

MINUTES
BUHL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
BUHL CITY HALL
10/15/2024

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

6:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER by Mayor Carter at 6:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Councilors: X Hadrava X Kealy X Loeffler X Towner
Mayor: X Carter

Administrator: X Jeffries
Public Works Foreman: X Pink
Attorney: X Kearney
Engineer: X Jamnick
Fire Chief: ___ Lehman
Police Chief: ___ Manner

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/COUNCIL ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

None.

Motion by Kealy to approve the agenda as presented.

Supported by Loeffler.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:

City of Buhl Public Works Foreman Trent Pink:

New space heater for City Public Works Garage to be procured before winter – this is a budgeted item and will come in at approximately \$3,000 –

The Public Works Department is busily preparing for winter – trimming trees for power line clearances, etc. -

Salt mixture for the roadways is in and is ready to be put down as needed –

Patching of the exterior shell of the water ground storage reservoir continues, however painting will likely not occur until spring –

Hydrants around town will be flushed one more time before winter – scheduled for late October – this will be posted around the city, and is expected to take up to 2 full days -

There is black mold present in the basement of the EMS garage – the City should get an environmental assessment to determine the scope and extent of clean-up and/or potential mitigation -

City Engineer John Jamnick of JPJ Engineering, Inc.:

No report -

Administrator Jeffries:

Noted a number of items, including:

1. There is no new recent news on the tornado civil defense siren – It turns but does not make sound. The Administrator has reached out to the controlling organizations, but has not yet heard back from anyone – and will continue to pursue additional in order to attempt to rectify -
2. Noted that there will be an event upcoming to allow individuals to safely dispose of old or expired prescriptions – St. Louis County will be hosting a site at the Virginia Sheriff’s Office (located at the Mt. Iron Community Center) on Saturday, OCTOBER 26, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – all are invited to take advantage of this service –
3. Noted that, for those property owners affected and impacted by the precipitation events of late June 2024, the deadline for applying for Federal Disaster Relief Assistance – October 27, 2024 is the last day to apply for this assistance with FEMA –

More information is available at [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov), or by calling City Hall -

4. Noted that a plan for mitigating water intrusion into the curling club ice surface(s) has been formulated and will be implemented in the next week or two - and

5. Noted that Administration and Public Works recently met with the Mn Rural Water Association and updated the city's Wellhead Protection Program Plan and associated Contingency Plan – this occur approximately every 2 ½ years; all is looking pretty good at this time -

6. CITIZENS FORUM:

None.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes:

- i. Regular City Council Meeting – October 1, 2024
- ii. City Council Working Session – August 8, 2024
- iii. Special City Council Meeting – September 26, 2024

B. Claims:

i. Payroll #19	\$ 14,234.14
ii. A/P	<u>\$ 94,196.08</u>
TOTAL	\$ 108,430.22

Motion by Kealy to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Supported by Hadrava.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. BUSINESS:

- A. Consider Conducting Updated Utility Rates Study for Service Years 2025-2030.

The City is the administrator of the delivery of utility services to its residents. Specifically, the City provides for and administrates water, sanitary sewer, refuse collection and disposal, and electric utility services.

These services are all operated as independent enterprise funds, separate from and not included in the City operations budget, and not affected nor impacted by the City's annual property tax levy.

By design, these enterprise funds should be operated so that the costs of providing these services are fully covered by the revenues collected for each of these services, on a fund-specific basis. In other words, each of these utility services should have rate structures which allow the City to provide all of these services and operate each of these funds without impact on the City's general operating budget.

The most recent rate study update was conducted by David Berg Consulting in the fall of 2020, with recommendations for action and rate structures proposed and designed to be effective until the end of 2025. These rate studies are recommended to be updated on at least a 5-year basis and adjusted accordingly.

David Berg Consulting has indicated a willingness to perform and conduct an updated rate study designed to establish through 2030 for the amount of \$5,000.00.

Recommendation is that the city authorize David Berg Consulting to perform an updated utility rate study to cover the years of 2025-2030.

Motion by Kealy to authorize and approve David Berg Consulting to conduct an updated utility rate study for the City of Buhl, in order to review and/or re-establish utility rates consistent with those required to allow each utility enterprise fund to operate in a revenue-neutral or better business position, for the amount of \$5,000.00.

Supported by Towner.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

It was noted that the pricing appears to be reasonable and competitive -

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Notice of Advertisement for 2024-2025 Recreation Department Winter Rink Attendants – Authorization for Staff to Publicly Post and Publish.

The City desires additional labor services over the winter months to assist in maintaining the attractiveness and safety of the community.

Specifically, the City wants to hire winter Rink Attendants labor for Recreation Department activities, including manning and attending the warming shack, cleaning the rink(s) surfaces, maintaining the ice conditions, monitoring guest and user safety, and other light duties.

Recommendation is to authorize staff to publicly post and publish a Notice of Advertisement to fill these positions.

Motion by Loeffler to authorize staff to publicly post and publish a Notice of Advertisement for 2024-25 Recreation Department Winter Rink Attendant labor positions.

Supported by Towner.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Question was raised regarding who is administering the CPR training – it is the Chisholm EMS -

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Resolution 24-25 for the City to Accept Various Donations for the 2024 Halloween Event.

The City has received a number of donations from local businesses and anonymous donors who have offered goods or currency to the City's Recreation Board as a financial contribution to help offset costs related to the City of Buhl Halloween events and other related recreational activities.

Specifically, the City has received:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Jim's Sports Club Bar & Grill - | Water bottles and chips; |
| • Snicker's Pizza & Pub - | Gift certificates; |
| • BG's Bar & Grill - | Gift certificates; |
| • Village Inn - | Gift certificates; |
| • Keyboard Liquor Store - | \$40 cash; and |
| • Anonymous Donors - | Candy/décor/cash - \$125 |
| value. | |

The City wishes to recognize all those who have contributed in continuing to make this important civic celebration a popular success.

