ft. +/- to the existing structure. They are requesting a setback variance of 47.30 feet from the lake so they can create a drive-fire lane as part of the new construction. The project complies with all other code requirements. **Motion by Councilor Stang to approve the setback variance request of 47.30 feet from the lake. Second by Councilor Manthe. Motion passed unanimously.**

Avon Estates Update

City Clerk Administrator Thares reported that an offer had been received for Lot 7, Block 7. The issue is that this lot does not currently have electrical power nor is it assigned a price. Councilors discussed the merits of extending electricity to the east side of the circular block and to Lots 3-7, Block 7. Matt Imdieke indicated that he had talked to the prospective buyer of Lot 7, Block 7 so he is ready to help sell this lot if the City extends power to it this year. He feels the center area lots will sell too, although it may be younger families and the lots may need to have lower price points. **Motion by Councilor Manthe to authorize extension of electrical power to the east half of the circular block and to Lots 3-7, Block 7. Second by Councilor Stang. Motion passed unanimously.**

ISSUES BY STAFF:

Public Works Department – Ray Schmidt, Public Works Director, discussed the size of the two parcels where the Public Works buildings are located. Together the two parcels total .821 acres (35,762 sq. ft.). The small parcel that extends to the east has underground utilities through it so the buildable area for Public Works' purposes, i.e., a larger building footprint is a concern. Matt Imdieke told the Council if the City wants to list the two parcels

separately, that could be done. He believes he could find a user for the small parcel. Ray said he feels it is best to keep the property together as one parcel. Matt said the listing range would be \$115,000 to \$120,000. Councilors agreed that it would be worth exploring the market and listing the property as one parcel. **Motion by Councilor Manthe to list the Public Works property with Central Minnesota Realty at a price of \$119,900. Second by Councilor Stang. Motion passed unanimously.**

Ray also requested approval of a quote from Lange Trenching for street sweeping services in the amount of \$6,120. **Motion by Councilor Stang to authorize Lange Trenching to perform street sweeping services for the quoted amount of \$6,120. Second by Councilor Manthe. Motion passed unanimously.**

Next Ray spoke about the need to address surface water drainage on Hamlet Drive South near the Stratford Park area. He is proposing a Drywell/French Drain in a location near the rain garden that would alleviate the standing water on the street. Installing a drywell was a successful solution in one other spot on the opposite side of the street in this area. The cost to install a Drywell/French Drain is \$2,780 per a quote from Lange Trenching. **Motion by Councilor Pelkey to authorize installing a Drywell/French Drain along Hamlet Drive South with Lange Trenching performing the work at a cost of \$2,780. Second by Councilor Stang. Motion passed unanimously.**

Finally, Ray asked Council to authorize hiring a summer youth staff person for 12 weeks at \$10.00 per hour. **Motion by Councilor Manthe to authorize hiring a summer youth staff person for 12 weeks at a rate of \$10.00 hour. Second by Councilor Stang. Motion passed unanimously.**

Ray then provided a brief update to the Council on a park improvement concept at Wobegon Park. The Parks Board will be meeting soon to discuss the idea and bring it back to the Council with final recommendations.

Police Department – Corey Nellis, Police Chief, referred the Council to his monthly report in the meeting packet.

Water/Wastewater Department – Jon Forsell, Utilities Supervisor, asked for a motion to authorize replacement of a 20-hp Hydromatic lift station pump with a new 20-hp Flygt pump. The cost per the quote from Electric Pump, St. Cloud, is \$16,257 which includes a \$1,000 discount for trading in several old Hydromatic pumps. **Motion by Councilor Stang to authorize purchase of a new 20-hp Flygt lift station pump from Electric Pump at a cost of \$16,257 with the old pumps having a residual value of \$1,000 being offered to Electric Pump in exchange for a reduced quote. Second by Councilor Manthe. Motion passed unanimously.**

Jon informed Council that he budgeted \$2,300 for summer help. City Clerk/Administrator Thares explained that the amount budgeted is not enough for a full complement of hours and it might be better to format it as a summer internship. There are students at St. John's who are looking for internships close to campus and enjoy outdoor tasks and environmental sustainability duties. Jim further suggested some of the duties could be structured to help the AALA get more organized and possibly grow its membership. Councilor Stang said he would prefer to see the intern work on City oriented projects at this time. **Motion by Councilor Stang to authorize an 11 week internship position with a monthly stipend of \$750.00 to be split 50 percent Water-Wastewater and 50 percent Public Works. Second by Councilor Pelkey. Motion passed unanimously.**

Internship Projects – Justin Markon, Intern, reported that the website upgrade is complete and is now live. Councilors commented that the new website is cleaner and much easier to navigate.

OTHER:

Clerk/Administrator Thares explained the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC) request for a resolution of support for small cities transportation aid. The proposed legislation (HF 2108) would distribute aid to cities under 5,000 population for local road maintenance and improvements, similar to the Municipal State Aid (MSA) system for larger cities. **Motion by Councilor Manthe to adopt Resolution 2015-11 in support of the CGMC**

effort to pass transportation aid legislation for small cities. Second by Councilor Pelkey. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Knox reminded Councilors that Ray's retirement date is looming on the horizon (June 3) and that Council needs to accept his resignation in good standing. **Motion by Councilor Stang to accept Ray Schmidt's resignation, due to retirement, effective June 3, 2015. Second by Councilor Manthe. Motion passed unanimously.**

Mayor Knox informed the Council that Nicholas Kruger, rural Avon, has achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. Mayor Knox suggested the City recognize Nicholas' accomplishments by approving a City recognition letter that Councilor Stang offered to deliver to the Scout ceremony. Councilor Stang described Nicholas' Eagle Scout project and his positive character traits. **Motion by Councilor Manthe to approve the City recognition letter to Nicholas Kruger for his accomplishments of attaining the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America organization. Second by Councilor Pelkey. Motion passed unanimously.**

ISSUES BY COUNCIL: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Councilor Stang to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 p.m. Second by Councilor Pelkey. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted
Jim Thares, City Clerk/Administrator