

## EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL TOWN HALL MEETING

October 26, 2011

The East Bethel City Council met on October 19, 2011 for a work meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT:      Bob DeRoche              Richard Lawrence      Steve Voss

MEMBERS EXCUSED:      Bill Boyer                  Heidi Moegerle

ALSO PRESENT:              Jack Davis, City Administrator  
                                      Nate Ayshford, Public Works Manager  
                                      Mark DuCharme, Fire Chief  
                                      Rita Pierce, Fiscal and Support Services Director  
                                      Larry Martin, Building Official  
                                      Stephanie Hanson, City Planner  
                                      Craig Jochum, City Engineer  
                                      Shelly Orlando, Lt., Anoka County Sheriff's Office

Call to Order      The October 26, 2011 Town Hall meeting was called to order by Mayor Lawrence.

Adopt Agenda      **Voss made a motion to adopt the October 26, 2011 Town Hall Meeting Agenda. DeRoche seconded; all in favor, motion carries.**

Ed Fiore of 194 Ivy Road said he has a question on water and sewer, mainly what is being built now. He said in reading the literature during campaign, it stated the surveys were done on population growth during 2006 and that study indicated a population growth over the next 20 years. Fiore said as you know that did not turn out to be the reality. The reality is in 2006, 2007 and 2008 the demography showed a declining population in East Bethel. Fiore said yet based on those declining numbers, the administration at that time, including the Met Council continued with the sewer and water system, based on the 2006 population growth numbers. He asked given that those numbers were wrong has there been dereliction of duty, either on the part of the existing City Council at that time, and/or the Met Council. Fiore asked and do we have a recourse back to the Met Council for the cost that have been incurred in building that sewer system which as far as he can see there is no way this population can support those operating costs and the redemption of the bonds given the present circumstances. Fiore said what he is saying is, do we have recourse back to the Met Council and do we have recourse back the City Council that existed back on November 2010 when they voted on that knowing that the study was flawed and they went ahead anyway. To him that is dereliction of duty and those City Council Members were covered by insurance called errors and omissions and perhaps the new City Council could look at both the Met Council and the existing Council at that time and look at possible legal action.

Davis said this is entirely a legal issue and he doesn't think we are prepared to speak to that. He said his first impression would be no to both things, but it is a legal matter that would have to be answered by an attorney. Fiore asked is the city looking at the culpability of this. He said he is interested in the Met Council more than anything. Lawrence said the new Council looked at this; we issued documents and looked into this, in beginning before the vote went down. He said we talked as Council. Lawrence said Council itself and all the people in the city are protected against that kind of a problem but he doesn't know about the

Met Council.

DeRoche asked how many people watch Council meetings on Channel 10 (Cable Channel) or online. A lot of the residents raised their hands.

Dale Williams said the tape on the Channel 10 is not starting on time. It is starting with the sheriff's report, not the pledge of allegiance. Davis said this is older outdated equipment, we are looking at upgrading the equipment and this would be paid for with cable access fees. He said we think we have most of the minor problems taken care of. Davis said if there are any issues, please let us know and we will address them. Williams said they also cut off before the meeting is done.

Deanna Kleven of 230 189<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE said she just wants to suggest when there is a community activity it would be nice if the Council Members would show up. She said such as National Night Out, and when the Fire Department had their Open House. Voss said he agrees. Kleven said it would have been nice to see some of you there.

Voss said perhaps some of you don't know; hope you have heard about it, the stoplight at 221<sup>st</sup> and Highway 65 is moving forward. Jochum said getting close to ROW acquisition phase. They hope to start the project in mid-summer and have it operational in late fall in 2012. Voss said so within a year from now. Jochum said correct. He said a Joint Powers Agreement between the County and the City will be coming forward at the November 16<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. Jochum said this is the final step for Council to approve or disapprove. Voss said there have been a few issues with the surrounding properties and the county has been working with them to try to ease that. He said he knows there are some that aren't in support of a light there, but a lot of us saw in the paper and on the TV how they rated the intersection and that intersection was the 6<sup>th</sup> deadliest in the state. Voss said in years past Council pushed for a bridge, just because there is a concern that stoplights cause other issues. He said we have had 6 or 7 fatalities in the past 15 years. Lawrence said one thing we can say about the light is it will approve the ability for fire and police to cross that intersection, because they will have the ability to change the light to green whichever direction they are traveling. He said so if there is a fire on the west side of the city they can get there quicker. Jochum said two modifications they have made recently are on the east side it is all curbed and on the north side pulled the ROW back a little bit. He said also they have changed the pond design quite a bit so it doesn't affect the northeast property as much. Jochum said they have been listening and working the comments and trying to address those. Voss said he knows the drawings are out there, what type of turn signals are they, east/west as well? Jochum said that is correct. Resident asked will there be a separate left hand turn lane going across. Jochum said that is correct. Resident said that is nice.

Harley Hansen of 1960 221<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE said there is a petition going around in regards to this stoplight. He said there is nothing wrong with having a stoplight there. Hansen said the opposition is three lanes going to west and three going to the east. He said they are taking all the property from the person on the north side by the name of Kable. Hansen said a few of us have taken a little sympathy with him and to get this changed a different way. He strongly believes that a corner like Coopers or 22 would be adequate for that. Instead of a median and three lanes. Hansen said if you look at the print, it shows 2 13 foot and a 12 foot lane, so that is 38 feet. He said that is snow that will have to be moved to the north and in the winter time, moving it in the morning, we will have it full by the afternoon. Hansen said also with the water running down on the north side in the third lane and he talked to the garbage people and they said now you are in a braking situation and you are trying to come up to the corner and now you have liquid coming down and freezing on that side.

