

EAST BETHEL TOWN HALL MEETING

November 18, 2010

The East Bethel City Council met on November 18, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. for their Town Hall Meeting in Council Chambers.

COUNCIL PRESENT: Bill Boyer Steve Channer Greg Hunter
 Steve Voss

COUNCIL EXCUSED: Kathy Paavola

ALSO PRESENT: Douglas Sell, City Administrator
 Tammy Schutta, Asst. City Administrator/HR Director
 Rita Pierce, Director of Fiscal and Support Services
 Stephanie Hanson, City Planner
 Jack Davis, Public Works Manager
 Mark DuCharme, Fire Chief
 Craig Jochum, City Engineer
 Larry Martin, Building Official/Code Enforcement Officer
 Lt. Michelle Orlando, Anoka County Sheriff's Office
 Sheriff Elect Jim Stuart, Anoka County Sheriff's Office
 Kreg Schmidt, Bolton & Menk
 Jim Roth, Met Council
 Bill Cook, Met Council

Call
Meeting to
Order

Mayor Hunter called the Town Hall meeting to order at 7:13 PM. He said he wanted to welcome everyone. Hunter said we do have some royalty, we have Natalie Steffen here from Met Council who has survived three governors and Susan Hoyt, our section representative. He said if you have any questions for the Met Council, please let us know or if you don't want to ask them in this forum, we will be meeting again after we are done in here in the Community Center and you can ask them in there. Hunter said tonight is open mike, your meeting, your topics, your discussion. He said we have representatives here from all our departments, fire department, police department, planning, building and financial. Hunter said everyone is here.

Hunter asked the Mayor Elect Jim Stuart to come up and introduce himself. Sheriff Elect Stuart came up and said he is the Sheriff Elect. He thanked everyone for electing him and said he looks forward to working with everyone. He introduced Lieutenant Orlando, the East Bethel liaison. She has been in charge of police services in East Bethel for 2 ½ years. Hunter said she is also a resident of East Bethel.

Christine Howell of 22314 - 7th Street NE said she is still a little confused about the City Administration Budget, under full-time employees, who does that include. Pierce said she believes the budget you are looking at, in 2008 and 2009 it included the city administrator and the receptionist. Howell asked when did you lose the receptionist. Pierce said in 2009. Howell asked how do raises work. She said she knows how unions work, but how does it work for the city administrator. Boyer said historically, every Council does it different, but last time we did it we had a salary task force which included the former Council Member Klein and me and we brought back recommendations to Council. He said that was in 2009.

Howell said according to what she got from the city administrator, by the way, when she asked him at the meeting prior where he worked prior to here and would she find out he wasn't a city administrator, he was at Brooklyn Center as something else. She said so when he started here he got \$102,742. then he went to \$106,000 in the same year. She said then in 2005 everyone else got an 3% increase he got 1.8% increase. Howell said then in 2006 he got \$115,000 or 3.6% increase, then in 2007 he got an 3.3% increase and in 2008 he got 4.1% increase and in 2009 when you cut the receptionist he got an 8% increase and everyone else just got a 3.7% increase. She said so she needs clarification, when everyone else is losing their jobs, the bottom is falling out of the market, how does the city administrator qualify for an 8% increase. She said she is sure he didn't want to come in to this meeting. Howell said someone has to give her an answer.

Howell said you said recession started in September of 2007. She said he is paid with our money. Voss asked at what point did we change the way we change the way we looked at salary. Howell said you in good conscience are sitting up there and he said it is an average of 4.2% and said this is because he didn't get an increase in 2010. She said he could have said the bottom is falling out, so I will just take the 3.7% like everyone else. Howell said she is giving him the above and beyond. Boyer asked don't you think it should be performance based. Howell said she is sure everyone in this room thinks they do a great job, but they don't always get a job raise. Boyer said if you knew the city administrator brought in 3 million in grants would that change your opinion. Howell said probably not, he knew that was part of his job. Boyer said if historically the City had not been receiving those kind of grants before he came, would that change your opinion. Howell said so now that he is not going to get a pay raise, is he not going to do any work in 2010. She said if you paid him this kind of wage increase in 2009 because he did a bang up job and now he won't get a pay raise in 2010, he won't do any work. Voss said we set our budget six (6) months before the year begins.

Troy Lachinski of 22286 Vermillion Street NE said he would like an update on the service road for 221st Avenue and Highway 65, an update on when we will be getting a light there. Hunter said we had Garwood from the county here at our last meeting and asked for an update. Channer said we are starting the service road in the spring. Jochum said we need to get some final easements for the service road and will be starting in June as long as we get them. Boyer said last we heard was 2013-2014 for the signal light. Voss said the service road will be on the east side of Highway 65 from Sims Road to 221st Avenue. He said and we are getting a signal light on 221st Avenue and Highway 65. Channer said this intersection is ranked 4th in fatalities. Voss said it is a bad intersection. Hunter said we don't have much control because it is a county road that goes over a state road. Channer said they asked us to give them some money to accelerate it.

Jerry Lancette of 356 196th Avenue NE said when you are going on Highway north to take a left to go west on Viking, why don't they do something about that left turn lane it is so full of pot holes and so short why can't they do something such as shovel a new lane, make it longer and wider. He said when you are waiting for light going south or north if you are the 5th car waiting you don't get to go. Boyer said Council has brought this up. Lancette said it seems to change, he drives that way quite often himself and at one point if he was at Viking trying to cross going straight you were lucky if four cars got to go across straight. Channer asked if he is talking about shoulder full of pot holes. Lancette said yes. Voss said as far as the timing of lights, the state retimed the lights so the ones on Highway 65 don't have to stop as much. He said that is at the cost of the ones crossing have to wait longer. Voss said they have had to make adjustments before and we can ask them to look at making adjustments again.

Bob Jacobson of 20628 East Bethel Blvd. said he would like to ask the new Council what are their plans to go ahead for the first part of the year. Hunter said they are not in office until January 5th. He said he believes some of them are here and you can talk to them in the Community Center.

Walt Osborne of 17100 Highway 65, Ham Lake asked have you thought about putting a stoplight at 181st Avenue. Hunter said no. Boyer said he doesn't think we have because we are limited to a mile between lights. Channer said also it crosses jurisdictions, but he believes the crossover is going to be closed. Voss said he thought we built that road for a stoplight. Channer said that is another dangerous intersection. Osborne said yes, it is another dangerous intersection. Channer said at 169th Avenue they are building an experimental u-turn, it almost like a mini ramp in-road. They call it a J-turn and can put it in between shorter light distances; it is the second one in Minnesota. Channer said we will see how this one works out.

Voss said this is our 11th Town Hall Meeting.

Boyer said he has a question for the sheriff. He asked if Lieutenant Orlando knows we have a serious problem with vandalism in our parks, and he hopes the sheriff's department will work with the City to limit this. Boyer asked if someone is available to work with the parks department as we are looking to make enhancements to security in our parks. Sheriff Elect Stuart said as soon as we started hearing about this we started looking at. He said when he saw this in the paper he was worried about it, because it said there were 30 incidents and only a small number of them were reported to the sheriff's office. Stuart said what he would ask is if you see something you want to pull us into the loop. He said call the sheriff's office, keep us in the loop. Stuart said once we realized there was this going on at the park, we became proactive. He said and give us a call and we will be more than happy to work with you. Channer said people are afraid to dial 911, but don't be afraid to. Stuart said that is correct, call 911, most of the information shows up on the screen that we need so it makes it easier for us.

