

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on November 2, 2015. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. asking that everyone join in the Pledge of Allegiance. The following were present for roll call: Mayor Dehen, Council Members Steiner, Norland, Freyberg and Spears, City Administrator Harrenstein, Finance Director Thorne, Attorney Kennedy, City Clerk Van Genderen, Public Works Director Swanson. Absent: City Planner Fischer.

### **Approval of Agenda**

**Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the agenda as presented. Vote on the motion: Steiner, Norland, Freyberg, Spears and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner to approve the minutes of the Council meeting of October 19, 2015. Vote on the motion: Steiner, Norland, Spears and Dehen aye, Freyberg abstain. Motion carried.**

### **Consent Agenda**

**Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to approve the Consent Agenda which included:**

- A. Bills and Appropriations.
- B. Res. No. 88-15 Approving Donations/Contributions/Grants.
- C. Approved Parade Permit for Business on Belgrade Association's Bells on Belgrade Winter Wonderland Parade, Saturday, December 5, 2015 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- D. Approved Parade Permit for Minnesota River Builders Association's 5K Run around Spring Lake Park on Saturday, September 24, 2016 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- E. Approved Large Group Audio Permit for Spring Lake Park Shelter #5 for Monroe Elementary Color Run on May 21, 2016 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- F. Approved Large Group Audio Permit for Spring Lake Park Shelter #2 and Gazebo for Oeffler/Gessner Wedding on August 20, 2016 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**Vote on the motion: Steiner, Norland, Freyberg, Spears and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

### **Public Comments**

Phil Henry, 1300 Noretta Drive, appeared before Council and stated the per-acre cost for the property located at 1610 LorRay Drive is \$84,000 while he calculated the per-acre cost for the Highway 14 Bike Trail at \$585,000. He indicated that if the City purchased the property at 1610 LorRay Drive it would be considered an asset but he did not consider the Highway 14 Bike Trail an asset.

Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council and stated the Friends of North Mankato continues to collect donations for the possible purchase of the property located at 1610 LorRay Drive but the group suggests making a pledge instead of a cash donation. Ms. Church indicated she believed the Council should spend more time reviewing the 2014 audit and the 2016 proposed budget.

**Business Items**

**Presentation by Bradley Peterson from the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities.**

Mayor Dehen introduced Bradley Peterson from Flaherty-Hood who presented a PowerPoint on the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC) work. CGMC represents 85 cities throughout Minnesota including North Mankato. Mr. Peterson discussed the 2015 legislative session indicating that the tax bill that included Local Government Aid (LGA) was not passed and CGMC would continue to work to increase LGA. Mr. Peterson reported that CGMC initiated a workforce housing proposal which resulted in the expansion of a 2014 pilot grant program to the rest of Greater Minnesota. Mr. Peterson indicated work continues on broadband infrastructure and \$10.838 million additional funds were allocated during the 2015 legislative session. Mr. Peterson reported CGMC's employer-driven job training program that was created in 2014 received funding during the 2015 legislative session with \$1.8 million over the next biennium. Mr. Peterson reported CGMC continues to work to reform the way environmental laws are passed. Mayor Dehen requested clarification on how Minnesota environmental rules fit with Federal rules. Mr. Peterson reported CGMC is challenging the Environmental Protection Agency's approval of certain Minnesota rules. Mayor Dehen requested information on the status of the Local Options Sales Tax legislature. Mr. Peterson stated the Local Options Sales Tax is under consideration in both the House and Senate and continued advocacy would help the position. Council Member Spears requested clarification on the purpose of LGA if it is not to equalize cities. Mr. Peterson reported that LGA needs to treat all cities equally regardless of size and to look at need versus tax base. He stated the goal is to equalize wealth in communities not necessarily focusing on the size of the community. Council Member Spears stated broadband technology should be left to the market as the investment could become obsolete and the technology usually benefits private companies more than citizens. Mr. Peterson responded the goal is to create strong economic foundations in cities and benefitting the local private companies is a step in that direction. He also indicated Council Member Spears' concern about obsolete technology has been heard but CGMC still advocates for the use of broadband.

**City Administrator and Staff Comments**

Administrator Harrenstein indicated the sports commission and regional partners continue to discuss a regional recreational facility.

Public Works Director Swanson indicated Lookout Drive reconstruction and roundabouts is reaching completion. The Highway 14 Trail should be paved the week of November 2-6, 2015 with the installation of guard rails and fencing in the month of November.

Public Works Director Swanson reported the City is working with SMC to repave the corner of Webster Avenue and Range Street and a detour will occur on Wednesday or Thursday the week of November 2-6, 2015.

Public Works Director Swanson stated the traffic signals at Marie Lane and Lookout Drive will be working once parts arrive to complete the work.

Public Works Director Swanson stated leaf collection will continue. Council Member Norland stated leaves should be placed on the curb not in the gutter.

**Mayor and Council Comments**

Council Member Spears stated a street light was out at the corner of Highway 169 and Webster Avenue and wanted clarification on reporting and responsibility for street light repair. Public Works

Director Swanson stated the location of the street light often determines who is responsible for the repair. The City has contracts with both Benco Electric and Excel Energy for the maintenance of the lights and City staff watches and reports light outages. Citizens are also encouraged to report lights out. Administrator Harrenstein indicated there was a link on the City website for citizens to report a street light out.

Council Member Norland reported she attended the League of Minnesota Cities' conference and would share with the rest of the Council and staff all the League offers.

Mayor Dehen stated he had signed the Monarch Pledge, which was included in the packet, with the goal of increasing pollinating habitats in public areas in North Mankato. Public Works Director Swanson stated City staff was working with Council Member Freyberg and the DNR on improving pollinating areas within City parks, specifically Bluff Park and Benson Park. The City plans to create educational areas throughout Benson Park to educate the public on the increased pollinating areas.

Mayor Dehen stated the next Intergovernmental meeting will be held at the Intergovernmental Center in Mankato on Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at 6 p.m. and the public is welcome to attend.

Mayor Dehen stated a Coffee with the Council is planned for Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at The Washboard Laundromat located at 422 Belgrade Avenue.

**Public Comments**

Phil Henry, 1300 Noretta Drive, appeared before Council and stated during leaf pick-up residents need to keep the leaves off the street to prevent the clogging of storm drains, flooding and pollution of the rivers. City Attorney Kennedy reiterated that citizens also need to keep grass clippings out of the drains as that can also pollute the waterways.

There being no further business, on a motion by Council Member Norland, seconded by Council Member Steiner, the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk