

City of Hill City
Regular Council Meeting
March 9, 2016

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call

- A. Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- B. Everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. The following persons were present: Mayor Larry Baker, Council Members Dave Lange, Audrey Baratto and Tina Haugen. Nate Rollins was absent.

2. Consent Agenda

Motion made by Lange to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, second by Haugen. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

3. Public Forum

A. Chris Eng – Northland Securities

Chris Eng from Northland Securities was present to present to the Council a couple different scenerios of the amount of money the city can save by refinancing the two sewer bonds that the city currently has because of a drop in rates. The two scenerios that were given show a savings of \$99,777.65 or a savings of \$218,687.88. Due to the fact that the sewer fund is currently going in the hole and rates may need to be raised, the Council needed to decide what amount of a savings they want.

Motion made by Lange to approve Resolution #2016-06 A Resolution Approving the Issuance of General Obligation Sewer Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2016A and Resolution #2016-07 A Resolution Approving the Issuance of General Obligation Sewer Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2016A with a savings of \$150,000.00, second by Haugen. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

A Public Hearing was set-up for March 21, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in regard to the refinancing of the sewer bonds.

4. Addition or Corrections to the Agenda

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

5. Reports

Maintenance/Water/Sewer/Parks/Airport/Streets

- Maintenance Assistant Pat Jordan said that everything was going well and that the road to the Hill Lake Park would be opened up on Monday, March 14th.
- Pat asked the Council if they felt the need to put in the three water bypasses this year due to the frost already coming out of the ground. It was decided to check the water temperatures of the three residents to see if the temperatures warranted the bypasses being put in or not.
- The roads will get graded as soon as they dry up a little more, in the meantime Pat said he might drag some of the worst areas.
- 95% of the insulation and tin is completed in the maintenance shop.

Motion made by Baker to order two solar sign lighting kits at the approximate cost of \$382.11 and two backup batteries for each of the “Welcome to Hill City” signs located at the north and south ends of town, second by Haugen. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

- There was also an incident with a citizen stepping into a broken storm sewer drain which has been reported to the insurance company. This storm sewer drain has been replaced.

Fire Department

- Fire Chief Jeremy Nelson had sent out invitations to all of the townships that are under the Hill City fire coverage area for a meeting on March 3, 2016. Spang and Macville were the only two townships that attended. The possible Fire Hall addition, Fairshare amounts and the possibility of combining the 1st Responders with the Fire Dept. were discussed.
- There were no calls in the past month.

Police Department

- Police Chief Madsen stated that there really was nothing new except that he had submitted his resignation as full-time Police Chief with the City of Hill City effective May 15, 2016. He hopes that he will still be able to work for Hill City as a part-time officer. He has been busy working on stuff with the County Attorney's office to get everything done before his resignation is up.
- Council member Lange has been researching the possibility of eliminating the Police Department in its entirety. Chief Madsen is against this and felt that a committee should be put in place to research ways to save money without eliminating the department. Madsen also felt that if it comes to it, this is an issue that should be put on a ballot and put up to vote by the citizens of Hill City. There was more discussion amongst the Council and different scenerios were looked at. It was also discussed that the Chief of Police position does not have to be a full time position. Police Chief Madsen and Grand Rapids Police Officer Jeremy Nelson both felt that Hill City should get started immediately on the hiring process to replace Chief Madsen. It was decided to put an ad in the paper with applications due by March 31, 2016.

Mayor

- Mayor Baker thanked Jeff Madsen for the work he has done for the city and was sorry to see him leave.

Motion made by Baker to accept Jeff Madsen's resignation effective May 15, 2016, Haugen regretfully seconded this motion. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Clerk

Clerk McManigle had nothing to report.

Council

The Council had nothing to report.

1st Responders

- Fire Chief Nelson said that the combining of the 1st Responders was discussed at the meeting with the township and they seemed fine with this.

Committees

The committees had nothing to report.