Channer asked for the shift breakdown of our coverage. He said most people don't know. Lieutenant Orlando said explained how the shifts work. She said you always have 2 deputies on. Lieutenant Orlando said in a 24 hour period you have five (5) people working. She said and you have CSO that works 2 pm to 6 pm Monday through Friday. Channer asked when you have crossover in shifts we might have 3 cars. Lieutenant Orlando said and there are two county wide, east and west. She said they assist when needed. Voss asked when residents report that they see our cars outside the City, how do you direct the deputies in terms of when they leave the City. Stuart said you are always going to get your bang for the buck. He said if you have a contract for eight (8) hours in East Bethel, we are going to spend eight (8) hours in East Bethel. Stuart said with that being said if there is an emergency outside of East Bethel, they have to respond, but that is reciprocal. He said the rovers spend a lot of time here too. Stuart said even if an East Bethel car spends a half hour doing something outside of the City, then a county wide will come here and spend time here. He said more often than not when the calls are here then we send the cars here. Stuart said it is the economy of scale. He said with the sheriff's office the cars might get backed up on a DWI or a domestic, but we will provide the service with a county wide.

Diane Jacobson said on her way to work in the morning she always sees two (2) to five (5) squad cars at the fire station, how is that good. Stuart said it might be a shirt change, it might

be breakfast or coffee or the cars might be converging to exchange information. He said when he was a younger deputy, we would meet at a Perkins, all these deputies from Ramsey County, Forest Lake, all these different deputies, and we exchanged information. Stuart said it was so valuable. He said we are spread over 21 cities and that information exchange is often what helps us solve the crimes. Stuart said he doesn't know why 5:00 am is the best time to share information, but it must be what they have determined. Jacobson said they should be at Co. Road 22 and Highway 65 pulling people over. Stuart said and then they would be calling our office complaining about us for pulling them over. Hunter said and he would be calling for that. He said the highway patrol should be doing that. Stuart said as the sheriff elect, he will stick his neck out on that. He said he used to go to a fire and ask why they are fighting a fire a certain way, and he would ask for the same respect. Stuart said he would trust that his deputies would know where the "hot spots" are. He said he would trust that they are going to identify the hot spots.

Mark DuCharme, fire chief said the other part of having them at the fire station is we have made the facilities available to them to have a comfortable work facility. He said it helps us to network and it is not unusual for them to come in and one time when he walked in on them, they were watching a training film on DVD, it shows a good working relationship.

Jacobson asked how do we pass on to the highway patrol that there are a lot of violations going on at Highway 65 and Co. Road 22. Stuart said if you have concerns call us. Lieutenant Orlando said she will contact someone at the state. Channer said this happens at Sims Road also, it is probably the same guy. He said they are trying to beat the light so they can stop at the next one. Voss said he has been doing a lot of traveling and one way to stop this is to put in the photo cops. He said in Houston, Texas, and other states they have this and it works, it is amazing. Voss said people were stopping early.

DeRoche said he doesn't want to contradict about the sheriff being on Highway 65, but it is our residents that are getting hit. Hunter said it is a state road and if we have such an issue on the state road we need to go to highway patrol and get them on our state road. He said it was years before we saw them on our state road. Stuart asked who do you see at accidents on the state road. He said it is our cars. Jacobson said when riding her four wheeler in the county ditch the sheriff's dept should not be stopping me and telling me I am doing something illegal. Hunter said when they see something illegal, they should stop it. He said but if there are real issues on county and state roads, let's deal with it. Hunter said if we have these issues, why is the highway patrol not sitting there, maybe we haven't done a good enough job communicating this to them. He said that is what we pay them to do. Voss said over his years sitting up here he has gone on a number of ride-alongs with the deputies and they don't want to sit around, they know that we want them in the neighborhoods.

