

**MINUTES  
BUHL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
BUHL CITY HALL**

Tuesday, February 16th, 2021.

6:30 p.m.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** By Mayor Klarich at 6:30 P.M.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Councilors Lehman, Carter, Kuechle, Markas and Mayor Klarich. Also, in attendance: Attorney Kearney & Clerk Pervenanze.

Mayor Klarich stated he would like to provide some information to the public prior to the assessment hearing for the rebuild of Woodbridge and Whiteside. The meeting will be at 6:00 P.M. at the Buhl Senior Center on Tuesday March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The regular Council meeting will follow the hearing. For the hearing there will be a sign in sheet for residents/landowners in the project area. Those wishing to speak will have 3 minutes. The Mayor can limit or extend the 3-minute time frame. Residents of the affected area can also submit a letter to City Hall prior to 2:00 P.M. on Monday March 1<sup>st</sup>. Any Council member that owns property in the affected area may not be able to comment during the discussion period. No vote on moving forward with this project will take place during the hearing or the ensuing Council meeting later that night. The vote on the project will be within a month of the hearing. General information for taxpayers on this potential assessment include: taxpayers will have options to pay the assessment all at once or have payments spread over 10 years, assessments qualify for state tax deductions, & certain taxpayers can qualify for differed payments. More information will be provided at the public hearing. Additionally, the new rebuild of the road and potential sidewalks will not raise the assessed value of your home. However, it may increase the sale value of your property due to curb appeal.

3. **COUNCIL ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:** None.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

A. Minutes:

- i. Regular Meeting February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.

B. Claims:

i. Payroll #4	\$ 12,740.84
ii. A/P	<u>\$ 93,312.25</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 106,035.09</b>

Motion by Lehman to approve the above consent agenda. Supported by Markas. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. BUSINESS:**

- A. CEDA Presentation. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Representatives from Community & Economic Development Associates (CEDA) gave a presentation regarding a mapping project that highlights reclaimed mining property throughout the area. The group is requesting a letter of support and financial contribution. No action taken.
- B. Campground Appraisal. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Clerk Pervenanze stated the City had the campground appraised due to an interested party in purchasing the property. The appraised amount is \$85,000. Clerk Pervenanze recommended increasing the campsite fee for the upcoming season. Motion by Markas to increase the camping rate from \$7 to \$10 per day. Supported by Carter. Motion carried unanimously.
- C. Local Board of Appeal & Equalization Meeting. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Motion to by Lehman to schedule the LBAE meeting for the City of Buhl on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 10:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. at City Hall. Supported by Kuechle. Motion carried unanimously.
- D. Park/Playground Improvement Grant Committee. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Mayor Klarich stated that the City will be looking into upgrades for Burton Park. There are numerous funding options that the City will explore the first of which is a grant through the DNR. One of the requirements for this grant is to engage the community. Motion by Klarich to appoint Councilor's Lehman & Carter to a committee assisting in the preparation of the park/playground upgrade project. Supported by Kuechle. Motion carried unanimously.

