

BELT

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

March 5, 2025

The first regularly scheduled meeting of March 2025 was called to order beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance. In attendance were Mayor James Olson; Aldermen Paul Heikkila, April Wells, Corbin Keaster, and Becky Gorton; Clerk-Treasurer Lynn Schilling; Public works personnel Codi Heikkila; Planning Board member Rolf Johnson; and members of the public including Penni Hoe, Casey Dawson, James Kendall, and 2 others.

PUBLIC COMMENT: James Kendall was present (statement attached) to urge the Council to compel the mayor to declare a state of emergency and repair the dike section behind the rodeo grounds. Kendall stated that the city has been aware for some time of the badly eroded section, and that now that flood season is upon us with heavy snow melt coming out of the mountains, it is a real liability and risk to leave the dike unrepaired. Other members of the public agreed and mirrored Kendall's statement. Kendall also suggested getting a bid going for cleaning up the creek floodway, an event that has been neglected in the past several years.

Casey Dawson was present to make several requests on the part of Little League in Belt. She stated that record numbers of kids were signed up for this year and they were requesting the city of supply port a potties beginning April 1, she further requested permission for Little League to use the tennis courts by the library as a batting cage. In addition to those 2 requests, she also requested use of the city pole barn for storage of Little League equipment as well as the city owned pitcher's mound, and asked for permission to expand and improve the little ball field with an eye towards a possible extended season in the Fall.

The Minutes from the previous meeting were submitted for approval. They were approved by a vote of those present. The claims and warrants were submitted for approval and release. They were also approved by a unanimous vote of those council members present.

The Complaint Log was reviewed without comment or action.

NEW BUSINESS: A discussion with representatives from Republic Services related to complaints and poor service was again tabled until the next meeting, as no one from Republic Services was present.

The Council reviewed requests by Little League a motion was made, seconded, and carried to put port a potties in the park by April 1; to allow Little League to use the tennis court as a batting cage by covering the area in net; to use the City Pole Barn for Little League Storage of 2 mounds and outfield fence panels (with the possibility of covered outside storage for the panels); and improvements to the little field being approved at Little League expense for this year.

The Council considered immediate action for repair of the eroded section of dike behind the rodeo grounds. It was pointed out that the section of dike in question is owned by DEQ since their quiet title acquisition of this area and various others within Belt in 2018. Alderman Keaster urged the Council to reach out to DEQ asking for their help and advice in fixing the dike since it is their property. He further recommended only doing an engineered project to repair the dike and taking the immediate temporary action of putting down rip rap in the eroded sloughed off area. Alderman P. Heikkila stated that rip rap

could probably be attained from the state from rock at the rest area. The rest of the Council agreed, and Mayor Olson stated that he would contact DEQ. It was further pointed out that though DEQ had taken quiet title of the land in question, it did not absolve the city from its responsibility to maintain and repair the flood dike throughout Belt.

The Council reviewed and discussed a 1-year proposal from Andy Newcomer to be selected as the new City Attorney for the City of Belt. A motion was made to approve the proposal and execute the contract. That motion was seconded and carried by a unanimous vote of those present.

The Council reviewed and considered proposed Resolution 816 – Flood Plain Building Permit fee schedule. After the Resolution was read, Rolf Johnson recommended that the matter be tabled for future consideration, to allow the Flood Plain Corrective Action Committee to review and study the enforcement process (now in progress) before going on to permit fee setting. After considerable discussion the Council unanimously resolved to table the Resolution for the time being.

OLD BUSINESS: Rolf Johnson presented an update with respect to the ongoing Corrective Action Plan compliance with FEMA's NFIP. He announced that meetings with the owners of 11 properties currently earmarked for the enforcement of flood plain violation, would be conducted and completed in the following week.

PUBLIC WORKS INPUT: Codi Heikkila reported that DEQ conducted their annual inspection of the water/sewer system with only very minor mandated actions. He further reported that the 3rd lagoon was close to overflow capacity but was being closely monitored. C. Heikkila closed in saying that Jeremy Hiatt would be performing routine skid steer maintenance and teaching the public works employees in the process.

COUNCIL REPORTS: Alderman Keaster requested that the Ordinance addressing the keeping of chickens in Belt be reviewed, with an eye towards amendment that will allow the keeping of up to 4 laying hens, in well kept pens and containment, with no roosters being allowed. The item will be considered on the next Agenda.

CLERK-TREASURER INPUT: None

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Olson reported that the long-standing leak in Nadine Hardinger's service line was being repaired. He stated that the contractor involved had dug up the area and discovered that the leak existed in Hardinger's service line between the curb stop and the water main. He further stated that JR Civil would repair it when ARPA water project resumed in the Spring.

Olson further stated that he would be meeting with Great West regarding the SRF funding, addressing the possibility of rate increases to fund the project, and also that Spring ARPA project construction would be addressed with contractor requests that public works employees turn and test various main valves prior to the ARPA contractor resuming project construction.

PUBLIC INPUT: None

There being no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.