Glenn Terry of 22800 Sandy Drive NE said at the sewer and water hearing, the per ponderous of the people that spoke were against project and he has noticed this in the past, that at public hearings people speak and then Council just does what they want. Terry said so he is wondering why not have a referendum to see what the people want. Hunter said Terry is our Planning Commission chair person. He said you know for planning you have to have a public hearing on everything. Terry said you are talking about changing the structure of everything with the water and sewer. He said not in short term, but in long term. Hunter said the sewer and water is only about new businesses and new residential. He said we are not going to serve any existing properties in East Bethel. Terry said when there was economic growth in the beginning it made sense. Hunter said we have worked on this for eight (8) years. He said you

have had a lot of input to that plan. Hunter said this plan hasn't changed. Terry said that is right, your plan hasn't changed; it is not reflecting the economic reality. Hunter said this is a 2030 plan but you and I know this goes well beyond 2030. He said people get this idea that they are going to go away for the weekend and have a hydrant in their yard when they get back. Terry said there will be construction in two (2) years. Voss said it will be up and running in two (2) years. Boyer said the funding does not need a single unit built in East Bethel until 2015. He said December of 2015 is the first bond payment. He said he knows you are not an economist and neither am I.

Terry asked you are willing to put the City on the hook because you have an idea that just won't quit. Boyer asked you are willing to throw away millions from Met Council and a \$200,000 savings in bonding. Terry said so the overall goal is to enrich Met Council and City at the expense of the citizens. Voss asked how different is your perspective now than three (3) years ago. Terry said five (5) years ago it was okay, but he was changing his thinking, then three (3) years ago his mind really changed because of the economy. Voss said you were part to the visioning of this thing, how did your visioning of the comp plan change. Terry said a lot of the comp plan was done on projected trends of growth. He said he doesn't see this happening ten (10) years down the road. He said he wouldn't make any grandiose plans on that. Voss said this is the vision the community has come up with, the end point we want to get to. He said the comment hasn't just been from you that the comp plan has to be thrown out and redone. Voss said whether we get there in 5, 50 or 100 years, it is our plan. Terry said he would say put in on hold until you have the economic indicators at least better than 10% unemployment. He said until you have people coming that want to develop big box stores. Boyer said what could be better than Met Council wants to do this now.

Natalie Steffen from Met Council said we have spent a lot of money here. She said we didn't start this; we got a call from the City asking them to come to meeting. Steffen said the City had done a study and their pockets weren't deep enough and they asked her to find grant money, what did it cost. So she went to see a gentleman named Bryce Pickart and asked have we always planned on taking all sewer to the Pigs Eye plant. Steffen said so then the Met Council did a study and once we knew were going to take all waste to Pigs Eye, then we knew we could do only sewer in East Bethel and it has taken us about four (4) years to get the land up here, you do not have a lot of sites that are conducive to treat water and we have to get permits, etc. She said if we would have to redo this it would be costly. Steffen said we have spent 2 million dollars of user fees here. Steffen said if you back out, we will be asking for 2 million back of those fees. She said if you take money out of this pot for that reason, it is user fees from the metro area. Terry said if the City hasn't approved a plan, he doesn't understand how we can be on the hook. Steffen said we have a signed agreement. She said we bought the land, got the agreement. Voss said as the Mayor alluded to, this is not a decision that was done over night, as far as working with Met Council, this has been done for four (4) years. He said we have had many meetings. Voss said most of the council has been here for the whole process. He said he thinks we have had forty (40) some meetings. Voss said there have been agreements over the years. Howell asked is it one agreement. Voss said there is a lot of that work that happened years ago, it is part of the whole process.

Bill Cook from the Met Council said this started with the Comprehensive plan, we went through a rural growth policy change at Met Council so we could put East Bethel in the rural growth policy center, then had a facility plan, talked about facility and user fees, then we did a waste water service agreement and cooperative service agreement with Council. He said we purchased land and started the design about two (2) years ago. Cook said he became involved

in the project about five (5) years ago. Hunter said you could go on and on about the process. Howell asked is there any place that breaks down what Met Council has spent so we can see how it was spent. Cook said not on their website. Voss said if you can make that request of Sell, he would have to give you those documents. Resident said please give him an answer. Voss said we were talking about how we were going to fund the system back when we did the comp plan. He said it was all Greek to him then. Voss said how the system would pay for itself. He said they set up the structure then, figured out what growth would be, demographics.

