

EAST BETHEL TOWN HALL MEETING

November 14, 2012

The East Bethel City Council met on November 14, 2012 at 7:00 PM for their Town Hall meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob DeRoche Richard Lawrence Heidi Moegerle

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Bill Boyer Steve Voss

ALSO PRESENT: Jack Davis, City Administrator
Rita Pierce, Fiscal and Support Services Director
Nate Ayshford, Public Works Manager
Nick Schmitz, Building Official/Code Enforcement Officer
Mark DuCharme, Fire Chief
Craig Jochum, City Engineer
Michelle Orlando, Lieutenant, Anoka County Sheriff's Office

Call to Order **The November 14, 2012 Town Hall meeting was called to order by Mayor Lawrence at 6:00 PM.**

Adopt Agenda **Moegerle made a motion to adopt the November 14, 2012 Town Hall meeting agenda. DeRoche seconded; all in favor, motion carries.**

Public Input Lawrence, "We would like to recognize our two new Council Members Ron Koller & Tom Ronning. Thank you for volunteering your time. Also, I have a note from Steve Voss he is out of town for work. That is primarily why he did not run for re-election, because his work has become more demanding on him. The Town Hall meetings were based on his ideas, so we acknowledge his absence today and he apologizes for not being able to be here."

Davis, "We have four main commissions in the City of East Bethel that we seek volunteers to serve on. The Parks, Roads, Planning and Economic Development Authority. There are currently vacancies on all of these. We are looking for individuals who are willing to work on these that have the interest of the City of at heart and who are willing to sacrifice a little bit of time to make the City of East Bethel a better place to live. If anyone here is interested or if you know anyone that is interested in serving on these commissions, please come by City Hall or give us a call and we will give you an information material to apply for these. And we strongly encourage anyone that has any interest to apply for this."

Davis introduced staff as follows: Nick Schmitz, Building Official/Code Enforcement Officer, Nate Ayshford, Public Works Manager, Craig Jochum, City Engineer, Wendy Warren, Deputy City Clerk, Mark DuCharme, Fire Chief, and Michelle Orlando, liaison with the Sheriff's Office, Rita Pierce, Fiscal and Support Services Director. Those are the staff and they do a fantastic job. One of the things we have done over the past couple years is there has been a reduction of staff at the City. All these people have taken on additional roles and duties and have done so with a great attitude. I certainly appreciate that and I know City Council does, so thank you."

DeRoche, We also have a new Community Development Director/City Planner who is in the interim of coming. She will be starting December 4th, Colleen Winter." Moegerle, "And

once again, on December 4th, Jack will only have one title, City Administrator. As opposed to City Administrator, City Planner, and Building Official. I think we are all looking forward to that development.”

Moegerle, “At this point we are interested in your comments. We have questions about how to get more public engagement. But we are interested about why you are here. We are here for you. Is there anybody here with questions?”

Diane Jacobson, “Who is the mayor?” Lawrence, “I am the Mayor, Richard Lawrence. Re-elected.”

Tom Ronning, “I have been asked a couple times and I didn’t know the answer. This Jackson Street, who is paying for it? I wasn’t sure if it was the county or somebody and then it comes out that we are paying for it. But it has been planned for, saved for. Maybe one of you can explain how that process works.” Davis, “The City has a Capital Improvements Plan for streets projects. We have a Streets Capital Improvement Plan and a MSA Capital Improvement Plan. Jackson Street is a State Aid Street so we receive approximately \$550,000 a year from MnDOT which we place into a fund for those streets that qualify for state aid. Jackson Street is one of them so the funds for this project do not come out of the general fund. Or any transfers that were made to the Street Capital Improvements funds. This project was paid essentially from those funds we received from MnDOT.”

