

**Minutes  
Braham City Council  
Tuesday, November 12, 2019  
7:00 P.M.**

Mayor Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm with the following members  
Present: Mayor Carlson, Councilor Ethen, Councilor Kunshier, Councilor Sullivan and  
Councilor Knowles.

Absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Angela Grafstrom, Police Chief Eric Baumgart, Utility  
Superintendent Dan Eklund, Rich Slagle and Les Mattefy of Moore Engineering, Shawn  
Fischer, Jeanna Strelow, Isanti County Dispatcher Ross Benzen, Isanti County Sherriff  
Chris Caulk, Liquor Store Manager Jacque Nordby, Scott McKinney and Laura Martin  
from the Braham Journal

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Council reviewed the minutes from of the 10/1/19 regular council meeting.

***Councilor Ethen moved to approve the minutes of the 10/1/19 regular meeting as  
written.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

**ACCEPTING THE AGENDA**

***Councilor Knowles moved to accept the agenda with the addition of a  
recognition.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS & PAYROLLS**

Council reviewed the bills totaling \$302,560.50 which includes checks #40105 to  
#40274 and electronic transfer #990045; and payroll in the amount of \$46,060.44 since  
the last council meeting.

***Mayor Carlson motioned to approve the payment of bills and payroll as  
presented.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Sullivan and carried unanimously.

**VFW AUXILIARY RECONGITION**

Grafstrom noted the VFW had dropped off a Certificate of Recognition for the City.  
Grafstrom noted it was for the work the city has done with the flowers, and, to keep up  
the parks. Mayor Carlson read the certificate which said: "To the City of Braham in  
recognition of inspirational patriotic service to the community through daily display of our  
national flag.

**POLICE REPORT**

## Vogel Resignation

Officer Vogel has resigned from his position effective November 20, 2019. Council needs to approve the resignation.

***Councilor Sullivan motioned to accept the resignation of Officer Mike Vogel effective November 20, 2019.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

## Citizen's Concerned about Police Coverage

During the week of November 4, some criminal activity occurred in the hours of a night when the city did not have police coverage. Baumgart and Grafstrom were exploring the option of 24-hour coverage, the city has about 2-3 uncovered hours per night, but had not intended to pursue this until next year, but recent events and citizen concerns moved up the timeline. Chief Baumgart gave stats showing the increase in criminal activity during the hours of no coverage from 9 dispatched calls in 2010 to over 200 so far in 2019. County calls have gone from around 200 to over 2000 for the same time period. Sullivan stated Baumgart has known this for a while, but now is the time to act. He asked if there was a plan. Baumgart said we could change the status of a part-time officer to a full-time officer and the next officer in line would be Jill Verke. Sullivan asked for clarification, would we need another part-time officer too, and Baumgart said no, it would just be changing Verke's status to full-time. Isanti County Sherriff Chris Caulk and dispatcher Ross Benzen, along with concerned citizens Shawn Fisher and Jeanna Strelow were there to speak towards the need. The county officials emphasized the number of calls county has and how long it can take an officer to respond. Caulk stated the double coverage is more important during the busy hours. Fisher was concerned about an attempted burglary on his property and Strelow was there regarding the break-in at her restaurant. Knowles said he thought the city had better coverage, but said we never had enough personnel for 24-hour coverage.

***Councilor Sullivan motioned to approve moving Jill Verke from part-time to full-time officer to provide the city with 24-hour police coverage.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Carlson and carried unanimously.

## OLD BUSINESS

### Sanitation

Some questions arose about how the vote was conducted at the special meeting. Sullivan noted the attorney stated he did not have a conflict of interest and would be able to vote on the issue. Grafstrom called and spoke with the attorney and Mayor Carlson read the following statement: The City needs to reaffirm the vote for Quality by actual majority and move forward. Council obviously believed the majority had been decided as the contract was signed with Quality which ratifies this was the intended procedure.

**Councilor Sullivan motioned to approve signing a contract with Quality making them the City's Sanitation Service.** Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier. Motion carried with a vote of 3 approving votes (Kunshier, Sullivan and Mayor Carlson), and 2 opposed (Ethen and Knowles).

#### Roof Tech Change Order

The roof on the fire hall has been done, but as you know from the email, we had to add in the sides of the upper level because they were cracked and leaking as well. Ethen noted the pictures indicated the need for the work. Council just needs to approve the change order.

**Councilor Sullivan motioned to approve the Roof Tech change order in the amount of \$18,575 for the correction of the deteriorated stucco cladding at low roof to high transition.** Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously

#### Hazardous Building Update

The paperwork has been file to initiate the hazardous building with the courthouse on October 31, 2019. The owner had applied for a building permit with the city, but never picked it up. He did not file an Answer, so the attorney prepared the paperwork to proceed as a default judgement. We had a time frame for the process, or we would have had to start all over. The case had been assigned to the court and Inspector Lind will be going to court on this matter. No action.

#### Forfeited Land Purchase

Grafstrom reported she received a notice from the county asking the city to set the price for the forfeited parcels they decided to purchase. She stated when she discussed this with the county at the time, we had talked about a purchase price of \$1.00 per parcel. She wanted to know if that is what the council wanted to set the price at. Sullivan stated he would not go over \$5.00.

**Motion made by Councilor Ethen to pay the County \$1.00 per parcel on the purchase of the forfeited land.** Motion Seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Close City all Day on Christmas Eve

Staff has asked if they could take the whole day instead of half if they use their own vacation or personal time for the additional half a day. This would effectively close the city for Christmas Eve. This has been done in the past. Christmas Eve is a Tuesday. Knowles wanted it known this is not making the full day of Christmas Eve a regular holiday but allowing people to take it off with their own time. Ethen reiterated they just don't want this to roll into the regular holiday schedule. Grafstrom made it clear this is not what was being asked.