Voss said what we have done since we did design, is Bolton and Menk provided our first look at a financial model and gave us five options, and then we went back and looked at the worst case, what if no one hooks up for so many years. He said Council decided to set it up on the 2nd to worst case. Voss said we knew the economy was turning the wrong way. He said we did take more conservative look at it. Voss said in terms of how we looked at it when the economy was strong, over the next ten years, the model is based on a 1/3 of the growth rate we had three (3) years ago. Voss said to say we haven't done anything different from comp plan and taken in the economy is wrong. Terry asked what have you done different. Voss said adjusted the growth rate. He said if you don't have a pipe in the ground why would someone build. He said he used to look at it the same way, why not wait. Boyer said what major business has come here since you have been on Planning and Zoning. He said we haven't gotten it in ten (10) years, what is going to change. Bonin said when theatre came in it was because they thought they were going to get water and sewer and they still don't have it. Landborg said big boxes have been waiting six (6) years to get in the city. He said Target and Wal-Mart have had plans in here, letters of intent. He said a grocery store has been here, eight (8) years ago he heard when are we going to get senior housing, you keep asking for it. Howell asked do you have letters of intent. Landborg said he has talked to united properties, Ryan companies. Howell asked will they put it on paper. Landborg said no, they won't do that. He said what about Coon Lake Beach if they need sewer at least we have some place to pump it to.

Voss said you say when Cub said they want to build here, then we will build a plant, that doesn't work. He said he has been personally talking to developers and landowners, and quite honestly he was surprised at how much they want this to go. Voss said he asked them to come tonight, but they couldn't come. He said they were worried our plant wouldn't be up in time. Terry said can this Council sign a pledge that no citizen will pay a fee or have to hook up. Hunter said yes. Boyer said do the math, we are not going to do this it would cost too much to make people with two (2) acres to hook up. Terry asked then why run the line to Coon Lake. Hunter said his stand on the sewer thing is when you build a plant you build it for expansion and when you put the pipe in you make sure you do it right. He said we want to design it to handle the capacity. Hunter said it won't happen to serve Coon Lake unless the residents want it. Voss said concerns have been brought up, if Coon Lake never happens It doesn't change our cost models, we don't need it for revenue. Channer said one of the mistakes we made way back is calling it 1A, they are not going to be phased in order. Boyer said any assessment at Coon Lake is going to be handled like a road assessment. He said unless $\frac{3}{4}$ of residents at Coon Lake Beach are for it he won't vote for it. Channer said we received a lot of written comments for the public hearing that were positive and when people are intimidated they don't always want to come to the meeting and give a comment.

Tiana Channer of 21572 Tyler Street NE said it sounds like a lot of misinformation was given out about this project, you bring businesses in during the bad economy and are creating job

opportunities for the people that are unemployed, and it is creating opportunity for the people that are here. Channer said it is up to residents to understand what the issues are. She said it is easy to look at your own agenda. She said she thinks this was a good thing tonight. Steve Channer said that is the woman I go home to every night.

Lachinski said it would be wonderful if everyone would show up for every meeting. He said the ball has been rolling for a long time on this project, and everyone should be involved all the time. Lachinski said he is really glad to see all these people here. Channer said there are nine (9) openings on the City commissions. He said that is a good way to get involved.

Boyer said he would like to add one thing. He said this is the last Town Hall Meeting for two Council Members in attendance. Boyer said he would like to thank Mayor Hunter and Council Member Channer for their service. Hunter said you don't get in for thanks, you just try to do what's right.

There were no more comments or questions so the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Wendy Warren
Deputy City Clerk