Becky Knisley, “I am wondering how we can approve the paving of the roads in Athens (that was part of the whole Great River Energy (GRE) deal) prior to us being notified on Sunset Road about the lines going down Sunset Road, although that was part of the whole package agreement with Athens Township. And that all happened prior to us even being notified that there was a public hearing for GRE.” Lawrence, “The paving of the roads, it is a shared road between Athens and East Bethel. I believe we also plow the snow on that road. Isn’t that correct Jack?” Davis, “That road was one was always in question about who was going to maintain it since it serves about 100 East Bethel residents in the mobile home court. That was one of the reasons we paved it. It is true that we did have some discussion with Athens; they did request we do this. But, it wasn’t the reason we did it. We felt there was a benefit to the East Bethel residents and that made it a good reason to do it. It had come to the point where the entrance to the trailer court was becoming a concern for emergency service vehicles. People were actually driving off the road on the shoulders.”

Knisley, “I am aware of that the trailer court had been asking the City and Athens both to get the road paved. What I don’t understand is why, when we had the GRE public hearing at the Planning Commission and the Council meeting, why things like that weren’t brought to our attention. That we had a deal going with Athens.” Moegerle “I think that when we were working to find a way that all three jurisdictions, Athens, Linwood and East Bethel could come to an agreed route that would actually connect up, there were discussions that were global. When you come into those kind of situations, then you have those discussions. Then you take it to the public and discuss the issue that is required for the public hearing. The public hearing part of that was just dealing with Sunset Road. The public hearing is not about the entire resolution of a lawsuit. So, not that it was secretive, it just wasn’t the issue. It is just some things are required on certain thing and the public hearing was required on Sunset Road, not the global resolution of the legalities.”

Knisley, “That has a direct effect on why it was going down Sunset Road. Because there had been agreement struck prior to.” Moegerle, “There had been discussions.” DeRoche, “There

were no agreements made. The discussion went right up until the last Council meeting before.” Davis, “There was discussion right up to the last Council meeting. That was part of the deal. It needed all parties’ approval. So it wasn’t approved until the end of May.” Knisley, “But still you guys knew that was part of the deal and that is very irritating as a resident to find out all these things have happened that we, as the public, were not made aware of. And things that went on, under the table, behind closed doors.”

Lawrence, “There was no under the table.” DeRoche, “You have brought this up and accused us of basically being on the take and being under the table. And just for the record, I have spoken with an attorney privately and there is a thing called slander. If you cannot prove that I took money under the table, or that things were done dirty dealing, then you may not want to be making those statements.” Knisley, “Maybe ‘under the table’ isn’t the right thing. But, the concept of coming to an agreement with Athens and you knowing that you are working on an agreement with Athens. And not letting the people know that you are working on this agreement with Athens and knowing this is what you are going to do for Athens and what you want in East Bethel and this is what you are going to do for the people in Athens is very misleading.”

DeRoche, “Part was done in closed session. Anytime there is litigation it is done in closed session. It is done that way by law until there is a decision made. After discussion in the back, we come back and, if there is a motion to be made, it is done in the public. Until that time, it is not public information.” Knisley, “I understand that. But, if GRE can apply for the CUP for Route A and it was denied, how does the City then issue the CUP for something they didn’t even apply for.” Davis, “A CUP was issued for Route I, GRE did not deny it. Then GRE moved to amend it with a modification of Route I.” Knisley, “But, what I don’t understand is how it can be that they didn’t apply for a CUP for Route I, but yet you issued one for Route I.” Moegerle, “They amended their application to make it Route I.” Davis, “They requested to amend their application to make it Route I.”

Lawrence, “They gave to us all these routes that they were looking at. We had a stack of paperwork from GRE that showed us every route they decided on. They came to us and said, “You show us a route that will work for all three cities.” And we came up with Route I. They hadn’t applied for it, but it was a route that they had said would work for them. All those options in the book were things that were acceptable. Why would they give us something if they weren’t going to consider it? I had to consider everything in that book as a viable tool. They gave us a chance to do something that no city has done, to come up with a combined effort to have something that works for all of us. That is why it was approved for Route I. And according to the attorney when we denied Route A, it was recommended from the legal standpoint that we give them some access to the City. And it was also the attorney’s recommendation that we give them Route I, with some modification.”

