

A special meeting of the Ishpeming City Council was held on Thursday, January 21, 2010 at the Ishpeming City Hall. Mayor Gary Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Gary Nelson, Council Members Patricia Bureau, Claudia Demarest, Pat Scanlon and John Stone. Present: Five (5). Absent: None (0). Also present were Interim City Manager Jim Bjerne, City Attorney David Savu and Mr. Alan Bakalarski, Search Consultant.

AGENDA COMMENT

None.

STATUS OF CITY MANAGER BACKGROUND CHECK

Interim City Manager Bjerne reported that Mr. Alan Bakalarski, Search Consultant, has completed the background check of Mr. Jered Ottenwess and stated that all of the City Council Members have received a copy of that report.

Mr. Alan Bakalarski, Search Consultant, summarized the contents of his report to the City Council. Mr. Bakalarski stated that he completed an internet search of Mr. Ottenwess' background and conducted thirteen interviews. Mr. Bakalarski stated that those he interviewed included council members, city employees, a representative of the chamber of commerce, and the news media. Mr. Bakalarski reported that Mr. Ottenwess was given a positive recommendation from everyone that he interviewed and stated that Mr. Ottenwess' job performance was rated very high. Mr. Bakalarski stated that no negative issues were discovered. Mr. Bakalarski stated that based on his findings he would give Mr. Ottenwess a positive recommendation.

Interim City Manager Bjerne reported that he conducted a criminal, driving and credit background check on Mr. Ottenwess and stated that Mr. Ottenwess' record is unblemished.

Mayor Nelson stated that Mr. Ottenwess sent an email to the City Council outlining his requests for the employment agreement which included: severance pay, health care, salary request, car allowance and vacation benefits.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the details of Mr. Ottenwess' employment agreement. Mayor Nelson recommended that the City offer Mr. Ottenwess a \$1,000 moving allowance. Mr. Bakalarski suggested that the moving allowance be offered only if Mr. Ottenwess chooses to live within the City limits. Mayor Nelson recommended that the contract language pertaining to the severance package include certain exclusions. Councilwoman Demarest recommended that the City offer a salary on the low end of the range with incremental increases after favorable employment reviews. Councilwoman Bureau recommended that Mr. Ottenwess be offered the choice between the MERS retirement program and an alternative investment option. Mr. Bakalarski recommended that the contract include a provision to require a 60 notice of resignation.

A motion was made by Councilman Scanlon and seconded by Councilwoman Bureau to authorize the Interim City Manager and the City Attorney to continue negotiations with Mr.

Jered Ottenwess for the City Manager position and to authorize the Interim City Manager and the City Attorney to draft the employment agreement. Ayes: Five (5). Nays: None (0). Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Scanlon and seconded by Councilwoman Demarest to authorize Mr. Alan Bakalarski to assist the Interim City Manager with the negotiations and the draft of Mr. Ottenwess' contact and to approve an increase in Mr. Bakalarski's consulting hours; total hours not to exceed 44 (forty-four). Ayes: Five (5). Nays: None (0). Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Stone reported that he attended the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting that was held last night. Councilman Stone reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission discussed the Deer Lake cross country trail situation as it relates to the recent decision by CCI to deed a portion of that property to Ishpeming Township. Councilman Stone stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission decided that it was in the best interest of the community for the City to continue to groom the trail.

Mayor Nelson stated that he is very disappointed that CCI chose to donate the property to Ishpeming Township. Mayor Nelson stated that it is unfair that Ishpeming Township will have the benefit of owning the trail after all the years that the City has funded the development and continues to fund the maintenance of the trail. Mayor Nelson stated that it is his opinion that if Ishpeming Township wants a groomed trail, then they should contribute towards the maintenance costs.

Councilwoman Bureau stated that she is in support of maintaining the trail at this time. Councilwoman Bureau stated that the City Council can re-evaluate the situation after they receive a report on the costs associated with maintaining the trail.

Councilman Scanlon stated that it is important for the City Council to support the decisions of our committees.

A motion was made by Councilman Scanlon and seconded by Councilman Stone for the City of Ishpeming to continue to groom the Deer Lake Trail as finances permit. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Councilwoman Bureau, Councilwoman Demarest, Councilman Scanlon, and Councilman Stone. Four (4). Nays: Mayor Nelson. One (1). Motion carried.

Interim City Manager Bjerne stated that the cost analysis report for grooming and maintaining the Deer Lake cross country trail will be on the February meeting agenda.

Councilman Stone questioned whether or not the sidewalk on Pearl Street alongside of the Butler Antique Mall would be barricaded off for an extended period of time. Public Works Director Kangas stated that there is a considerable amount of snow on the roof of the Butler Antique Mall

and stated that the sidewalk was closed for pedestrian safety. Interim City Manager Bjorne stated that he would look into the situation.

Interim City Manager Bjorne reported that he and City Attorney Savu have prepared a purchase agreement between the City of Ishpeming and Mr. and Mrs. Phil Gleason for the sale of 21 acres of property east of Wabash Heights.

Councilman Stone stated that he has concerns about the access road from the Wabash Heights area into the Gleason's property. Councilman Stone stated that the temporary road from Wabash Heights is a dirt road and is full of iron ore. Councilman Stone stated that an increase in road traffic will cause a lot of problems for the residents in Wabash Heights.

Mayor Nelson stated that the DDA will be meeting on Monday, January 25, 2010 and stated that he is hopeful that the DDA will commit to extending Malton Road. Mayor Nelson recommended that the gate leading into that property from Wabash Heights be locked and that the Gleason's be offered a key for the gate.

City Attorney Savu recommended that the language in the purchase agreement be amended to say that the road leading into the Gleason's property from Wabash Heights is a temporary road and the access will be discontinued at such time that the Malton Road extension has been completed.

A motion was made by Councilman Scanlon and seconded by Councilwoman Demarest, to approve the purchase agreement, as amended by City Attorney Savu, between the City of Ishpeming and Mr. & Mrs. Phil Gleason for the property east of Wabash Heights and to authorize the Mayor and the City Clerk to sign the amended purchase agreement on behalf of the City of Ishpeming. The deed for the property shall be executed after such time that the signed purchase agreement has been returned and the proceeds have been received by the City of Ishpeming. Ayes: Five (5). Nays: None (0). Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS STATUS OF UNION NEGOTIATIONS

A motion was made by Councilman Scanlon and seconded by Councilwoman Demarest to enter into closed session at 4:52 p.m. to discuss the status of labor negotiations. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Councilwoman Bureau, Councilwoman Demarest, Councilman Scanlon, Councilman Stone and Mayor Nelson. Five (5). Nays: None (0). Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Stone and seconded by Councilwoman Bureau to return to open session at 5:47 p.m. Ayes: Five (5). Nays: None (0). Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilman Scanlon and seconded by Councilwoman Bureau to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 p.m. Ayes: Five (5). Nays: None (0). Motion carried.

Jenifer M. Rajala
City Clerk