***Councilor Sullivan motioned to approve allowing staff to use personal or vacation time to take an additional half a day off on Christmas Eve.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

#### Codifying the Ordinance Book(s)

Lind and Grafstrom are requesting the council allow them to have the city ordinances codified. The ordinances are the laws of the city, so they should be accessible and understandable. Currently the city ordinances are stored in 6 books dating back to the early 1900s, plus an additional book for the zoning ordinances. The ordinances in some cases are handwritten, but the bulk of them exist only on the newspaper clipping from their publication. Grafstrom brought two books to the meeting for council to see how they look. Council suggested these be donated to the historical society when we have updated ordinances. Knowles asked if we would have to do this every time, we wanted them updated. Grafstrom said no, we would be able to add ordinances and periodically have them update the entire book.

***Councilor Sullivan motioned to approve paying American Legal Publishing \$8395.00 to update and codify the City Ordinances.*** Motion seconded by Mayor Carlson and carried unanimously

#### City Engineering: Moore Engineering

Lind, Eklund and Grafstrom have met with different engineering firms, including MSA; Widseth Smith Nolting; Bolton-Menk and Moore Engineering. Their information was included in the packet along with the staff's recommendation to use Moore Engineering going forward. Grafstrom also included two pages of glowing recommendations from cities of all sizes that have worked with Moore Engineering. Moore was invited to the meeting since they were the staff's choice.

Rich Slagle and Les Mateffy from Moore presented the council with a map identifying different conditions of the city's streets. They included a photo sheet of some of the worst areas in the city. Rich Slagle introduced Moore Engineering to the council. He said the company has been in business since 1960. They have 135 employee/owners. They have offices in St. Cloud, Fergus Falls, and Bemidji which just opened. In addition they have four offices in North Dakota. Slagle identified the engineering team the city would be working with and discussed developing a Capital Improvement Plan.

Councilor Ethen said the council has known there were more issues with the streets, but they have not been able to afford to do more. Grafstrom added that is why is it so important to have an engineering firm that will help us get on the lists and find other funding sources. Slagle said they can do things in phases, but they would never suggest the city do a street without first making sure everything underneath is good. He stated ultimately it is the council's decision and funding will play a factor, but they will do what they can to help us.

***Councilor Kunshier motioned to discontinue using BDM and MSA for city engineering.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen, with regret, and carried unanimously.

**Councilor Ethen motioned to approve using Moore Engineering for engineering services.** Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously

#### Resolution 19-25 Join the Regional RSG

Council reviewed the Administrator's report on the value of joining a Regional Safety Group.

**Councilor Sullivan motioned to join the Pine County Regional Safety Group effective 1/1/2020.** Motion seconded by Mayor Carlson and carried unanimously

#### EDA Recommendation – MN Main Street

The EDA met on 10/14/19. They recommend that council join MN Main Street. There is information in the packet on the program. The cost to be a Network Member is \$250.00/year. Grafstrom applied for a grant opportunity with MN Main Street that was closing on October 25, 2019. The grant is for using art to enhance the downtown business community. She said she got the information just before it was due, but went ahead and applied anyway.

**Councilor Ethen motioned to join MN Main Street at the \$250.00 network level.** Motion seconded by Councilor Kunshier and carried unanimously

#### Ordinance Restricting Use of City Name

Grafstrom reported this arose out of the Animal Control Contract. The contract the city signed allows animal control to identify themselves as Animal Control for the City of Braham, so restricting the use of the city name would not apply in this case unless a new contract is drafted. The City of Cambridge restricted the use of the city name by ordinance to include the Name, the seal and the logo. The city's tagline: "Minnesota Opportunity Community" was copyrighted (NOT the city name or logo, just the tagline). A copy of Cambridge's ordinance was included in the packets. Grafstrom is wondering if the city wants her to work on an ordinance restricting the use of the City of Braham. Ethen said what happens to people who sell stuff that says Braham. Carlson noted it would only pertain to things using "The City of Braham." If someone violated, a letter would be sent first. Council directed Grafstrom to work on drafting an ordinance for Braham restricting use of the name. No action taken.

#### Subordination of Aurelius Small Cities Loan

Grafstrom reported this would be to subordinate the Small Cities loan. She stated this is common for cities to do for continued economic development.

**Councilor Sullivan motioned to approve the subordination of the Small Cities loan given to Aurelius.** Motion seconded by Mayor Carlson and carried unanimously.

PeopleServices, Inc.

Grafstrom reported the Management Discussion and Analysis Committee, along with Superintendent Eklund, met with Paul Christiansen and Gary Giltner of PSI to discuss the ongoing issues with water quality, Giltner's hours, and the recent water main break. As a result, the city staff will write up work orders on every complaint received and map where the complaints are coming from for the month of November. Giltner will return the work order with the actions taken. The committee requested the GPS from Giltner's truck (which has not been provided), a breakdown of the monthly fees to identify what the \$14,133/month the city pays PSI is spent on (staff, chemicals, maint, etc), and to let them know the City of Braham does not want passable water, we want good water. Christiansen got very upset when asked for the breakdown of the fees and as of tonight's meeting, this information has not been received. Grafstrom will maintain documentation of issues and results received.

Mayor Carlson added that Christiansen directed Giltner to start testing water on the outside of the house so we can verify the issue is with the water coming in and not from the person's own pipes. Knowles stated Giltner had tested his water inside the house and stated Knowles's pipes were the problem. No action taken.

**There being no further business, Councilor Sullivan moved to adjourn the regular council meeting of November 12, 2019.** Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela M. Grafstrom  
City Administrator