

**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AURORA CITY COUNCIL**  
**CITY/TOWN GOVERNMENT CENTER**  
**THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2018**  
**5:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Councilor Worshek, Gregor, Cromley, Mayor Lislegard

**ABSENT:** Councilor Lakso

**ALSO PRESENT:** Craig Anttila, Jon Skelton, Ed Kippley, and Jodi Knaus from the Town of White; Wayne Thuringer, Aurora Public Works Director; Tim Kauppi, Aurora City Clerk/Treasurer; Eric Meyer, Larson Engineering; Rob Hill and Gene Maki, Mesabi East School Board; Matt Reid and Mike Larson, Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc.; and Butch Ceglar

A special joint meeting with the Town of White Board was called to order by Mayor Lislegard at 5:00 p.m.

Eric Meyer from Larson Engineering appeared on behalf of Mesabi East School for the purpose of presenting to the city council the options for drainage of the new athletic facility. Items also discussed included the need to vacate Railroad Avenue to accommodate the new project footprint, creation of a new road to provide ingress/egress to the remaining residences currently located on Railroad Avenue, and questions regarding electric, water, and sewer utilities that run along Railroad Avenue. It was decided to first approve the drainage plan, and then address the other items in upcoming meetings after more information was known.

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Gregor to approve Option 2, Drainage Improvements for the Mesabi East athletic facility. MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion was had between the Aurora City Council and the Town of White Board regarding the results of the Special Election held on March 13, 2018. Jon Skelton stated that the Town of White Board is completely in favor of continuing to pair and share with the City of Aurora and enjoys the strong relationship the City Council of Aurora and the Town of White Board have established over the years and wants to continue to build on that strong relationship. The election results only impact the City of Aurora residents being able to run for Township Board seats and vote in Township elections. As of the next election, City of Aurora residents cannot vote in Township elections or run for office. The Township Board and the Aurora City Council both agreed that these joint meetings should continue into the future in order to provide further transparency to the public.

Discussion continued regarding the East Mesabi Water Project. Mayor Lislegard made some opening comments stating that SEH has been working on this project for several years now and that they have done some great work. A proposal for engineering on the project was recently brought forward for the Town of White and the City of Aurora to approve. Mayor Lislegard explained that the proposal was removed from the City of Aurora's agenda at the last scheduled meeting so that both the City of Aurora and the Town of White could get together and openly discuss the subject before moving forward as there are several questions that need to be answered including the cost of the project and how expenses for the project will be approved. Conversation continued regarding how the project will

be funded and the necessity to keep moving along with the project planning and design of the plant and what the next steps should be.

Ed Kippley left the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Discussion then focused on what needed to be done now to improve the chances of receiving funding for the water project. It was determined that moving forward with SEH on a contract that would only cover preliminary site and intake layout, transmission main alignment, and a pilot study would be best until it was learned if actual funding is awarded for the project. SEH agreed to restructure the contract proposal for just these items at a cost of \$86,000. Other items need to be discussed further, but Mayor Lislegard and Ed Kippley agreed to testify and present the project to the legislature on behalf of each community with Matt Reid from SEH being available for technical support of the presentation.

**Moved by Gregor and supported by Worshek approving the proposed agreement with Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH) in the amount of \$86,000 for completing the Preliminary Site and Intake Layout, Transmission Main Alignment, and Pilot Study. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Cromley that any expenditures made out of the joint water fund for the East Mesabi Water Project need to be brought before the city council for its approval prior to any agreement or payment of funds. MOTION CARRIED**

Additional discussion ensued regarding the problems associated with the water levels in the St. James Pit and the Hydrology Memo prepared by the MN Department of Natural Resources. Wayne Thuringer reported that the water levels in the pit continue to rise and the need to pump the pit again in the spring is very likely and the city will need to be prepared to take action.

Town of White made a motion to adjourn their portion of the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Cromley to take a meeting recess at 6:58 p.m. MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was called back to order by Mayor Lislegard at 7:05 p.m. Present were Councilors Worshek, Gregor, Cromley, and Mayor Lislegard. Councilor Lakso was absent.

Councilor Worshek provided an update on the logging project on the athletic facility land at Measbi East School. All councilors and the mayor consulted with the two school board members in attendance as to what timber should be removed with a focus on what buffers should be left in place. All agreed that the timeline to have this project completed is no later than the end of May.

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Gregor to have the mayor sign the logging contract with Doug Hustad Logging that contains a map of the agreed areas to be cut and to have the cutting done by the end of May 2018. MOTION CARRIED**

**Moved by Lislegard and supported by Worshek to add Jim Lakso as alternate to the East Range Public Safety Board. MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion was had regarding the structure of the city clerk's office and the distribution of duties amongst employees. Councilors viewed this as an opportunity to restructure the office duties with Tim Kauppi submitting his notice that he will be leaving his role as City Clerk/Treasurer. It appears that two

positions will need to be hired and the council agreed that the city needs to take a close look at upgrading its current office software. The council agreed to take action at the next regular meeting regarding new hires.

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Gregor to adjourn the meeting.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

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David Lislegard, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Tim Kauppi, City Clerk/Treasurer