

Bronson City Council

Minutes

Special Meeting

February 5, 2024

City Hall- 141 S. Matteson Street, Bronson MI 49028

5:00 pm

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 5:05 PM

2. Roll Call

Council Present: Vice Mayor Bill Earl, Councilmember Bill Rinehart, Councilmember Larry McConn, and Councilmember Rick Johannes

Council Absent: Mayor Matt Watkins

Staff Present: City Manager Brandon Mersman, Clerk Treasurer Tricia Rzepka, Water/Wastewater Supervisor Jerry Rinehart, and Fellowship Patrick Bird

3. Public Comments - None

Public comments shall be limited to 3 minutes for items not listed on the agenda.

4. New Business

A. Approve Selection of Engineering Firm for Clean Water Revolving Loan Project/Administrative Consent Order

City Manager Brandon Mersman presented the following information to the council:

The city recently sent out a Request for Qualifications for engineering services. The City received 5 proposals from Abonmarche, Fleis & Vanderbrink, Fishbeck, Jones & Henry, and C2AE. After reviewing proposals and conducting interviews, it was clear that all of these firms are highly qualified. Jerry, Patrick and myself conducted the interviews.

Based on Fleis & Vanderbrink's heavy experience in addressing I&I, they would be my top choice. They have a dedicated team that works on I&I projects. F&V has been very successful in obtaining funding for projects as well. Of the projects that received funding, 20% of them used F&V to prepare their applications. F&V was the company that I met with that showed us how we could have scored a lot better on the drinking water application. We were impressed with the engineers that we would be working with the most during the interview. They have worked on I&I projects that saw 50-80% reductions. F&V also approaches I&I by focusing on sources and getting the best bang for our buck on lining. They offered a unique perspective to addressing I&I that we did not hear from the others. They work with a lot of small to mid-sized communities and is their niche. I contacted their references along with some others that have used them and they had nothing but good things to say about their work. The City of Portland has used them for 40 plus years and they have been very happy with them. The company stresses communication with staff and council. They would help facilitate meetings with the public to understand the need for the project as well.

Abonmarche was also very impressive and would be a very close second choice. I think either of these firms would do a great job for us. Abonmarche is doing our Master Plan & Zoning Update currently. They have also been very helpful on the trail project by giving us estimates and a plan to obtain funding at no cost. They would also help us draft grant applications for us at no cost. The project engineer that would be working with us has many years of experience building WWTP plants as well as operating them. He has worked in communities that had consent orders in Indiana with the state and with the EPA. He would be a solid choice for us as he knows what it is like to operate and build/design plants. Abonmarche has had success on I&I reduction projects as well. They are also selective in where to treat the issue to get the best bang for our buck.

Looking at the fee schedule for both companies, they are very similar. Abonmarche seems to be a little bit lower but a lot of it depends on who at the company is doing the work.

Again, I think either of these firms would do a good job for us. I would lean towards Fleis & Vanderbrink but Abonmarche would be good as well.

Patrick Bird also stated that both firms were very impressive and responsive. Fleis & Vandenbrink may be the better choice for this project, but Abonmarche would be a good choice too if the council chose to go that way.

Councilmember Rick Johannes questioned Jerry Rinehart as to whether he had a preference as to which firm to work with?

Jerry Rinehart stated that he would be fine working with either firm.

Councilmember Bill Rinehart stated that he had also spoken to Jerry and was informed that interviews went well with all the firms interviewed.

Councilmember Larry McConn stated that while he was the interim mayor for the city, there had been some issues with Fleis & Vandenbrink, but was not sure if that was entirely their fault.

General discussion took place of going with whom Brandon felt comfortable with.

Motion to approve Fleis & Vandenbrink as the engineering firm for Clean Water Revolving Loan Project/ Administrative Consent Order made by Councilmember Bill Rinehart with support from Councilmember Rick Johannes.

4 ayes/0 nays Motion Carried

5. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Councilmember Bill Rinehart with support from Councilmember Rick Johannes.

4 ayes/0 nays Motion Carried

Adjourned at 5:16 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Rzepka
Clerk/Treasurer
City of Bronson