Knisley, “Can you tell me again why Route A was denied?” Lawrence, “Because it was the most invasive route through the City. When I drove the route with the City Administrator and it is not something I just looked and said I didn’t like.” Davis, “Of all the routes that were considered viable, it had more impact on more residents than any other route. Either directly or indirectly. That is why the City chose to deny Route A. As a result of that, GRE entered into litigation, sued us over that. We were required to approve an alternate route. That is when we approved Route I. Before it went to court, they recommended voluntary mediation. After two meetings, GRE gave us an opportunity where they advised us they would accept a route compatible with Linwood, Athens and East Bethel. Meetings were held to see if they were interested. Route I-1 was the one that was most acceptable to all three of

those. Then GRE accepted Route I-1.”

DeRoche, “We are not going to re-litigate this. You have asked these questions over and over through numerous times of the same questions. A lot of people put in a lot of time at a lot of meetings. Whenever there was information, the public got it. It was discussed at meetings. It was going to go in somewhere. They wanted A, we wanted I. The courts recommended mediation, the three cities got together because, had East Bethel taken it on and maybe won, GRE could have walked over Linwood and Athens and done whatever they wanted because they are not cities. They kind of went on the skirts of East Bethel with this and recognized that GRE is going to go somewhere. No matter where it goes, there is going to be someone that is not a happy camper. Sometimes up here you have to make a decision. And, how much do you want to spend on it. You can only answer the question so many times. I have more than enough information at home if it ever had to be re-gone though. You keep asking the same questions and getting the same answers. Nothing was done on the sly; I didn’t make any money off it.”

Knisley “I am not accusing anybody of making any money. It is the idea of and I don’t know who went to Athens to make the deal of paving of the roads and I know GRE purchased the lighting of another ball field for them. And I also know that GRE was going to be paving or Class V a trail if it was on Route A.” Moegerle, “That wasn’t part of it. That was a desire of a Council Member. Brainstorming of possible solutions. But it is very clear when you poll the GRE Committee Members that this was never something that was on the table. That was a dream. It may have been discussed.”

DeRoche, “The parties that were involved: Jack was appointed and the city attorney was appointed to find out how we can come to an agreement. None of us Council Members can go out independently and do that. It is staff’s job. It is not that they went out and worked out these deals. It was a lot of running around and talking to people to find out what is it going to take from this City and what is it going to take from that. How can we come to an agreement here without letting it go to court and letting a judge throw a coin in the air (who really had no interest in it at all) and make a decision. It makes a lot more sense to come to an agreement with the two townships and the City and say, ‘GRE is a big conglomerate. So let’s try and minimize this as much as we can with as little as impact.’ There is no way we were going to tell them, ‘No, you can’t put it in East Bethel.’”

Lawrence, “This is the only time that we can have our ‘say so’ on a 69kv route. The other issue was the Indian burial grounds on Typo Creek Drive; they wanted to stay away from that.” Knisley, “We went to the Linwood meeting and they asked why it wasn’t going down 85.” DeRoche, “When we - Jack and I - went to their meeting, they had all the information.” Davis, “As far as who made the deal, there was no ‘deal’ made. I met with the Athens Town Board Supervisor and asked them if they were interested in the relocation of the 69kv route. He said they would be interested, but they would ask one thing of East Bethel. That was they wanted a street paved and would we consider a non-annexation agreement. I told them the City Council could discuss this. We met with Linwood in a public meeting. Bob was with me. We presented this to them also. They said they had no objections to changing the route. What they wanted was to make sure that the route didn’t go down Typo Creek to the north. That was what they were getting out of it. Linwood had no ordinances to deal with this, so they were at the mercy of whatever GRE wanted to do. This was done publicly. There were a few closed session meetings, but those were listed in the agendas and minutes.”