Recommendation is for the City to accept these donations.

Motion by Kealy to authorize the City to accept donations from several area businesses and anonymous donors to the City and its' Recreation Board as financial contributions to help offset costs related to the City of Buhl Halloween events and other recreation related activities, to execute Resolution 24-25 concerning the same, and to acknowledge this donation with appreciation.

Supported by Loeffler.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Roll Call Vote: Hadrava - Aye, Kealy - Aye, Loeffler - Aye, Towner - Aye; Carter - Aye.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Approve Posting of Notice of 2025 Vacancies on City of Buhl:

- 1. Recreation Board (2 positions);**
- 2. Library Board (1 position);**
- 3. Long-range Planning & Zoning Commission (4 positions); and**
- 4. Buhl Economic Development Authority (2 positions).**

The City will realize vacancies on several of its Authorities, Boards, Committees, and Commissions effective January 1, 2025, including specifically:

Recreation Board -	2 vacancies;
Library Board -	1 vacancy;
Long-Range Planning and Zoning Commission -	4 vacancies; and
Buhl Economic Development Authority -	2 vacancies.

It is the City Council's practice to notify the public with regard to vacancies or upcoming vacancies on authorities, boards, committees, commissions, and similar bodies, and to receive and accept solicitations from interested individuals.

The public is hereby notified of these vacancies.

Notices regarding these vacancies will be posted in the usual City notice locations.

Anyone interested in serving in any of these capacities should contact City Hall before December 12, 2024, for potential consideration.

Recommendation is to approve posting of these vacancies in all locations.

Motion by Kealy to provide and post notice regarding vacancies on all affected City authorities, boards, committees, and commissions.

Supported by Loeffler.

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Mayor Carter encouraged all residents to consider applying to serve on these important City bodies -

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Reminder of Working Sessions for 2025 Budget Initiatives.

The City Council conducted an initial dedicated fiscal year 2025 budget working session at 6:30 p.m. on September 26, 2024, in the City Council chambers in City Hall.

The preliminary budget for fiscal year 2025 was introduced at that City Council Working Session, and adopted at a Special City Council Meeting that same evening.

Staff also introduced the City proposed tax levy for fiscal year 2025 at that meeting.

The City adopted and certified this proposed tax levy for fiscal year 2025 to the St. Louis County Auditor on September 30, 2024.

The final budget and tax levy is anticipated to be prepared and completed in December 2024, and must be adopted and certified by December 28, 2024.

Further evaluation and review of the proposed budget is warranted in order to achieve a workable fiscal year 2025 budget that is acceptable to the City Council.

As such, further working session(s) are required and have been scheduled for four (4) additional future dates, to provide for additional necessary or desired evaluation and review of the fiscal year 2025 budget prior to adoption and levy certification.

Those dates are:

October 17 (Thursday);
October 30 (Wednesday);
November 20 (Wednesday); and
December 12 (Thursday) - (if necessary).

All sessions will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Informational only.

F. Other Business.

1. Animal Control Discussion.

As a result of complaints, the question has been raised as to how animal control is presently managed – and whether the City should begin conversations with considering an contract with as local animal shelter –

It was noted that the animal shelter in Chisholm is not able to be serve the City of Buhl, but rather these services may be available from the Mesabi Humane Society located in Virginia.

The Administrator suggests to do additional research and will continue to converse with Mesabi Humane Society to determine whether a process, a plan, and/or an arrangement can be formulated – and to please have patience during this process

It was also noted at all animal shelters are in need of and appreciate donations of time (volunteering) and/or food or funding -

2. Councilor's Comments.

Councilor Kealy:

Commented that the Paul Bunyan Communications equipment structure located at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Wanless Street looks really nice –

Commented that the Meet-the-Candidates event held at the Senior Center on October 14 was really good, and noted that Melody Staffaroni did a very nice job in organizing this event –

Also thanked all the candidates for their time and attention to this important civic event -

Comment received that it would be great for this event to continue into the future –

It was independently noted that there was information disseminated that did not appear to be correct, and urged doing research and being diligent to assure factual data is used when disseminating information to the public –

Councilor Loeffler:

Noted the following events occurring in the near future:

City smoke testing starting October 21 (2 days minimum);
(volunteers welcome to be observers!)

Water Tower Public Input Session – October 21 at the
Senior Center at 6:00 p.m.,

Halloween events (parade, party, dance) at the
Community Center on Saturday, October 26, from
2 p.m. until? - and

Kinney Halloween festivities on Sunday, October 27 -

Summarized the extended voting hours available at City Hall for 2024 absentee voting as follows:

October 26; Saturday – City Hall open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
October 29; Tuesday – City Hall open until 7 p.m.
November 2; Saturday – City Hall open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
November 3; Sunday – City Hall open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
November 4; Monday – City Hall open until 5 p.m.
November 5; Tuesday – City Hall open until 8 p.m.

Councilor Towner:

Noted that everyone is really excited about the upcoming Halloween parade, party, dance, etc. slated for October 26 – and

Noted that there are a lot of people helping out this year, and THANKED ALL for their assistance and time!

3. Mayor's Comments.

Thanked the Senior Center for hosting the Meet-the-Candidates event –
And thanked Melody Staffaroni and all others for the same efforts and initiatives -

Urged families to bring their children out into the outdoors and away from the devices we all are so attached to –

Stressed that it is enjoyable and that it makes memories -

9. **ADJOURN:**

Motion by Kealy to adjourn.

Supported by Towner.

Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

ATTEST:

Tony Jeffries, City Clerk


Brandin Carter, Mayor