

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF CROSSLAKE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2022
10:00 A.M. – CITY HALL

The Council for the City of Crosslake held a Special Meeting on Thursday, January 6, 2022. The following Council Members were present: Mayor Dave Nevin, Aaron Herzog and Marcia Seibert-Volz. Dave Schrupp and John Andrews attended via Zoom. Dave Schrupp was attended via Zoom because he was in Florida and John Andrews attended via Zoom for medical reason. Also in attendance were City Administrator Mike Lyonais, City Clerk Char Nelson, Planner-Zoning Coordinator Cheryl Stuckmayer, Park Director TJ Graumann, Public Works Director Ted Strand, Heavy Equipment/Sewer Operators Nate Deshayes, Joe Chase and Seth Wannebo, and Echo Publishing Reporter Nancy Vogt. Northland Press Reporter Paul Boblett attended via Zoom. There were five audience members in City Hall and on Zoom.

Mayor Nevin called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. Mayor Nevin explained that he called this meeting because he was told by staff that he could not see the applications received for the Zoning Administrator position until the Council decided a process for hiring. Marcia Seibert-Volz stated that five applications were received and that staff is suggesting that three of the five applicants be interviewed. Ms. Seibert-Volz stated that the Personnel Committee should have gone through the applications and reviewed the training and experience in order to rank the applicants, rather than staff.

Char Nelson stated that staff reviewed the applications and determined that two of the applicants did not meet the minimum requirements for the position, which are listed in the job description. Ms. Nelson stated that this is the same practice that has been used in the past and that the Personnel Committee has never been involved with reviewing the applications. Aaron Herzog stated that the Council should trust staff to review and rank the applicants, noting that if there were 100 applications, the Council would not want to go through each of those.

Dave Schrupp suggested that the Council use the same process that was used for interviews for the Park Director a few years ago, including these guidelines: All council members be involved in the interviews. No single council member is to contact an applicant or their employer. Staff will arrange interviews with applicants. Resumes will be passed out at the interview meeting and returned to staff after the meeting. Applicants will be advised to have no discussion with any council members prior to the interviews. If they are contacted, they need to tell staff. The same questions will be asked during the interview of all applicants. MOTION 01SP1-01-22 WAS MADE BY JOHN ANDREWS AND SECONDED BY DAVE SCHRUPP TO INTERVIEW THREE OF THE FIVE APPLICANTS THAT MET THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE POSITION, USING THE CRITERIA OUTLINED BY DAVE SCHRUPP. ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES.

Dave Nevin asked if the public works employees are hired as sewer operators. Mike Lyonais stated that they were. Dave Nevin stated that he was contacted from somebody at the Pine River Sanitary District about People Service which prompted him to contact People Service to see what they could do for Crosslake. Aaron Herzog asked why he is looking at a proposal from People

Service today for the first time, which is dated June 2021. Dave Schrupp, John Andrews and Aaron Herzog stated that they were not aware of this proposal. Dave Schrupp stated that the Mayor mentioned something about People Service to him, but they never met to discuss it. Mr. Schrupp stated that staff is doing a fine job and he is not sure why the Mayor would want to bring a company in to run the sewer plant. Dave Nevin stated that Ted Strand will be retiring soon and asked who would replace him. Nate Deshayes said from the audience that he could replace Mr. Strand because he has the license necessary to run the sewer plant. Mr. Nevin stated that he was told by Mr. Strand that there was no one qualified.

Troy Bauch, AFSCME Union representative, addressed the Council and stated that this entire process is not anything he has seen in his entire career. Mr. Bauch stated that usually the Mayor would have talked to the Council about this before meeting with People Service. Mr. Bauch stated that on May 13, 2021, he received a call from the public works employees that the Mayor had said he was bringing friends in to tour the sewer plant and that the friends turned out to be People Service. Mr. Bauch immediately called the City Administrator, who knew nothing about the tour. Mr. Bauch then called the City's labor attorney, because staff felt their jobs were in jeopardy. Dave Nevin stated that they weren't in jeopardy. Mr. Bauch asked why the Mayor had been so secretive and stated that Mike Lyonais knows that there is an employee that holds the required licensure. Mr. Bauch submitted a data request and received copies of emails between Dave Nevin and People Service, used on Mr. Nevin's private email address, detailing that the Mayor and People Service representatives went out for dinner and drinks. Mr. Bauch stated that he found this concerning. Mr. Bauch stated that the Mayor should have used the RFP process to get bids on these services. Mr. Bauch stated that the Mayor should be grateful that the City has good employees especially now with the uncertainty of unemployment. Mr. Bauch stated that these employees feel undervalued and that a sewer license is a valuable asset for them to have because cities are looking for sewer operators.

