

**City of Fairmont  
100 Downtown Plaza  
Fairmont, MN 56031**

City Council Minutes  
Regular Meeting

June 24, 2024  
City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Fairmont City Council met in regular session at the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Baarts called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Council present: Lee Baarts, Mayor  
Wayne Hasek, Councilmember  
Britney Kawecki, Councilmember  
Randy Lubenow, Councilmember  
Michele Miller, Councilmember

Absent: Jay Maynard, Councilmember

Staff present: Matt Skaret, City Administrator  
Ned Koppen, Economic Development Coordinator  
Matthew York, Director of Public Works/Utilities  
Michael Hunter, Chief of Police  
Hannah Neusch, Water Resources Technician  
Betsy Steuber, City Clerk  
Cara Brown, City Attorney, via telephone  
(Flaherty & Hood)  
Troy Nemmers, Bolton & Menk (Contracted Services)

**PLEDGE OF  
ALLEGIANCE**

The City Council and all present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF  
AGENDA**

Councilmember Kawecki asked agenda item 10.1 be removed based on not following the City of Fairmont: City Council Rules of Procedure adopted by Council on March 22, 2022 and updated by Council on October 24, 2022 (with regards to staff time spent on an individual councilmember's agenda request). Motion was made by Councilmember Kawecki, seconded by Councilmember Lubenow to remove agenda item 10.1 from the agenda; the following voted in favor thereof: Kawecki and Lubenow; and the following voted against the same: Hasek and Miller; Abstained: None; Absent: Maynard. Mayor Baarts broke the tie vote, voting in favor thereof. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilmember Lubenow, seconded by Councilmember Kawecki to approve the agenda as presented without agenda item 10.1.; the following voted in favor thereof: Hasek, Kawecki,

and Lubenow; and the following voted against the same: Miller; Abstained: None; Absent: Maynard. Motion carried.

#### **ROTATING VOTES**

Please note that votes taken by roll call are called by the City Clerk on a rotating basis; however, the written minutes list the Councilmembers in alphabetical order.

#### **RECOGNITION/ PRESENTATIONS**

Dustin Optaz, Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Manager of BerganKDV presented the 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Lubenow to accept the 2023 audit and approve the distribution of the 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. All present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Economic Development Coordinator Koppen provided Council with a FEDA update. Coordinator Koppen stated over the last year through the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), FEDA awarded \$350,000 in loans and currently has \$150,000 approved waiting to be closed. Additionally, FEDA approved over \$45,000 to ten businesses in forgivable loans through the Façade Program. FEDA closed on the sale of 4 lots in the White Tail Ridge development with Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership.

#### **PUBLIC DISCUSSION/ COMMENT**

Richard Bradley, Fairmont resident, addressed the Council to “clear up some confusion of recent statements made in the council chambers” regarding the Fairmont Taxpayers Coalition and the court proceedings of the recent litigation.

Steve Tudor, Fairmont resident, requested Council’s consideration to allow honeybees in City limits (beekeeping is not specifically addressed in City Code). Mr. Tudor provided a copy of the *Model Beekeeping Ordinance* prepared by the Minnesota Hobby Beekeepers Association to be disbursed to Council following the meeting.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Baarts introduced the consent agenda items as listed for consideration to be enacted by one motion unless requested that an item be removed and included under new business. Mayor Baarts reviewed the consent items, as follows:

- Minutes from the June 6, 2024 Special City Council Meeting
- Minutes from the June 10, 2024 Regular City Council Meeting
- Minutes from the July 11, 2024 City Council Workshop
- Payment of June 2024 accounts payable
- An Event Permit for Community Worship at Sylvania Park Bandshell by First Congregation UCC & St. Johns UCC on Sunday, July 14, 2024

- An Event Permit for a Disc Golf Event at Cedar Creek Park sponsored by Wecovery/Beyond Brink/Y.E.S. on August 25, 2024
- An Event Event Permit for a Disc Golf Event at Cedar Creek Park sponsored by Wecovery/Beyond Brink/Healing Hearts on September 14, 2024
- An Event Permit for Cardinal Power Softball to host a Tournament on July 6 & 7, 2024 at Cardinal Park and Winnebago Avenue Sports Complex
- Acceptance of Determan's Resignation and Authorization of Staff to advertise for a Part-Time Building Inspector
- Information on the 2023 State Demographer Population Estimates
- A License Application for Sale of Edible Products infused with THC for Kwik Trip Inc., of Fairmont
- An Event Permit for Downtown G-PAC to host Crazy Days in Downtown Fairmont from Thursday, July 18 to Saturday, July 20, 2024