Knisley, “When amended Route I was applied for or approved, GRE had the map of where

the lines were going, the pinch points, where the poles were going. But nobody can seem to find that for Route A. It would seem to me that if they were considering Route A, they would have that figured out.” Davis, “That was never done because they didn’t go that far with Route A. It went to litigation and stopped any kind of design work on that. As you and I had some discussion on the impact on this.” Knisley, “Route A was going on assumptions.” Davis, “You could also make assumptions to show it would impact more people. We took a middle of the road approach in doing so.”

Diane Jacobson, “First of all would like to know when is the City going to consider blacktopping Klondike? I know it is an MSA road, and I feel MSA funds should be applied to it. It was very evident when 22/65/74 were being worked on how much traffic was going down there. When is the City going to use MSA funds to blacktop it? Try traveling Klondike pulling a 60 foot camper. I would like an answer, when are we doing this?” Davis, “With the current schedule it would be at least five years. MSA funds are projected and spent out over the next five years.” Jacobson, “On what.” Davis, “Jackson, the next project will be the reconstruction of 183rd which is Longfellow Drive, Laurel and Lincoln. Those two projects will take all our MSA funds through 2015/2016.”

Jacobson, “Are any of those property owners along those roads being assessed to help contribute towards the MSA funds?” Davis, “No we are not.” Jacobson, “Why not?” Davis, “As far as I know the City has never assessed MSA street projects.” Jacobson, “Oh yes we have. And the reason they did that is to stretch the MSA dollars further. So I think you better go back in your records and see when that was started. And I think it is time to take that back up again.” Davis, “The problem with assessment is that on Klondike there are very few property owners.” Jacobson, “So?” Davis, “And, the cost for doing Klondike is about 1.5 million dollars. In some cases the assessments might exceed the value of the property and so by state law we cannot do that.” Jacobson, “Years back we never charged the full assessment. It was always a portion of what the assessment would be. It was something that we felt would help stretch those MSA funds out. So that other projects could be done. I would like the City to consider that.”

Jacobson, “And why do we keep redoing MSA roads over and over again? Jackson is one of them. Durant and Wild Rice Drive. And you are not re-charging these people anything for these MSA funds. Which I think is wrong. And, also I would like to know why was the project let out on Jackson Street in October?” Jochum, “The actual contract was let in early August. The utility company was the delay.” Jacobson, “Now we are running into what used to be called the ‘cold weather rule’. Years ago, we would never let a project start because a lot of the blacktop companies would be shutting down in October. That would have been a real mess out there on Jackson had we got a storm like we did on one Halloween. I don’t think any of those residents would have been happy. I would like to know when everything was bypassed as far as cold weather rule.”

Moegerle, “Where are we with the technology and materials with the ‘cold weather rule’? Has that adapted and changed?” Davis, “Historically the asphalt plants have been able to remain open here from the 1st of November until Thanksgiving. Also, the base is being put down now, but the wear course will not be put down until spring.” Jacobson, “Once the contract was let, if the company you hired couldn’t deliver, they should have been dropped.” Lawrence, “I think it was more of an issue of the utilities; getting them out of the way so they couldn’t get the work done.” Jacobson, “Are they going to get all the piles of dirt out of there before they freeze in there? Because you are going to have a snowplow come through there and hit those dirt piles and we are going to have a lot of repairs.” Jochum, “They are

working on the restoration this week. They should be done. But, we aren't putting the wear course down until spring."

