

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Work Session – March 10, 2025

Pursuant to due call and notice, a work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, March 10, 2025 at 6:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Prince presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer.

Present: City Manager Rich Spiczka, City Engineer Sam Anderson, City Clerk Michelle Miller

TH 197 Raise Grant Project Update

Anderson state that the city project involving Hannah Avenue and Middle School Drive, with a total cost of over \$20 million, faced a funding delay of the \$18 million federal RAISE grant. The city received an additional \$5.2 million in state funds to cover local match. Unlike the federal RAISE grant funds, the IIJA State Match dollars are not affected by the federal freeze on discretionary grants and available for now.

Anderson provided two options for the council. To delaying the project a year or using the state funds to start construction this summer. Staff feel there's an opportunity to use the available funding to proceed with improvements on the city system that would otherwise be difficult to fund without grant assistance. The City has already spent about \$1 million on easement acquisition and engineering. If the RAISE grant funding becomes available in the next 12 months or sooner, then things stay relatively on schedule with what's been programmed for the last few years and no anticipated cost to the City for either project. If the RAISE grant funding is taken away, there's a risk the IIJA State match funding disappears as well, and our city street improvements aren't completed. MnDOT is willing to use the available funding to assist the city in the short term, but wants to make sure the city is still committed to the overall project in the event the RAISE grant goes away.

The council provided consensus in favor of using the state funds to proceed with partial construction, focusing on the 23rd and Middle School roundabout, to minimize impact on the school district and businesses. This includes the possibility of an MOU with MnDOT to formalize the funding and construction plan.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Thayer, seconded by Fiskevold Gould, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle R. Miller
City Clerk