6. Old Business

A. Campground Host/Park Attendant – approve Contract

There was discussion on having this position as an independent contractor with them having to provide their own insurance but it was discovered that their liability insurance would cost them between \$1,300.00 and \$1,800.00 a season. With this position getting paid \$500.00 per month plus a full hook-up RV site this would probably not interest anyone. According to the city's insurance agent the best way to go would be to have them as an employee of the city as the liability insurance and workers comp. insurance would basically cost the city nothing.

Motion made by Baker to approve the Campground Host/Park Attendant contract hiring the individual(s) as an employee of the city with city liability and works comp. insurance, second by Haugen. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

B. Wifi in Hill Lake Park

This was tabled.

C. Addition to Fire Hall – approve for bid process

Ron Saxton said that the Fire Dept. had approved for up to \$300.00 to be spent to put the Fire Hall Addition out for bids. They would like to do this April 1, 2016 with the bids being accepted until May 1, 2016. The Fire Dept. is looking at a total cost of up to \$330,000.00 for this addition. The Fire Dept. Building Fund currently has approximately \$130,000.00 in it and the department would like possibly borrow \$200,000.00 from the city on a short term 4 year loan. Council member Lange was concerned about the Fire Dept. not having had a survey done. The Fire Dept. stated that they would have a survey done after the bids all come in.

Motion made by Baker to approve the Fire Dept. spending up to \$300.00 and putting the addition out for bids, second by Haugen. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

7. New Business

A. First Call donation request (Approve Resolution #2016-08 with dollar amount)

Motion made by Lange to approve Resolution #2016-08 and donate \$250.00 to First Call, second by Haugen. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

B. Ordinance #129 – Fee Schedule changes-need to set Public Hearing

Due to the fact that there are a couple of fees that need to be changed, a Public Hearing needs to be set-up. It was decided to set the Public Hearing up for April 12th at 5:30 p.m., ½ hour before the regular Council meeting.

C. New vest for Ron Saxton

Police Chief Madsen stated that Ron Saxton is in need of a new bullet proof vest as the vest he has now is a “hand-me down” and too large for him. Madsen will check to see if there are any grants out there for this vest but the cost would be around \$1,000.00.

Motion made by Baker to approve the purchase of a new vest for Ron Saxton up to \$1,000.00, second by Lange. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor of.

D. New handheld, software & Maintenance

The handheld unit that is used to read the water meters will be obsolete by the end of this year. The city needs to obtain a new handheld, software and maintenance agreement by July 1, 2016 in order to take advantage of the \$250.00 trade-in that the city can receive. The total cost of the handheld unit, charging cradle, belt clip transceiver and three year software maintenance program is \$7,563.57.

Motion made by Baker to approve the purchase of the handheld unit, charging cradle, belt clip transceiver and three year software maintenance program for \$7,563.57, second by Baratto. Motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

E. Fire Dept. live burn

Ron Saxton reported that the Fire Dept. will be doing a live burn at 331 Stoner Avenue on April 18, 2016. Also, if there is another house that needs to be burnt down to contact the Fire Dept. by July 1, 2016 because there is grant out there that could cover the costs.

F. Tammy Root water usage

Tammy Root had reported that her water usage for the month of February was three times higher than her usual usage. The maintenance dept. has been reading her meter at different intervals for the past 11 days and her usage is right on track for her normal usage. There were two other citizens that felt their usage for February was higher than normal also. Their meters were also read at different intervals and their usage is right on track also. The Council wanted Clerk McManigle to check the billings for the

month of February to see if everyone's usages were higher than normal. This is being looked into further.

There was a letter from Dale Hilton that stated he had never received a bill for the month of January and wanted the Council to refund his \$25.00 late fee. The City office has never received Dale Hilton's bill back. The Council did not feel that a refund was in order as everyone knows that they have a monthly bill due.

Motion made by Haugen to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m., second by Baker.

Respectfully Submitted:

Diana McManigle, Clerk/Treasurer

Larry Baker, Mayor