Jacobson, "What is happening with our traffic signals on 74 and 65?" Davis, "We have been in contact with county. They have claimed they have a delay in the cabinets and some of the signalization equipment. We are totally at the mercy of the county on that." Jacobson, "Maybe you can contact your new county commissioner." Davis, "We have been in contact with them on a weekly basis to find out the status." Lawrence, "Sometimes on a daily basis." Jacobson, "Why did the City pay for the new soil borings on Jackson Street? When I was on Council we paid an extra \$30,000 for soil borings because they found faulty soil. And when I was reading the paper the Council once again paid to have soil borings done once again on Jackson." Jochum, "I think what you read was for material testings." Jacobson, "That is not part of the original bid?" Jochum, "The City pays for that. It wouldn't matter if you had the contractor do it, the City would still pay the cost."

Jacobson, "Because instead of paying for that, maybe you could have paid to have our reader board done." DeRoche, "That is getting done." Lawrence, "We have approved a new one." Jacobson, "Because when you drive down 65 and you see that reader board there you think, 'Is this a City I really want to locate in?'" DeRoche "You know Diane, Jack just mentioned there are openings on the commissions. With all these ideas you have, maybe you want to get on one." Jacobson, "I already served 12 years with my ideas." DeRoche, "Well times have changed. It is more fun." Moegerle, "And part of what we agreed on, I am in favor of the reader board but I didn't vote for it because of something in there. But part of the contract is to renovate and remove the existing one, so that is why it has been standing there as an eyesore." Jacobson, "And as you repair it can someone mow around it?"

Jacobson, "Who designed the intersection on County 15 and 22? If you are coming from the west heading east and you turn on 15 heading north, you have to be a contortionist; first to take a left and then you have to go around a curve." Davis, "That is an Anoka County project and we had no input." Jacobson, "The City had influence on the pork chop there. So don't tell me the City doesn't have influence on that." Davis, "One of the design features was the skewed intersection there. We have a perpendicular intersection there now which is much safer. As far as pulling out on 22." Jacobson, "That is the only time it is safer. That is the most ridiculous corner we have." DeRoche, "How many meetings do you watch on TV?" Jacobson, "I watch none. But my husband watches every one of them." DeRoche, "So how many times have you heard us say up here, if you have an idea or a problem call the City?" Jacobson, "Because when that was done, it was done. It was already paved." DeRoche, "So were you on the Council?" Jacobson, "No." DeRoche, "When was that done, I have no idea?" Jacobson, "It was just done." DeRoche, "The county road was done."

Jacobson, "Also, I want to know why whenever we have these meetings; they have to be held in chambers here. I feel people would feel much more comfortable if it was held in the community center and I know you are going to say, 'Well we can't film it and we have no microphones.' We are given franchise fees from the cable company; can't that pay for it, or get a grant to put a filmer thing in the community center? Because I think people are getting tired of cramming into the hallways. Look what we have tonight, nothing. We are normally jam packed." Moegerle, "Isn't there also some issue with the senior center being paid for with CDBG funds? And that it is different from the City." Davis, "That does have some impact on the issue. We could put some things in there, the City just doesn't have the funds right now to do it." Jacobson, "You could apply for a grant." DeRoche, "We could have used you on the budget talks, in fact we are still talking."

Jacobson, "I got this anonymous letter and I don't know where it came from, but I would like to read it before the Council."

Diane, many of our East Bethel residents want to thank you for speaking up at the city meetings. Many things are handled so sneaky. My neighborhood encourages you to continue to speak up for what is right. We have tried to speak up, but the Mayor and the new Council doesn't care what anyone thinks. They laugh and say they have the power of vote. They don't even try to work with other Council Members. Why are so many employees leaving City Hall? I hear there are harassment lawsuits from employees that Council is keeping quiet. Have you ever asked? Has anyone ever questioned the City Administrator? I think that the last few employees that have left should have been interviewed to protect our City from these costs. Some jobs were eliminated to give others overtime at what rate per hour. We as a neighborhood would like to hear an explanation. Just in the last month was the resignation of the Building Official and camera operator. How many employees have left since the new Council? Maybe someone should ask on camera at a meeting.

