

**Minutes
Braham City Council
Regular Meeting
July 6, 2021 – 6 pm**

Mayor Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Members present Ryan Davis, Seth Zeltinger, Vicky Ethen, and Robert Knowles.

Staff present: Administrator Angela Grafstrom, Police Chief Eric Baumgart, and Water/Wastewater Superintendent Victor Fanth

Also, present: Sarv Mithaqiyani of the County News Review, Andrew Fontanille of WCMP Radio, James Robins of Robins Consulting, Jon Pauna of Moore Engineering, Doug Leaf, and residents Adam Zeis, Ben Maki, Jeremy Iverson.

Accepting the Agenda

Councilor Knowles motioned to accept the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Councilor Davis and carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda contains approval of minutes from 6/1/21, the payment of bills and payroll and the following list of items. Bills to be paid total \$ 229,355.09 including e-checks #32761e-32772e, checks #42193-42262, and payroll electronic checks #502534e and 502559e totaling \$52,761. 95.

Additional items are as follows:

- Approving the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Isanti County
- Resolution 21-21 Authorizing Braham to participate in MN Green Steps Cities Program.
- Resolution 21-24 Donation from Grandy Lions and naming the park Lion's Park.
- Resolution 21-25 Accepting Donations for Fireworks
- Resolution 21-26 Mutual Aid Agreement with City of Isanti
- St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church Event Permit and Temporary Liquor 9/18/21
- Gambling Permits: Both the Ruffed Grouse Society (7-23) and Pheasants Forever (9-11)
- Pizza Pub Conditional Use Permit 8/14/21

Total consent agenda includes 12 items for approval.

Council recognized and thanked the Grandy Lions for their donation. Grafstrom stated we will have ribbon cutting and park naming ceremony when the structure is built. Grafstrom also noted she emailed Moore Engineering and asked if they would consider donating to the City's fireworks display. They sent a check for \$500.00. Mayor Carlson added Moore also donated to Appreciation Day and Pie Day. James Robins of Robins consulting mentioned the City becoming a GreenStep City is also a positive as it brings

recognition at the state level and could provide us with unpaid interns. Grafstrom added we also have opportunity to work with other state agencies.

Councilor Knowles motioned to approve the consent agenda items consisting of the minutes from 6//1/21; Resolutions 21-21, 21-24, 21-25, 21-26, approving the above mentioned event permit, gambling permits, conditional use permit, and the payment of bills and payroll totaling \$229,355.09 which includes check #42193-#42262, electronic checks #32761e-32772e, and payroll transfers #502534e and #502559e totaling \$52,761.95. Motion seconded by Councilor Davis and carried unanimously.

Engineering Report

Jon Pauna of Moore Engineering updated the council on the 2nd Street Project and directed them to review Task Order #8 Scoping for the Comprehensive Plan Update. The cost for Task Order #8 is \$5000.00. This will give the City an idea of what we need to update as parts of the plan are not needing updating.

Pauna said we have had some change orders including modifications to the state highway. Overall there were plusses and minuses to the project costs so the overall dollar amount did not really change too much. He mentioned the Landpride payment request of \$194,334.34. Grafstrom thought they had paid it, but it was not in the paid bills. She asked council to approve so we could send it out. Zeltinger asked if that was about half and Pauna said yes, it is.

Mayor Carlson motioned to approve the payment of Landpride in the amount of \$194,334.34. Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

Councilor Ethen motioned to approve Moore Engineering Task Order #8: Scoping for the Comprehensive Plan Update. Motion seconded by Councilor Zeltinger and carried unanimously.

Lobbyist Report

James Robins of Robins Consulting attended the meeting. He reported there has been no more bonding in the special session. They passed a sort of "lights on" type bill fixing mistakes from the last bill. He had a lengthy meeting with Senator Koran. Koran is committed and wants to be involved in the Braham project. He wants to see council and community members involved showing community support. He would like Braham to have a favorable presence in St. Paul. Robins will follow up with Brian Johnson as well. Robins reported there is a chance for a bonding bill in September, but it would likely focus on higher education and infrastructure repairs. Maybe some PFA money will come out of this. This would be good for Braham, not because they will qualify, but they will move up on the PFA list. Once the City Council passes Resolution 21-23, he will send that and they Mayor's letter to the committee.

Councilor Ethen motioned to adopt Resolution 21-23 Support of Legislative Bonding Tour Visits to the City of Braham and Subsequent Funding Authorization. Motion seconded by Councilor Davis and carried unanimously.

Police Report

Written report is in the packet. Zeltinger asked about the swearing in ceremony for Brandon Thompson. Chief Baumgart reported that will be next meeting as Thompson had a family issue arise and was not available for this meeting. Baumgart added he will also be getting a lifesaving award for saving a life his first day on his own.

Utility Report

The Street Dept and Water/Wastewater Dept written reports are included in the packets, but council had several items to review for approval.

Visu-sewer Test and Seal Joint Grouting on Elmhurst.

Fanth reported televising is completed, most of it is not good. They had to jet the line under Elmhurst over 100 times and vac it because it was so full. They took out 2 truck load in approximately 520 feet. The City was about 25% away from epic failure of no waste water coming in. He estimates we will need to test and seal joint grouting in approximately 1100 to 1200 feet, basically Central Drive to the treatment plant. Davis commented that grout can last up to 25 years. Fanth was happy to hear that as he was hoping if we grout some areas it would be effective instead of lining. Other areas will be grouted as minimally as possible to allow for lining.