Mr. Bauch asked the Mayor what his end goal was because it was not to save the City money. The People Service contract was expensive. Dave Nevin replied that it is not his intention to get rid of employees but rather to free up their time so that they can do other things. Ted Strand stated that they are busy and could use more help. Mr. Strand added that he told the Mayor that Mr. Deshayes had the required license to run the plant and that the others are in the process of obtaining theirs. Dave Nevin asked if the City wanted three licensed operators.

Marcia Seibert-Volz asked why Mr. Bauch hadn't emailed her a copy of the proposal from People Service. Mr. Bauch replied that Mr. Nevin shared it with her through their private emails last summer. Ms. Seibert-Volz stated that was a long time ago and she probably deleted it. Ms. Seibert-Volz stated that the proposal never went anywhere because the Council did not want to consider it. Dave Nevin stated that he did not think the Council talked about it at a meeting. Dave Schrupp stated the issue has never been on an agenda and questioned why the Mayor would give People Service a tour of the plant beforehand.

MOTION 1SP01-02-22 WAS MADE BY JOHN ANDREWS AND SECONDED BY AARON HERZOG TO END ALL DISCUSSIONS PERTAINING TO PEOPLE SERVICE. Dave Schrupp encouraged Dave Nevin to put such items on the council agendas so that they can talk about them ahead of time. Mr. Schrupp stated that there needs to be reasons to make changes and

that this did not make sense. ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES. Marcia Seibert-Volz noted that a future Council could bring this up for discussion again. Dave Nevin stated that he is just looking for ideas to help the City and thought he could gather the information first and then bring it to the Council. Mr. Nevin stated that he went out of bounds and he apologized. Mr. Nevin stated that he has no relationship with the City Administrator and that they need to work on that. Mr. Nevin stated that he does not feel like he can talk to any of the staff.

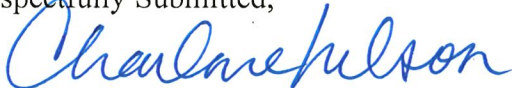
Dave Nevin stated that the lease with the County for the Public Works Facility ends in 2023 and that the City needs to start thinking about what they want to do then. Aaron Herzog stated that staff should be involved with the discussions with the County. Dave Schrupp stated that he would like monthly updates from staff on how the talks are proceeding. Ted Strand stated that both the County and the City have space needs and that together they could expand the existing building. Mike Lyonais explained the conditions of the lease, noting that either party could buy the other out for the cost of the building. Mr. Lyonais asked the Mayor where public works would move to if they sold the building to the County. The Mayor stated that they should look at moving the public works department to the community center. Marcia Seibert-Volz stated that if Ted Strand has space needs, he should share that information with the Council. MOTION 01SP1-03-22 WAS MADE BY JOHN ANDREWS AND SECONDED BY MARCIA SEIBERT-VOLZ TO DIRECT TED STRAND AND MIKE LYONAIIS TO MEET WITH THE COUNTY TO DISCUSS THEIR THOUGHTS AND NEEDS, TO DIRECT TED STRAND AND MIKE LYONAIIS TO PRESENT TO THE COUNCIL THE NEEDS OF THE CITY, TO DIRECT STAFF TO KEEP THE COUNCIL ABREAST OF THE DISCUSSIONS, AND TO PUT THIS ITEM ON THE FEBRUARY COUNCIL AGENDA. ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES. Dave Nevin stated that his reason to move public works to the community center is because the park needs more room as well and suggested that the park be added to discussions.

Dave Nevin apologized to the Public Works staff again.

Mark Wessels of Fifty Lakes addressed the Council and stated he thinks it is fine for one council member to get information about outsourcing jobs and stated that he was part of the change when Crow Wing County took over servicing the City's Planning and Zoning Department.

MOTION 01SP1-04-22 WAS MADE BY AARON HERZOG AND SECONDED BY MARCIA SEIBERT-VOLZ TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 11:10 A.M. MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL AYES.

Respectfully Submitted,



Charlene Nelson
City Clerk