Davis, "All the accusations are inaccurate. The camera man that left got a better job. The building officials left on their own accord, nobody has ever been pressured out of here. The city planner left for a better job. You can't hold people back and we encourage people, 'If you can better yourself, by all means do so.'" Jacobson, "I heard that the building official left because he did not have his degree. That the Council let him go." Moegerle, "No. He resigned; we have the letter of resignation." DeRoche, "And to me, if a person is going to write a letter, then why don't you come in person to ask those questions in person." Moegerle, "And sign the letter as well." DeRoche, "It is awful easy to make accusations and libel somebody without knowing the facts." Jacobson, "I know, but I am just reading what was written to me."

It says the newly elected Mayor and Council Members said in their campaign that they were going to compare expenses and payroll costs. Has anyone ever compared wages with the City of Ham Lake? Davis, "We have. But, we are not Ham Lake, it is apples and oranges."

Jacobson, "I know, when I sat on Council we had to remind the citizens we were not Ham Lake, not Bethel or Cambridge, or not Blaine, nor the City of Minneapolis." Lawrence, "We do check it to see where we are at." Davis, "We check everything. As I mentioned earlier here, we are down four staff members over what we were two years ago. But, the workload has not decreased. The workload has actually increased."

What is it costing us to have a person answer the phone? Shouldn't the Council minutes state the pay rates for hiring people? Not hide them? Other cities state wages in their minutes and meetings. DeRoche, "Are you talking about Council making more money and getting raises?" Jacobson, "No. I don't think that is what this person says." Davis, "Diane, you know as well as anybody that is public information and it is not hidden. These are baseless accusations, unsubstantiated claims. I would just ask that person to appear before us and so we can answer them directly." Jacobson, "I don't know who it is. This is just signed 'East Bethel Resident.'"

Davis, "Everything at the City is public information." DeRoche, "There was a flyer that came out at Booster Day that was signed East Bethel Resident making pretty much the same accusations." Jacobson, "Who was it?" Lawrence, "If you ask Jack what he makes, he will tell you and if you ask me what I make I will tell you." DeRoche, "I take home \$438 a

month and how many meetings did we have last year? About 45?"

Lorraine Bonin, "When you have a letter that isn't signed, you have no right to read it to the public." Jacobson, "It is signed East Bethel Resident." Bonin, "That is not a signature." Tom Ronning, "You could have written it yourself, there is no credibility in that whatsoever." Another resident said, "I am a resident and I didn't sign that." Jacobson, "I don't know where it came from; I was shocked when I got it. It is postmarked Saint Paul in June." Bonin, "And it should have stayed at your address and never come here. That was very poor taste on your part to have read that letter." Lawrence, "Let's check on this. A few years back we did a road resurfacing that took me by surprise. We did Palisade. Was that a MSA fund road? Davis, "That was done years ago. Way before my time." DeRoche, "Have we ever been, or are we involved in any harassment lawsuits with any employees?" Davis, "Absolutely not. And I am available to discuss any of these issues or if you want any information. It is all public. You will be furnished anything that is on record. If you desire to speak with me about any of these issues I am available at your convenience."

Randy Plaisance, "Thank you for taking the time to see us. My question goes back to the Commissions. Thank you, Jack, for offering us to become involved. Recently, I was at a Planning Commission meeting and was rather appalled by the actions of the people on the commission. We had some experience with people coming to the Commission looking for answers as to the viability of some property and whether or not it could be rezoned. My concern was that Planning Commission not only disregarded ¾ of the agenda that night that was submitted, I am assuming, by you, the Council. But, they also then continued to argue with Jack and Heidi who were sitting in the audience as to whose responsibility it was to do their jobs."

