

**MINUTES**  
**BUHL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**2/18/2025**

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

6:30 P.M.

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

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Councilors:     X  Kealy         X  Loeffler    \_\_\_ Teska-Erickson     X  Towner  
Mayor:          X  Matthews

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

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/COUNCIL ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:**

**Motion by Towner to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**4. REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

**City Engineer John Jamnick:**

Deferred comments to individual agenda items, as appropriate -

**Administrator Jeffries:**

1.        Noted that some compliments were received from the public regarding the work being done by the City Public Works crew, and thanked the

general public for this, noting that the crew works hard and that it is nice to receive the positive feedback -

2. Indicated that staff has been working with CEDA (Community Economic Development Associates) regarding completing an application for submission to the MN Department of Natural Resources to apply for a grant to expand the Stubler Beach Campground – and that this will be completed by the end of March 2025 –

It was noted that there appears to be general support from other funding agencies regarding this initiative (IRRR, etc.) -

Also indicated that CEDA will be visiting Buhl in the next week to tour the site and meet with staff as a portion of that project -

3. Urged that the City Council consider inviting the Mn Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRR) to visit the City and present an overview of the Agency at the current time and the programming they offer – and to do this at a regular City Council meeting -

**5. CITIZENS FORUM:**

None.

**6. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Minutes:

- i. Regular City Council Meeting – February 4, 2025

B. Claims:

- |               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| i. Payroll #3 | \$ 14,789.44        |
| ii. A/P       | <u>\$ 97,974.70</u> |

**TOTAL                      \$ 112,764.14**

**Motion by Towner to approve the consent agenda as presented.**

**Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

## 7. BUSINESS:

### A. Consider Mold Remediation Proposals for EMS Hall at 201 Forest St.

The City has previously identified issues with the presence of mold in the basement of the EMS Hall, located at 201 Forest Street.

Independent environmental consulting analysis confirmed the presence of mold spores in this area, and recommended remediation of the same.

City staff has solicited proposals from qualified mold remediation contractors; two (2) potential contractors have responded with proposals for these activities.

Either of these potential contractors have the knowledge, wherewithal, and experience to successfully perform these services for the City.

This work can be completed before the middle of April 2025.

**Recommendation is for the City to accept one of the received proposals for remediation of the aforementioned mold issues and to direct the selected remediation contractor to perform said services.**

**Motion by Towner for the City to accept the proposal of ServiceMaster Cleaning & Restoration by Moline for the remediation of mold issues present in the City of Buhl EMS Hall, located at 201 Forest Street, and to direct the selected contractor to perform these remediation services, in an amount not to exceed \$ 4,615.67.**

**Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Staff will research whether or not to consider this matter as a potential insurance claim -

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### B. Consider Resolution 25-12 Approving Applying to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority for a Grant Agreement for the Water Tower Project.

The City has previously been awarded certain funding for construction activities related to municipal water storage system improvements through the 2023 State of Minnesota "bonding bill".

In order to access this funding, the City must enter into a Grant agreement with the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (MPFA).

A portion of the application process with the MPFA is for the City to execute a resolution to submit certain information to the MPFA, and to subsequently

enter into a Grant Agreement with the MPFA upon successful acceptance of an application.

This application is substantially complete, and Resolution 25-12 has been prepared for these purposes.

**Recommendation is for the City to approve and execute this resolution to allow for access of the awarded funding from the 2023 State of Minnesota “bonding bill” for the water tower project.**

**Motion by Towner to approve Resolution 25-12 authorizing the submittal of certain information to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (MPFA), and to enter into a Grant Agreement with the MPFA for the City of Buhl Water Storage Improvements project.**

**Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

Question was raised as to whether or not an application fee is associated with this action –

The Administrator indicated that no, there is not –

The City Engineer indicated that the application is in a state that it may be submitted (to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority) within the next couple of weeks -

Comment received that land ownership (of the site of the new water tower) may be an issue – the City needs to own or control this land site –

It was noted that geotechnical work will be needed to determine locational specifics and the suitability of the soils (through conducting selective soil borings) at the proposed water tower site – these activities are presently scheduled for early spring 2025 -

**Roll call vote.**

**Motion carried unanimously; Teska-Erickson absent.**

C. Consider Approving Applying for IRRR/AOEA Business Energy Retrofit Grant to Re-Lamp Community Center/Curling Club.

The City has recognized that its Community Center/Culing Club, located at 2 Jones Avenue, is in need of updating and upgrading its lighting system(s).



The current systems(s) are a dated combination of metal halide, incandescent, and fluorescent lighting fixtures, with a substantial energy draw associated with them.

Lighting control is also restricted with the present system(s).

Updating and upgrading these system(s) to fully dimmable LED fixtures will result in substantial energy savings and increased control over lighting output.

The design plan is to upgrade all fixtures in the building.

The Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRR), through its Business Energy Retrofit (BER) grant program, administered by the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA), has indicated that these improvements would be eligible to receive grant funding.

