

City Council Meeting
March 15, 2021

The Fergus Falls City Council met for a regular meeting on Monday March 15, 2021 in the City Council Chambers at 5:30 pm. Rajan Zed led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mayor Schierer called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm and the following council members were in attendance: Hagberg, Kvamme, Rufer, Thompson, Arneson, Gustafson and Hicks. Fish was absent.

Approval of Agenda

A motion and second were made by Hicks and Rufer approving tonight's agenda with the addition of adding two items: a resolution setting a final cost hearing for PI 6074, the 2020 sidewalk/driveway improvements for April 5, 2021 (consent) and a resolution authorizing staff to obtain quotes for a mobile performance stage (resolutions). The motion carried.

Consent Agenda

The following items were approved under **Resolution #40-2021** by Rufer: Motion approving the minutes from the March 1, 2021 City Council meeting. Motion approving the following licenses: Minnesota Lawful Gambling Permit Minnesota Deer Hunters Association for raffle at VFW Post 612 on May 22, 2021; Mechanical Air Mechanical Inc. **Resolution #41-2021** authorizing the Fergus Falls Fire Department to accept a \$1,000 in store gift card from Home Depot for the purchase of fire prevention and fire station/response tools. **Resolution #42-2021** approving a 2021 budget adjustment carrying over part-time wages from 2020 to 2021 for library aide positions. **Resolution #43-2021** approving budget adjustments. **Resolution #44-2021** accepting a Quit Claim Deed from Rosendahl's to the City of Fergus Falls conveying Tract C (a stormwater pond) to the city for 200 Tower Road N. **Resolution #45-2021** accepting an ingress/egress easement from Rosendahl's to the City of Fergus Falls allowing the city access to Tract C across Tract A for 200 Tower Road N. **Resolution #46-2021** authorizing the Mayor and City Administrator to sign a Stormwater Pond easement of grounds (mow, weed and brush control) on owner of Tract A for 200 Tower Road N. **Resolution #47-2021** setting a final cost hearing for PI 6074, 2020 sidewalk and driveway improvements for April 5, 2021 at 5:30 pm in the City Council Chambers. The resolution was seconded by Thompson and was adopted.

Ordinance 11, Eighth Series, Solar Energy Systems

Ordinance 11, Eighth Series, Solar Energy Systems was adopted with a roll call vote.

Annexation of Buse Township

Otter Tail Power is planning a solar farm project which will encompass portions of Buse and Aurdal Townships. Otter Tail Power wishes to annex these properties into the city limits. The annexation of 280.99 acres, (zero population) in Buse Township was proposed at the township meeting last week. They have consented to the annexation for an exchange for 20 years of lost taxes in a current value lump sum of \$13,500.22. Otter Tail Power would reimburse the city for this expenditures. The annexed area includes road right of ways that the city will take over for road maintenance. If approved, the resolution will be filed with the Administrative Law Judge and the city will continue annexation efforts with Aurdal Township. Arneson offered **Resolution #48-2021** approving a joint resolution for the immediate annexation of land in Buse Township owned by Otter Tail Power for the Hoot Lake Solar Project, which was seconded by Thompson and was adopted.

Outstate Brewing Company

Outstate Brewing Company was adversely affected by the pandemic and requested they be allowed to make interest only payments on their Intermediary Relending Program loan until July 1, 2021. Business Development for Fergus Falls reviewed their request and recommended the city accept interest only payments as requested. Hicks offered **Resolution #49-2021** authorizing the city to allow interest only IRP loan payments for Outstate Brewing Company until July 1, 2021, which was seconded by Hagberg and was adopted.

Rail Spur Grant

Ben Carleton of Carleton Capital Investments LLC asked the city to provide a resolution of support for his Minnesota Rail Services grant application to construct a longer railroad spur. Mr. Carleton reviewed the project location off Weyrens Road and said once their scale is up and infrastructure complete, the spur will also benefit a number of other local businesses by offering transloading. Hicks offered **Resolution #50-2021** authorizing a MRSI grant application to fund a rail spur as requested by Carleton Companies, which was seconded by Gustafson and was adopted.

Mobile Performance Stage

The original downtown riverfront project included the construction of an amphitheater to be located behind City Hall. The amphitheater has been removed from the plans as the amount of state bonding funds the city received was less than anticipated and capacity of the amphitheater was deemed too small for the available space. After speaking to leaders in the arts community, the city is considering the purchase of a mobile performance stage that can be used in multiple settings by a number of groups. The stage would be able to be set up and taken down relatively quickly and would include the stage, lights and sound equipment. The projected budget is \$150,000 and a local trust would provide \$50,000 towards the purchase price. The remaining \$100,000 would be funded from liquor store proceeds and/or COVID relief funding as the stage could encourage social distancing and safe activities. Michael Burgaff, representing A Center for the Arts spoke in favor of the mobile performance stage and the economic impact the arts community provides for our town. They would utilize the stage for outdoor events and concerts downtown and on the RTC grounds. Other entities could also use the equipment and the rental fees would benefit the city. Thompson offered **Resolution #51-2021** directing staff to obtain quotes for the purchase of a mobile performance stage, which was seconded by Arneson and was adopted. Once the city has received these quotes, they would bring them to the council for their approval and a final funding plan.

Resolution of Accounts

Kvamme offered a resolution authorizing the payments and claims in the amount of \$2,457,875.69, which was seconded by Hagberg and was adopted.

Update: Airport Manager/FBO Hiring Process

Justin Arneson provided an update on the Airport Manager/FBO hiring process. Their working group has met once and plans to meet again next week. They had a good meeting that resulted in outlining a process to follow. They hope to come back to the council with a recommendation in May.

The meeting adjourned to a closed meeting at 6:01 pm as permitted by the attorney-client privilege to discuss an active or threatened litigation matter, per MN Stat Sec 13D.05. Subd 3(b).

Lynne Olson