"My frustration is 'Where is the responsibility on their part? And how can we make sure they are fulfilling their obligations?' You hate to bug people about this, because they are offering their time. But, on the other hand, as you all know we have three years to come up with a financial plan to support the sewer and water. And my concern is; it takes time to get these things through. If we are going to have this plan to go forward as a City in order to cover these costs and we can't even have a simple meeting where people can come to an agreement to give a simple answer. As a City, when you can't even answer one person's questions about a ten acre lot, how are we going to go forward and have the investment in the City that we need to have, if we can't even get this one Commission to agree to hear this one person's thoughts? And this one person walked away angry and frustrated. And I don't understand why we continue to have this argument with the person standing up here waiting for an answer?"

DeRoche, "I did watch this, and for anyone in the audience that has an opportunity; watch the last planning commission meeting. I got so frustrated I walked away from it twice. I could not believe the disrespect and the way things went down. And the way they were pushing off responsibilities. Part of the issue was the Comp Plan. The Comp Plan was initially done in 2007, passed in 2008. With the sewer and water going through the way it is, that Plan has to change. Certain things have to happen to encourage development. It has to be enough to support the system or every person that is sitting here and on the other side of those cameras is going to be paying for this. They didn't feel it was their job to review the Comp Plan, they felt the City Council wasn't doing their job because it wasn't what they do. If someone isn't willing to do that, then maybe they are in the wrong situation. We might need to change zoning or ordinances might need to be tweaked here and there. Because if a developer comes in here, we need to be able to give them answers. I would recommend any

one out here, watch it. I don't think anyone gets an idea how much time these commission people put in. It is not just that you get a packet and show up at a meeting. If you are doing your job right, you get your packet, you do research. You drive around, Google it. You need to know what you are getting into, because you can't sit up here and look at a black and white piece of paper and know what is going on. We just had an election; it costs \$5, run."

Lawrence, "I know what you are saying. The Planning Commission is the first face that these people will be seeing. So it is crucial that they understand that. So when people come before them, they are getting a warm feeling that we actually want them to come here. We need to work with the Planning Commission so they understand what their job is. Sometimes the lines get skewed and they don't understand what we are asking them."

Moegerle, "I lived through that meeting. I was stunned by the Commission. While Richard says the Planning commission is the first face of East Bethel, the first face is staff. And then they meet the residents at Commission meetings and then the typical order is one of the gentlemen had come to Council and asked what the procedure is. Fighting over the agenda, which is set by staff. It is the Planning Commission, not Planning and Zoning. There are large issues in Planning. Never is Planning going to make the decision for the Council. They are an advisory body to the Council and it is important to hear from that advisory board. And we make the decision; we carry the weight and responsibility for our votes. I was extremely disappointed on those issues. And, there are ordinances and a wide range of ideas and zoning issues that are going to come up that maybe haven't come up before. It is a new world in East Bethel and it has to be because of the infrastructure. If the Planning Commission can't get with it, we need them to get with it."

Moegerle, "I have heard people say, 'Commissions serve at the pleasure of the Council.' The last thing anybody wants to do is say, 'You are a roadblock and you have not grown in the direction of these issues and of all different levels. We need you to serve on a different commission.' We don't want to disinvite somebody to Planning. And that is not it, but we need to look at the broad picture and the big picture of the development corridor has to be filled and we have to work with people. I was appalled at the insulting things that were said to staff; as if the agenda were something that somebody had said, 'Hmm, Planning has a light agenda so let's put this on there.' That was extremely offensive. These things don't come up on a whim. They are very serious issues that have meaning for all of us. I hope there is a renewed commission that comes and gives it more thought and this is not just 'East Bethel being East Bethel'. We [the City] are more than just dealing with a permit and whether you have dogs and cats and cows and those kinds of things. This is serious business and if we are going to get business, we need to get down to business."