This grant funding will cover 1/3 of project costs, up to a maximum of \$20,000; the project is anticipated to cost approximately \$21,000.

**Recommendation is for the City to apply to the IRRR for a BER grant, Administered through AEOA, for updating the lighting systems at the City of Buhl Community Center/Curling Club.**

**Motion by Kealy to direct the Administrator to apply to the Minnesota Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation for a Business Energy Retrofit grant to update and convert the lighting systems in the City of Buhl Community Center/Curling Club to LED fixtures; and to accept and utilize said funds for these purposes if awarded.**

**Supported by Towner.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject/Table.

The Administrator clarified that the maximum grant amount of \$20,000 would apply to a project of \$ 60,000 or greater; this project total estimated cost is preliminarily estimated at approximately \$21,000.

Additional design comments of the flexibility of the system and its individual components was discussed –

It was noted that some of the lighting fixtures have already been replaced (7 surface-mounted fixtures in the lobby area) –

The Administrator commented that noticeable electrical savings should be anticipated with this initiative -

**Motion carried unanimously.**

D. Update on Public Posting of an At-Large Commissioner Vacancy on the Buhl Economic Development Authority (BEDA).

A vacancy currently exists for a representative to serve as a Commissioner on the Buhl Economic Development Authority (BEDA) for a member of the community.

The term of this vacancy expires on December 31, 2026.

The City has recently posted this opening, and will receive and accept Expressions of Interest until 11:00 a.m. on February 28, 2025.

Individuals interested in serving are asked to complete a City of Buhl City Boards/Commissions Expression of Interest, which may be obtained at City Hall during regular business hours.

An Expression of Interest is required to be completed and submitted in order for an interested individual to be considered.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting City Hall.

**Informational only.**

This information will be posted on the City of Buhl website, as will the Expression Of Interest form.

Interested individuals who have contacted the City on the past will need to re-submit and complete an Expression Of Interest.

E. Notice of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development (RD) Single Family Housing Repair Loans and Grants Opportunities.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Rural Development (RD), is now accepting applications for potential single family housing repair loans and grants to fund critical or general home repairs.

The USDA RD offers a program, known as the Section 504 Home Repair program, to provide loans to very-low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their home(s), or provides grants to elderly very-low-income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards.

Loans can be used to repair, improve, or modernize homes or to remove health and safety hazards; grants must be used to remove health and safety hazards.

The maximum loan amount available is \$40,000, and the maximum grant available is \$10,000.

The City of Buhl is located in an eligible rural area for these programs.

Certain qualifying eligibility requirements, including income limits, apply to potential recipients.

Additional information may be obtained at <https://go.usa.gov/xJHPE>, or from City staff at City Hall.

There is no deadline for applying; applications are available and received year-round for as long as funding is available.

**Informational only.**

F. Other Business.

- 1) Discussion of Refuse Services and Contract Extension with WM Wisconsin Minnesota.

It was noted that there have been certain commercial establishments previously included on a list of facilities/locations receiving “donated” services from WM Wisconsin Minnesota, and that this “list” should be revisited for the amendment to the extended contract –

It was further noted that at least one local business had been contacted and told that they would no longer be included on the “list” – and that the City Council was not necessarily made aware of this -

The Administrator explained that the revised and amended waste management services agreement should either include all commercial establishments in the City, or none – and indicated that, both in the best interests of the City as well as to “equal the playing field”, the City should not offer any services to any private operation or concern – and that all locations on the “list” should be either City-owned locations or locations with a definite connection benefitting the City by their operation or operations -

It was also noted that this item did not go before the Public Utilities Commission, and that it should have –

The Administrator indicated that it does not appear that a Public Utilities Commission actually was formed or exists for the City –

It was noted that the “list” should have come back before the City Council for approval; the Administrator indicated that the “list” has



not yet been finalized and will be brought before the City Council for ultimate approval of the (waste management contract) amendment –

Extended discussion regarding this item and specific actions continued – including how services received from an independent third party should be managed, ensued -

G. Councilor's Comments.

Councilor Kealy –

Questioned what is happening at BEDA at the moment – why meetings have not recently occurred and questioned what the direction of this entity is at the current time –

Discussion regarding the above between members of the City Council ensued –

The Mayor indicated that it may be uncertain that there is an active BED at this time due to the present vacancies that exist for this body -

H. Mayor's Comments.

Made Comment regarding the current status of refuse pick-up – and questioned why any business in town should deserve preferential treatment -

Made comment regarding the Public Utilities Commission – and indicated that he has not seen any enabling resolution suggesting that this body was properly formed –

The Administrator indicated that he also is not aware of any enabling language or instrument -

Thanked the community for its support and commitment to getting a new water tower constructed -

**8. ADJOURN:**

**Motion by Towner to adjourn.**

**Supported by Loeffler.**

**Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.**



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James Matthews, Mayor

ATTEST:



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Tony Jeffries, City Clerk