Councilmember Kawecki mentioned the unmatching numbers on the population signage at the entrances to Fairmont. Administrator Skaret will contact MnDOT to have uniformity amongst the population signage. Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Hasek to approve the consent agenda. All present voted in favor. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**  
**ROLL CALL**  
**Item 8.1**

Hannah Neusch, Water Resources Technician, provided a brief overview of the materials covered, and discussion held during the June 11, 2024 workshop on restoration of city owned farmland and the potential changes to farmland lease agreements. Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Hasek to approve changes to the City owned ag land lease agreements following the 2024 crop year, full restoration of the Cedar Creek Farm to native prairie habitat (approximately 85 acres), installation of native prairie strips on the east side of the Day Farm (approximately 2 acres), incorporating the use of cover crops and reduced tillage into the City of Fairmont agricultural lease agreements (totaling 480 acres less the Cedar Creek Farm prairie restoration acres and the Day Farm native prairie strips acres) and the reduction of mowing at Cedar Creek Park and the Day Farm as directed by Public Works Director York; the following voted in favor thereof: Hasek, Kawecki, and Miller; and the following voted against the same: Lubenow; Abstained: None; Absent: Maynard. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS  
ROLL CALL**

Public Works/Utilities Director York stated Bolton & Menk notified the City of an amendment to the Gomsrud Park Project Task Order #1 due to scope modifications being made. Director York indicated the amendment has been reviewed and is seeking Council approval. Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Hasek to approve Amendment #1 to Task Order #1 (2023) between the City of Fairmont and Bolton & Menk for Design Services for the Gomsrud Park Phase #1; the following voted in favor thereof: Hasek, Lubenow, and Miller; and the following voted against the same: Kaweck; Abstained: None; Absent: Maynard. Motion carried.

**MOTION  
Item 9.2**

Public Works/Utilities Director York stated the City has been working with Bolton & Menk on the Lake Avenue Project since 2023. With prior Council approval, Bolton & Menk created and submitted preliminary project plans to the State, resulting in \$1.5 million being awarded, to the City, thru the Local Road Improvement Program(LRIP). Since the design was based on preliminary plans by Bolton & Menk, Staff recommends continuing with Bolton & Menk for the design and bidding services. Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Lubenow to approve Task Order #4 (Bolton & Menk) for the Lake Avenue Local Road Improvement Program Design and Bidding Services. All present voted in favor. Motion carried.

**ROLL CALL  
Item 9.3**

Motion was made by Councilmember Lubenow, seconded by Councilmember Miller to approve the Community Development Director position job description and authorize advertising for the position; the following voted in favor thereof: Kaweck, Lubenow, and Miller; and the following voted against the same: Hasek; Abstained: None; Absent: Maynard. Motion carried.

**MOTION  
Item 9.4**

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Lubenow to approve change order #1 – Airport Lift Station with Beemer Companies for \$15,000. All present voted in favor. Motion carried.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcements were made.

**STAFF/LIAISON  
REPORTS**

Director York provided Council with a Flood/Storm Update. Since Friday afternoon, staff spent over 150 hours working on high water and storm activities. Director York stated between Friday and Sunday, 30.6 million gallons went through the Wastewater Treatment Facility and as a reference, 36.79 million gallons went through the Facility during the entire month of February. Various systems were bypassed, as allowable by law, based on current conditions to ensure we would not lose the Facility during that time. Councilor Kaweck posed questions on the dam

and dam operations during the time of extreme rainfall, which led to Councilor Hasek questioning the structural integrity of the dam. Director York will examine further.

Administrator Skaret proposed holding a goal setting workshop with Council on July 30, 2024.

Councilmember Kawecki thanked Fairmont citizens for completing the on-line survey for 1 Watershed 1 Plan and for those that attended the Fairmont Lions Fly-In Breakfast.

Councilmember Lubenow reported the Park Board met and held discussion on the CIP for 2025 and the city owned ag land that may be taken out of production.

Councilmember Miller reported that Visit Fairmont recently purchased signs to be placed around town showcasing our lakes and that interest and enrollment continues to be high with the various CER programs and offerings.

Mayor Baarts attended the Region 9 meeting, with the next meeting to be held in October. As Gomsurd restrooms are currently closed due to vandalism, Mayor Baarts reminded citizens to be respectful of City properties. Mayor Baarts provided an overview on upcoming local happenings.

Councilmember Lubenow asked everyone to act responsibility and safely in and around the water, especially with the high levels we are currently experiencing.

## ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Hasek, to adjourn the meeting, as there was no further business to come before the Council. All present voted in favor. Motion carried. The Fairmont City Council adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
Betsy Steuber, City Clerk

  
Lee C. Baarts, Mayor