Plaisance, "I have been to all of the commissions and looked them over, and I see a disconnect in cooperation between all the commissions. It seems to me we are all working towards the same thing. We are going to wind up with some times here, how are we going to get these people to work together, not only in the same commission, but across commissions. Like Planning and Economic Development, they are working on the same thing. So how can we get that cooperation to go throughout the City?" Moegerle, "I think that comes from the top down. I think that this Council has gradually settled down and with the new members of the Council there will be a fresh start. I think there is an opportunity for us to set the standard of cooperation, of discussion of issues in detail. I think that is a part of it. We as a Council have to demonstrate that. We also have to confirm to the public and members of the commissions as they reapply, that it is a new day and there are bigger requirements for you. If you cannot serve and come to meetings prepared to discuss these issues, and if you can't

come to 80 or 90% of the meetings, then there is a different place you can serve East Bethel than perhaps a commission. We've got a lot of work to do and we need people on the commissions that are willing to work and I think that message has to go out when we ask for people to fill the commissions."

Tom Ronning, "That was very gracious with allowing that anonymous letter. The fact of the matter is, all of us will find some soft spot in there, 'Well that sounds right.' Who hasn't read an editorial or letter to the editor that is signed by anonymous and something hits home and you get upset over it. If this was any legal proceeding, that letter would never have been considered for any reason. An anonymous letter has the same value as hearsay or rumor. And the reason it has that is because you have no opportunity to question the author about the accuracy of certain things or any of the details, what year was it, who, what, when, why stuff." Lawrence, "We have no record that the person lives in East Bethel, actually." Ronning, "Right. Anonymous letters are hearsay or rumors, no more, no less."

Moegerle, "For all of you here, we have a new website coming. Theoretically, the roll-out date is Valentine's Day. We have sent it back to be redrawn. But these kinds of questions that you are asking here today, there should be a module with it that you will be able to ask those questions and people can see the answer you will receive. You will also be able to report there is a pothole and a dead deer on the website. That will improve communication for those of you that are on the internet. Also the new reader board is very exciting."

DeRoche, "I went to quite a few of the 'Meet the Candidate' nights and everyone talks about how the City doesn't communicate with the people. But when there are four newsletters a year, we have cable TV, you can look up information on our website, I don't see how there isn't enough communication short of going door to door. Every single meeting, someone makes the statement if you have something to say, bring it to the Council. I haven't heard any complaints. I tell people, if you are having a problem, call Jack, call Nick, and call Colleen. Sometimes you just have to bring in the right people to do the right job. East Bethel is changing, and it is not changing where it is going to develop throughout the whole City, but the 65 corridor has to develop. If it doesn't, a lot of people are going to get real upset when they get their tax bill."

DeRoche, "Speaking of that, when you look at your taxes, look at the form and see what is really the City tax. City tax is 10%, County tax is between 10 and 15%, state tax is around 24% and school tax is about 23%. We have had numerous meetings up here and I have posed the question, how many of you have ever read the budget? Everyone says cut the budget, okay cut what? Do you want the roads not plowed? Do you want us to cut fire services or police services? What do you want to cut? Whoever has left this city, we haven't fired anybody. When they left, they left. Right now, our staff is pretty assertive, they have great ideas! I am not going to beg anyone to stay. There is water in the tower. Aggressive Hydraulics, it is going to be a great landmark to start from. People coming into town are going to look at it and say, 'Wow'. Get involved."

Lawrence, "I am thankful for everyone showing up. We have had a wonderful exchange, whether we agree or disagree. It is a nice relaxed forum where people can say what they want to say."

Moegerle, "We are on schedule to reduce to taxes about .97%."

Lawrence, "It has been a real privilege to be re-elected as your Mayor. Hope I can do the job

I have been doing. I have been doing a lot of things lately. A lot of it is people have questions about this and that. People will e-mail me and I will send them an e-mail back. I do always request if you e-mail me put your name on there at least. For being involved in the City, we talk about being as open as possible.”

Adjourn **Moegerle made a motion to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. DeRoche seconded; all in favor, motion carries.**

Attest:

Wendy Warren
Deputy City Clerk