

City of Brownsdale

Garden Spot of Mower County

Mayor – Jeff Foster Council Members – Debra Schuette, Jessica Klingfus, Rick Smith, Raughn Oakland

City Clerk/Treasurer – Adria Vargas

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City Council Meeting

April 1st, 2024

Present: Mayor Jeff Foster; Council Members: Debra Schuette, Rick Smith, Jessica Klingfus (Absent), Raughn Oakland

City Employees: City Clerk: Adria Vargas, Police Chief: Jon Smerud, City Maintenance: Wayne Baldner

Public in attendance: Jan Ball, Zach Day, Loren Swanson, Brian and Azalea Heintz, Jenny and Matt Long, Jessica Green (Northland Trust), Tammy Kester, Pat Roles, Tiffany Gustafson, Mitchell Mead

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

March regular meeting and Public Hearing minutes approved as written.

All votes are by roll call vote.

Public Comment:

Tiffany Gustafson approached the Council with pictures from the most current snake of the drains at her home. She stated that there is a large Maple tree on the side of the driveway, and she would like the City to consider removing it. Mitch Mead stated that they had to rent a commercial snake this time due to sewer back up. After a very brief discussion the Council asked Wayne to have this tree bid for removal when the other tree work is going to be done on the City Ash trees.

Matt and Jenny Long asked the Council if there would be an issue with installing benches for the kids at the bus stop. Mayor Foster stated to make sure that it's not on the ROW for the state, other than that no issues.

Tammy Kester addressed the Council about a concern regarding garbage at the neighbor's property, she approached the Council with pictures of the neighbor's property. She asked for clarification on the garbage ordinance, Chief Smerud stated that the ordinance in question has been reviewed and all garbage must be in an enclosed, secured building. Tammy stated that there's nothing secure about where it is, what about rats, rodents and cats, garbage and mail blowing all over. Zach Day stated he believes that he or his property has been discussed at previous meetings. Mayor Foster replied that he or his property has not been discussed openly at any meetings about this topic. He went on further to state that there have been complaints and now that the parties involved have both chosen to attend a council meeting that this will be talked about now in a public forum. Zach stated he had pictures of other properties in town and approached officer Smerud to show his pictures. Tammy stated that they work hard and shouldn't have to come home from work and clean up their business property and residential property every day. We have lived there for 30+ plus years and we try to have everything picked up and cared for. She went on to say

then what should I do continue to call and make complaints. Zach went on to say that using the City Police to address the complaints is wasting resources, that could be better used elsewhere. Officer Smerud stated that he is there to mediate between them and that he understands both sides frustrations, Officer Smerud stated that it is very difficult to enforce something that is vague, he stated that ordinances can be amended. Both Zach and Tiffany mentioned the city website links ordinances and policies are not working. She thanked the Clerk for sending the tree policy she requested. The Clerk stated that she was unaware of the issue and will reach out to Matt to see if the website links can be corrected.

New Business:

Jessica Green from Northland Security spoke to the Council about the options on bond funding for the upcoming street and utility project. She reviewed the 10,15,20-year payment options, she stated that a shorter term would be cheaper due to not needing a payment agent or needing to have the bond rated. She stated that it would also be more feasible to work with the local bank provided rates are good and within current market conditions. Mayor Foster asked the Clerk how long of the term of the other bond, stated that she was thinking that it was a 15-year bond. He stated that the same time frame should be considered for this one. Jessica also stated that there are other terms of 11,12,13 years, etc. Clerk Vargas stated that maybe another term should be looked at the difference of roughly \$94,000 dollars in payments from 10 to 15 years. Jessica also stated that these numbers are preliminary, based only on Engineers' estimates.

Old Business:

Azaela and Brian Heintz asked the Council about updates on the lot next to their house. Clerk Vargas explained the tax foreclosure laws, processes for forgiveness, potential changes to the MN Tax forfeiture laws due to the ruling in Tyler VS. Hennepin County. The parties discussed what amounts were reassessed, the Mayor asked the Council what their thoughts were in forgiving a portion, He also stated that the Council could also wait for it to tax forfeit again and the City could wait for it to come back to the City for a second time attempt to re-coup changes for the costs associated with the razing of the house that was previously on the lot. Pat Roles stated that he had put in a bid through an attorney. The Mayor stated that hearing that new information, we'll have to see what happens with the lot in the future.

Public Works Report:

Wayne and the Council furthered the conversation about the tree removal bids from the March meeting. The Council discussed to include the other three trees into the \$10,000 bid or have them outside of the bids. Wayne was asked to get new bids including the three trees and what Ash trees would not be excluded in the bid and get a bid outside of the \$10,000 bid. Council Member Smith asked if the Clerk will be applying for another grant for tree removal, the Clerk stated if there is another opportunity she will apply for another grant. Mayor Foster stated we as a Council still need to do something about the trees, the last grant out of 6 million dollars of grant money there were requests for 30 million, even if the Clerk writes another grant who's to say we would get any funds, every city needs funds. Mayor Foster offered to assist and use his Lul to cut down some uncomplicated trees, but that Public Works would need to remove all limbs and brush. Matt Long also offered the City help with his 55 ft bucket truck.

Wayne discussed his plan to lean into retirement, using his PTO bank and working with Raughn to fill the hours. Council Member Smith stated that he would like to see a schedule so that he knows who to call if need be. Wayne stated that he still carries the phone, has the keys etc. and will be coordinating the work

that needs to be done. Council Member Schuette stated that she doesn't mind what they are doing as long as it works for everyone, and the work is getting done.

Wayne stated that the lift station power outage/ surge last month that Cory thought it was just a three-stage power surge, and that over time it levelled itself out.

Wayne stated that the Council will need to start thinking about spraying weeds here within the next few months.

He also mentioned that Metro-Net had been to the shop to pull the fiber across the road and ready for installation inside the shop.

City Police Officer's Report: available at the City Clerk's office upon request. Chief Smerud thanked Deb Smith for her great work on the Easter egg hunt on Saturday. He also stated that chickens continue to be out of hand, those that are not containing their chickens, its just a cycle that's good for about a week and then goes right back to out of control. He stated that amendments can be made to any ordinance if needed and fines can be issued.

Bills were presented and signed.

Council Member Schuette made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17pm, Council Member Smith seconded the motion. 4Yeas, 0Nays. Carried.