Hansen said the drain should be on the south side. He said there are a lot of experts out there too. He said he has a petition going around, with about 150 names. Voss asked is the petition to change the design. Hansen said there are options. Go to a two lane, discontinue the median. Equalize how they are taking the property. Hansen said that little piece of land just as you leave 65 belongs to someone else, and you could discharge the clean water as you leave the pond, he will get you a copy. Voss said this is the first time he had heard of the petition. Davis asked Hansen to get those petitions to him so he can get them to Council. Lawrence said in response to moving the road south, he talked the County Commission, and it would cost \$300,000 because of it needing more fill. Also according to the county you have to have three lanes, but you can dig that one up.

Hansen said it is 90% covered by a federal grant. Davis said that is true, it will cost the city about \$10,000. Jochum said the city is not intimately involved in the design. Voss said that is his point, so we know if there are ways to tweak this. Davis said city staff has met with the Anoka County Highway Department regarding Mr. Kable's concerns. We also met with the County Commissioner about his concerns. Davis said to date they have followed through with addressing a lot of his concerns. They have been listening to some of our requests on this. DeRoche asked has there been any more discussion on going on the south side for the water? Davis said no. He said what we have been told is the 3 lanes and a portion of the median is a requirement of the federal grant monies. Lawrence said we also have been told going to 2 lanes would only save about 10 feet of land. Voss said there are other improvements we have been working on in that corridor. Frontage road, 221<sup>st</sup> to Buchanan. This was on the East Side, but we couldn't acquire the land, so now we have to move it to the West Side. Davis said it was planned to go to Teddy Bear Care. He said we hope someday to be able to resurrect this.

Bruce Roles of 21853 Quincy Street NE and he wants to know when we are going to stop wasting money. Want to know when we are going to stop wasting the deputy's time having them sit in attendance at the Council meetings and get them back out in the street where they will do us some good and use the skills and services that they have acquired during training. Roles said rather than having them sitting needlessly at all the Council meetings. He said he wants to know when that is going to stop. Lawrence said some people think it is necessary and some don't. He said when the people come and say we don't need them anymore. Roles said we don't need them anymore, think others think the same. Resident asked why it was needed? Lawrence said it was requested to be done by other people. Resident said she has a hard time seeing how the time spent at a Council meeting is that detrimental to their service. Lawrence said it was done for the safety of the people in the chambers and in the audience. DeRoche said there are quite a few cities that have deputies at their meetings. Roles said that is a waste of money. DeRoche said he doesn't think at the time that was a waste of money. He said and if you watch the news quite a few things happen at meetings. DeRoche said and it would cost a lot more money to take care of it after if there wasn't a deputy there. DeRoche asked Lt. Orlando, we still have people patrolling the city. Lt. Orlando said yes. Voss said but one less. Resident asked could the Council look into the issue and see if the deputy is needed at the next meeting.

Fiore said the City of Harrisburg declared bankruptcy, under Chapter 9; they are the capitol of Pennsylvania. They built an incinerator plant on the basis of we build it they will come and they didn't. Fiore asked if you can't get the customers, will you consider bankruptcy down the road? Lawrence said that will have to be addressed when it comes up. He said we have businesses hooking up and in 2016 when we have a major payment coming up, hopefully we will have taken care of this problem.

Fe Mahler said she just wanted to say she doesn't object to having a sheriff here. She said life is just too unpredictable and she does support your decision to have a sheriff here if you feel it is necessary. Lawrence said we will still review this to see if we feel it is necessary.

Lawrence said we haven't had any comments on the sewer and water project. DeRoche asked for an update. Davis said the project is on the schedule. He said if you have driven up Hwy. 65 you have observed the construction. The sewer portion is now proceeding in front of Village Bank. He said the water tower is out of the ground now. If you drive west on Viking Blvd. you can actually see the base of the tower. The schedule for completion of that is next fall. Davis said the schedule for completion of water and sewer lines is also next fall. He said the sewer treatment plant is scheduled for completion in 2013. Met council has agreed to pump and haul for all the connections that can be connected to the system at the completion of the piping work, which is approximately one more year. Davis said things are going according to schedule and the city is going to extraordinary steps to widen our customer base so we won't be in the predicament that you just described.

Lawrence said we have enacted the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and they will be going out and trying to bring in new business to the city. He said it will be crucial for the EDA to get this done. Lawrence said we are really working with that group and hoping to see good things. He said we have had some interesting people come to the city as they have seen the city sewer and water come in. Lawrence said we haven't had any takers yet. Davis said he is an optimist, would realistically expect to see something happen in the next year or two on the corner of 22 and 65. He said there is ample property for development in the sewer phase portion of this project. Davis said again, we will be able to meet our initial goals to make this thing cash flow.

Resident asked is it his understanding for any new commercial coming in do they have to go in that new zone. He asked or can then go on 221<sup>st</sup> and 65, such as a gas station? Davis said absolutely. He said three of those properties are for sale; they can go there if they met the zoning code. Resident asked what they would have to go with for sewage. Davis said at this point they would have to go with septic and wells for water.

Davis introduced staff. He said we have a new Public Works Manager, Nate Ayshford. He comes to us from Ham Lake; he has a lot of experience and is doing a good job. Voss said and as most of you know, Jack Davis is now our City Administrator; he was our Public Works Manager.

Adjourn

**Voss made a motion to adjourn at 8:42 PM. DeRoche seconded; all in favor, motion carries.**

Attest:

Wendy Warren  
Deputy City Clerk