- E. Trapping/City Property. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Clerk Pervenanze stated that a resident expressed concern about traps located on City property in which a dog became trapped. Currently the City does not have anything in ordinance prohibiting trapping. The DNR was informed of this incident. Attorney Kearney & Clerk Pervenanze will research and bring back to the Council.
- F. Fire Fighter Training. Approve/Reject. Chief McDowell requested authorization to send Spencer Kerr to training at the College. Motion by Councilor Carter to approve fire fighter 1 & 2 training for Spencer Kerr at a cost of \$1,370. Supported by Kuechle. Motion carried unanimously.
- G. Utility Billing. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Clerk Pervenanze stated that due to changes at the post office with all in-town mail being sent to St. Paul changes need to be made to keep electric utility data confidential. Residents will see a full-page bill for this next cycle. City staff is also recommending the Council authorize the purchase of e-billing software which will help decrease postage cost in the long run and give residents another option on how to receive their bill. Motion by Lehman to approve the purchase of e-billing software. Supported by Carter. Motion carried unanimously.
- H. Damian Addition Curb/Storm Sewer Project. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Mayor Klarich stated that due to the high cost of this project it is not feasible at this time. Motion by Klarich to cancel the public hearing and pause the Damian project. Supported by Lehman. Motion carried unanimously.
- I. Water Tower. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Clerk Pervenanze outlined the 3 options the City has for addressing the aging water tower. These options include; refurbishing the interior/exterior of the tank estimated to cost \$182,00-\$213,000 plus yearly maintenance estimated over \$ 15,000 per year due to the age of tank, total replacement estimated to cost \$625,000 plus maintenance, or replacement with a different type of low maintenance tank estimated between \$260,000-\$500,000. Motion by Lehman to continue pursuing options and schedule meetings with the respective representatives. Supported by Klarich. Motion carried unanimously.
- J. 2021 St. Louis County Solid Waste Fees. Discussion. Approve/Reject. Mayor Klarich stated that St. Louis has increased their solid waste fee's \$15 for a residential property for this year. Motion by Lehman to approve changing the

solid waste fees on the utility bills to reflect the County increase. Supported by Kuechle. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Councilor's Comments:

- Councilor Kuechle stated that water temps are being monitored throughout town. Current temps are in the upper 30's to low 40's. Motion by Kuechle to authorize City Staff to allow residents to trickle water if temps fall to a certain level. Supported by Lehman. Motion carried unanimously.
- Councilor Markas mentioned that the City might want to consider sidewalks right next to the curb on Woodbridge & Whiteside.
- Councilor Carter is continuing the LMC training.

#### Mayor's Comments

This week's Mayor's comments will focus on the changes to our utility billing process. Due to circumstances with the post office beyond the City's control residents will experience some noticeable changes. The first of which is the bill itself. Your new utility bill will be sent in an individually addressed envelope and contain a full-size bill outlining the charges. The bill will list every charge associated with the property. Residents may see charges listed that were previously grouped under the "Misc" category on the old postcards. Line items that you may see on your utility bill include:

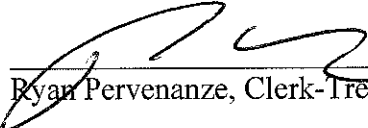
- Water
- Sewer
- Refuse
- Electric
- Wtr Test Fee (This is a state fee that we must remit to them quarterly)
- Fuel Adj Chg (Changes monthly and is set by MN Power)
- Capital Improv (Fee for infrastructure improvements)
- SW Mgmt Tx-R (Tax on the refuse service)
- SW Svc Fee (This is a county fee that we must remit to them quarterly)
- Sewer Svc Fee (Fee for the debt & operations/maintenance of the Central Iron Range Sanitary Sewer District)
- Tx-Fuel Adj (Tax on the fuel adj)
- Sales Tx – E (Tax on the electric)
- Non-radio Ele (This is a surcharge only for those residents that have not converted over to an electric radio read meter)
- Late Fees

Beginning shortly, customers will be able to sign up for electronic billing instead of receiving a paper bill. Please keep an eye out for an upcoming newsletter that will explain the process. If there are any questions, please contact City Hall at 218-258-3226.

In response to a concern on Facebook about utility bill payments, I offer the following. You have two options to pay by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the following month. One is to pay directly at City Hall by using the buzzer at the front entrance, or by using the drop-box by the east entrance to City Hall. Masks must be worn when entering City Hall. The City does not hold checks and late charges start accumulating on the first day of the following month if payment is not received. The drop box is emptied daily and recorded the day of receipt. Remember a check dropped off on a holiday or weekend will not be entered until the next business day.

6. **ADJOURN:** Motion by Kuechle to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Carter. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

  
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John Klarich, Mayor

  
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Ryan Pervenanze, Clerk-Treasurer