Fanth showed footage of 2nd Street SE near Appaloosa Court which is likely to be the next area to see a sewer collapse. This is the older part of town. The video showed cracked and broken pipe with areas where wastewater is leaking into the ground. He is coordinating with James Robins to get him stills and video of the worst areas to share with the committee for the bonding request.

Councilor Davis motioned to approve the estimate from Visu-Sewer at the rate of \$275.00/hour and acrylamide grout at \$12.00 per gallon to test and seal the joint grouting on Elmhurst. Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously.

Purchase of Water Tower Mixer

The mixer will help prevent freezing in the winter and keep the chemicals from striating year-round which will result in better water quality for the City. We received a small grant from Centerpoint Energy to put towards the cost. Council will have to approve the acceptance of the grant. Zeltinger recognized Grafstrom's good job in getting us the \$2500.00 grant from Centerpoint Energy, and thanked Centerpoint Energy for the grant. It will go towards the purchase of the water tower mixer.

Councilor Ethen motioned to approve the purchase and installation of the Water Tower Mixer for \$15,626.00. Motion seconded by Councilor Knowles and carried unanimously.

Mayor Carlson motioned to adopt Resolution 21-22 Accepting the Centerpoint Energy Grant of \$2500.00 Toward the Purchase of a Water Tower Mixer. Motion seconded by Councilor Ethen and carried unanimously.

Addition of Water/WW Specialist and the Exit of PeopleService

Fanth reported Gary Giltner is planning to retire in March of 2022. Fanth and Grafstrom are concerned about finding a second operator. We need to have someone in place before we are done with PeopleService (PSI) for continuation of operations. Fanth and Grafstrom would like to begin the hiring process to find a licensed operator. They feel it will take a minimum of 3 to 6 months, then the person may need to give notice somewhere else. They would like the person to have at least 6 months on the job before PSI leaves. At the time of Giltner's retirement, the City will have approximately 2 more years with PSI, but no on site operator. The only Class B operator PSI has in the area is in Hinckley.

Councilor Ethen motioned to approve beginning the hiring process for the addition of a Water/WW Specialist. Motion seconded by Mayor Carlson and carried unanimously.

Fire Department

The written report is in the packet. Council approved the donation for fireworks received to date in the amount of \$1685.00 under the consent agenda. We received more donations in today's mail, and we will approve the additional donations at next month's meeting.

Liquor Store

The written report is in the packet. Just want to note, like many other businesses we are struggling to recruit and keep new employees. Additionally, the coolers went down, and we called for repairs on those today.

Old Business

Department Overtime

The council reviewed department overtime. It was noted it is significantly less than it was in the past and every department has a reason for their overtime. Department heads just needs to be mindful of overtime hours and continue to work at keeping it at a minimum. Zeltinger noted that the police department overtime is needed to keep the 24-hour coverage we currently have. Baumgart noted we had Stahl come in on July 4 to help the county and we were going to be reimbursed his hours by the County as they have had staffing issues as well. They are looking at putting on some part time officers. Grafstrom asked Baumgart if we would be able to get the officers parttime as well. He was not sure in the current law enforcement climate, but he will look into it. This new climate has Baumgart counting the days until he reaches age 55 and can retire.

City Vehicles Outside of City Limits

Mayor Carlson said she has had complaints about City vehicles outside of City limits. Not just police, but also our Street Dept. There may be reasons for our vehicles to leave town, but we need to address concerns of the public when they arise. Baumgart said for police there is a complaint process that must be followed. Grafstrom said even if there is not a formal complaint, maybe it would be good public relations to just explain why they were out of town.

Hazard House

Marshall Lind has a written recommendation on how to proceed so we do not wait another month. The suggestion is to obtain 3 estimates, as long as they are under the mandatory bid amount of \$175,000, he suggests council authorize Grafstrom to accept the lowest bid and get the work done. The court order was included in the packets.

Councilor Knowles motioned to approve getting bids to demolition the house at 310 West Central Drive, authorize Grafstrom to accept the lowest bid, get the work done, and access all associated fees to the property taxes. Motion seconded by Councilor Davis and carried unanimously.

New Business

Tarp Structures

Community resident Jeremy Iverson addressed the council regarding a tarp structure he erected on his property. He felt singled out and wanted to know if all 13 properties with these structures received a letter. Grafstrom stated he received a letter when Lind noticed the structure while doing an inspection for something else. Lind also sent letters to the other residents Iverson identified who had tarp structures. Council will consider changing the ordinance. Grafstrom expressed concerns as they are not load bearing structures and they decrease property values for everyone in the neighborhood. She also mentioned that it costs \$100 for someone to start the process of ordinance change and it will not guarantee the ordinance will be changed. She said it also requires public hearing and publication. She will investigate this more and let council and Iverson know more about it. Council will let Iverson leave his structure up until October 1, 2021 while they review.

Ransomware Attack

Grafstrom did not really have much to add beyond what was in the Administrator's Report, but added that her staff is still dealing with issues associated and we are struggling with access to some state portals.

Mayor Carlson added at this point an FYI, that Marshall Lind will be done July 25, 2021 as the Building Official/Zoning Administrator.

Adjourn

There being no further business of the Braham City Council, ***Councilor Knowles moved to adjourn the meeting of July 6, 2021.*** Motion seconded by Councilor Davis and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.