

City of Brownsdale

Garden Spot of Mower County

Mayor – Jeff Foster Council Members – Debra Schuette, Jessica Bakken, Rick Smith, Raughn Oakland
City Clerk/Treasurer – Adria Vargas
Correspondence: PO Box 336, Brownsdale, MN 55918 (507)567-2177 (507)567-2250-fax email:brownsdale.mn.clerk@frontiernet.net
City web site: brownsdalemn.com

City Council Regular Meeting April 6th, 2021

Mayor Jeff Foster called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.; everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mayor Jeff Foster; Council Members: Debra Schuette, Rick Smith, Jessica Bakken, Raughn Oakland

City Employees: City Librarian: Deb Smith, City Clerk: Adria Vargas, Assistant Librarian: Shelley Vogel (Absent), Police Chief: Jon Smerud, City Maintenance: Wayne Baldner

Public in attendance: Craig Byram (City Attorney Hoversten Law Office, Jenelle Parks (Mower County Independent & BP Library Board), Jan Ball, Mary Moritz, Tanya Rumsey (Frontier Lounge), Nicolee Holmgren, Sharon Garbisch (Greenwood Cemetery Association)

March 1st, 2021 Meeting Minutes were approved with corrections.

Public Comment: Mayor Foster after addressing the Public for comment and hearing none, moved on to New Business.

Old Business: Mayor Foster addressed the Council about setting up a work session for Policy review or if they would like to include that the May Council meeting. It was decided that policy review would be held during the next City Council meeting in May.

New Business

City Attorney Craig Byram from Hoversten Law Office addressed the Council and Public on the Library Findings. Mr. Byram started by saying the City of Brownsdale is a statutory city and with that the Library Board is a governing board within its budgetary confines. The City Council sets levies that pertain to the library or sets funds aside from the General Fund for library use. The City Council provides the means and the Library Board carries out decisions and care of the facility. He also stated that the Library can back fill the budget with outside grants and fundraising but may not over-spend the budget, without first making formal amendments the budget. Mr. Byram also stated that keeping a good balance in materials and staff is important to manage the Library. He also commented this balance is important, you can have a well staffed library and no materials and have an understaffed Library all the materials. He also suggested to see what could be done to contract with other libraries for staffing.

The Attorney answered several questions posed by the Board President and Public;

Q: Policies and Library Staff?

A: Library Board appoints the Library Director and the City employs the director. The Director follows the City's Personnel Policies.

Q: Volunteers?

A: Although volunteers are needed to help, present a particular insurance liability to the City, a volunteer policy should be drafted and put into effect.

Q: Library paygrade and can the board set raises and compensation such as Vacation time?

A: this is a difficult question, the question being this is an unskilled position question is who would apply for the position at that level or criteria, it is department head level, but it must stay within pay equity levels. There may be budget concerns with this and also budget impacts, that's why the personnel policy is put into place to have fair and equal treatment for all employees.

Mayor Foster stated that when the Pay Equity report is returned to the City with the results it should be forwarded to the Mr. Byram for review and more information. Mayor Foster also stated that he would like to see the Library Fund in August to have time to review in order review, approve, in order to set the preliminary and final levies on time.

Council Member Schuette made a motion to pass Resolution 2021-07 accepting a monetary donation of \$20.00 for the park Council Member Smith seconded the motion. 5Yeas, 0Nays. Carried.

Sherrie Garbisch came on behalf of (Greenwood Cemetery Association) seeking a yearly donation to match the Townships donation of \$2500.00, she stated that would help them cover the mowing expenses which is the most, costly of the expenses for the us. She stated that still have a cushion, but have some other expenses coming such as the road and the maintenance on the building. She stated that the only revenue they have coming in is the sale of cemetery lots which only two were sold totaling \$1000.00. Mayor Foster commented that the City has no problem donating to the cemetery, but it is in the township and is ultimately the townships responsibility but seeing that may City people are buried there as well, the City is willing to help if able. He stated that it would need to be an annual request because the laws on donations change. **Council Member Bakken made a motion to match the townships 2021 donation of \$2500.00 pending research on permissible donations. Council Member Smith seconded the motion. 5Yeas, 0Nays. Carried.**

Tanya Rumsey on behalf of (Frontier Lounge) addressed the Council about the difficulties over the last year in business with the Pandemic, she stated that she was closed for nearly 5 months and fears that at any point she may have to close again due to restrictions for COVID. She asked if the Council was able to offset some or all of the License fees due for 2021 business year, the Council stated that they would like more time to think it over before making a decision.

She also asked about the ability to hold Brownsdale Fest in the park and have the street blocked for the Tractor Pull. Chief Smerud stated that there were many angry people because of this last time and said more had to be done to alert the community and the people living on those roads to keep the peace. Mayor Foster stated that at this time we are not able to hold large events and the bathrooms at the park will continue to be closed until he hears through the League of MN Mayors or the Govern changes his

recommendations. Tanya stated that the guy from the tractor pulls was inquiring about interest in the event this year. Mayor Foster asked about the date of the Brownsdale Fest, Tanya stated it would be the 1st weekend in August. Mayor Foster stated that's a way's out, but the City doesn't really know much more at this point.

The Senior Card club has requested the use of the Community Room for Monday afternoons from 12:30-3:30pm stating that they have all been vaccinated and will be wearing masks at the events. Council concluded that this request be granted.

The Council briefly discussed receiving the America Relief COVID funds. **Council Member Schuette made a motion to accept the funds as they come available. Council Member Oakland seconded the motion. 5 Yeas, 0Nays Carried.**

The Council discussed the park basketball hoops, bathrooms, and planting trees to replace trees that had been in the park previously. The Council briefly talked about reservations for the pavilion, repairs of the picnic tables. The Council discussed writing of a grant for a purchase of a new table or two. The Council decided that due to COVID at this time the bathrooms would remain closed. They would revisit the subject at the May council meeting.

Public Works Report: Wayne mentioned that he's holding off on the street bids and waiting for information on Vista Village whether or not they need to be included on the bids for repairs. Wayne also stated that he would like to see a few new policies included in the discussion for the next meeting about street inspections and trees inspections on a rotating yearly schedule.

City Police Officer's Report: available at the City Clerk's office upon request. Officer Smerud said he didn't have a lot to comment about. He stated that the new rifle arrived and is waiting on instructions to return the loaned rifle back to the State of MN.

Library: Librarian Smith passed out a report it is available at the Library or the Clerks office upon request.

Bills were presented and signed

Council Member Schuette made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:22pm. Council Member Bakken seconded the motion. 5 Yeas, 0 Nays. Carried. The meeting stood adjourned at 8:22pm