

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MONDAY, MAY 12, 2014 AT 7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order in regular session by Mayor Powers with the following members present: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel.  
Absent: None.

Moved by Niemeyer, seconded by Skutnik that the Open Meetings Act is posted on the southeast wall of the City Council Chambers and that prior to this meeting a notice was placed in the Hastings Tribune on May 9, 2014, that notice was posted in three public places, that each Councilmember and Mayor received a copy of the proposed agenda and that an agenda for such meeting, kept continuously current, is available for public inspection and that said meeting is held in open session. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

**REPORTS OF LIAISONS:** Councilman Goebel reported on the May 1, 2014 Board of Public Works Meeting. Councilman Goebel stated Hastings Utilities goes from 10 megawatts to 15 megawatts on the amount of electrical production that they are required to take from WEC II which was effective May 1<sup>st</sup>. Fortunately, it sounds as if we are in a time where marketing some of that will be certainly possible at a reasonable rate. WEC II is down with a planned outage, they are doing an overhaul of the draft fan to repair some cracks in it and some work on the burners also. There was a presentation of the 2013 annual audit by McDermott & Miller; they did issue a clean opinion noting that Hastings Utilities has good financial controls in place and found no issues of non-compliance. The Board also accepted a three year contract for the audit and quarterly financial reviews to be done by McDermott & Miller. The next regular meeting is May 15, 2014 at 9:00 A.M. at the Hastings Utilities Board.

Councilman Goebel stated the Mayor's Youth Council will have a meeting at 6:45 P.M. in the City Council Chambers on May 13, 2014.

Councilman Krings stated we did find out today that the Hastings Marathon to be held on June 21<sup>st</sup> of this year is being recognized as an official 2015 Boston qualifying event. It is good for us to get the recognition, promotion and hopefully pull a few more people here.

Councilman Harrington reminded everyone that summer fun classes start at the Hastings Museum next month. There are some scholarships available, call Russanne Erickson at the Hastings Museum for more information.

The Mayor stated for the last couple of years we have been looking at convention centers and how to proceed with taking our city in a different direction. The Mayor stated tonight he has the wonderful opportunity to lay out a project for the town that could really shape the future of the City of Hastings. We have worked on this project for a couple of years now and we (Mayor, Dave Rippe, Kaleena Fong and Randy Chick) have probably worked more seriously on it since the summer of last year. We are going to do a project where we remodel the City Auditorium, we could possibly put an addition on the City Auditorium and then we put an RFP (Request For

Proposals) out for the surrounding area to do any kind of project that we think might fit the area.

Dave Rippe, Executive Director of HEDC (Hastings Economic Development Corporation) congratulated the Mayor and Council on the successful application to the State of Nebraska Civic and Community Financing Fund. On May 7<sup>th</sup> we were informed that the City's application for a \$750,000 grant to assist in renovations and a potential expansion for the Hastings City Auditorium had been approved. The purpose of this fund is to support the development of civic and community centers throughout Nebraska and is for projects that foster growth of communities. Without a doubt the continued pursuit of responsible community growth is the ultimate goal of the project, the ultimate goal of HEDC and it is the process we are discussing this evening. In 2013, this community undertook significant planning and study efforts in order to discover ways in which we could address a specific community deficiency, that being the lack of a suitable conference center, as well as opportunities for continued growth in our thriving downtown. Kaleena Fong with the Adams County Convention & Visitor's Bureau and Randy Chick with the CRA (Community Redevelopment Authority) and BID (Business Improvement District) will elaborate on these efforts. This evening we ask the Council to consider the significant research that has been completed surrounding this effort and ask that you capitalize off the momentum of your successful grant award and take the next step in the process, the next step being the solicitation of private development in order to compliment, improve and expand its City Auditorium. In authorizing an invitation for redevelopment proposals for the block of city owned property between City Hall and the City Auditorium, you will allow the community an opportunity to leverage powerful resources. There's the potential of a renovated and expanded City Auditorium, underutilized community owned property and an amazing downtown to attract transformative, private investment and redevelopment into the core of our community. With your authorization of the invitation for redevelopment proposals this evening, potential developers will have until June 6<sup>th</sup> to submit proposals back to the City concerning the redevelopment of the City block. Proposals will be reviewed by a project review team appointed by the Mayor and this team will ultimately make a recommendation for developer of choice to the City Council. Upon selection of a developer, the City would begin the process and negotiation of a Redevelopment Agreement for the project. Details as they relate to timing, the ultimate scope of what might be done at the City Auditorium and what might occur on the city block will all be dictated by the proposed project, the selected developer and covered by the Redevelopment Agreement which are all unknowns at this point in time. Certainly there are areas of emphasis, community priorities and key project objectives that are consistent with the 2013 studies and these are outlined in the invitation for redevelopment proposal documents. The mission of HEDC is to provide direction in making Hastings a community of choice for talented people and quality businesses, encouraging public/private partnerships in order to aggressively pursue growth and development opportunities that allow us to invest in ourselves and better our community is an effort that is fully supported by our Board of Directors and our corporations membership. A downtown project that addresses areas of need for our community and presents opportunities for investment and growth would be an economic driver for Hastings. Your approval of this invitation will allow us to seek these opportunities. This is an exciting time to be in Hastings and we greatly appreciate your support of this process.

Kaleena Fong, Director of the Adams County Convention and Visitor's Bureau, congratulated the Mayor and Council on the grant award and thanked them for the opportunity to address them this evening. As you are likely aware, in the summer of 2013, several community partners, both public and private, contracted with Venue Works to conduct a feasibility study for a new conference center in Hastings. Through their research Venue Works gathered input from nearly 400 individuals through interviews, focus group meetings, surveys and follow up calls. They also toured existing meeting and event spaces in the community. Taking all these things into consideration and weighing on their long standing experience within the industry, Venue Works recognized Hastings' need for a conference center. Conference centers are traditionally more upscale venues, including ballroom space that can be divided into smaller break out spaces and which are often adjacent to sizeable lobbies and most successfully, hotels. They made several recommendations for location, layout, operation, staffing and maintenance of such a facility, but most importantly in their report they stated that there is a significant demand for meeting and event space to accommodate 200 to 400 attendees in Hastings. Public assembly facilities are an integral part of cultural, social and economic fabric of the community and quality of life is enhanced by the opportunity to host and attend a variety of events. These types of facilities are also economic drivers, based on their assumption of this type of facility, Venue Works estimated that the economic impact to the community from events and activities hosted at a conference center will be \$1.7 million without multipliers from just the first year of activity. The Hastings City Auditorium is centrally located, it is in close proximity to restaurants, retail and entertainment venues. This will make the facility a draw and an economic driver for surrounding businesses. It will also make the facility a desirable location for meetings and events because participants will have entertainment options within walking distance. Mrs. Fong stated she believes in Hastings and its ability to attract and retain convention business. It will increase tax revenues, sales and visitor traffic at businesses throughout the community for decades to come. Mrs. Fong appreciates the Council's consideration of this study and the results as you make your decision.

Randy Chick, Director of the CRA and BID stated downtown is the City's historic cultural and civic core. The downtown area has seen significant development including renovated upper level housing and main floor retail space and the development of new cultural institutions and social attractions. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Plan identified several short and long term goals for the downtown area: 1) bring additional retail and hospitality oriented businesses to the area, 2) apply strategic improvements to the public realm which will help increase the downtown district's appeal to residents, businesses, customers and visitors, 3) create or improve existing public spaces and policies to increase the number of public events held downtown, 4) promote the downtown as a destination for specialty retail, cultural events and entertainment and hospitality, 5) increase the use of the downtown district after business hours by promoting and attracting more restaurants, lounges and entertainment venues and finally encourage private investment and development that builds on the current public infrastructure and investments made in the downtown. Certainly the renovation and potential expansion of the City Auditorium and

redevelopment of the City Parking Plaza would further these goals. In our 2013 Downtown Revitalization Plan, it identified several physical and strategic catalyst projects that would help spur revitalization in the downtown area. Two of those were to create an entertainment district and the other to partner with entities in the community to increase regional tourism. When identifying the next steps, the plan went on to say both residential and commercial developments have a reciprocal effect on the other and an increase in residents leads to increased need for commercial services, while an increase in commercial services increases neighborhood appeal for residents. To fill the commercial portion of the equation, additional commercial space and opportunities need to be created downtown. One of the most interesting comments in the study said “an additional sector of the Hastings’ economy that is missing from downtown is a hotel”. Within the City there is currently interest in developing a hotel and convention center and downtown would be an ideal location for such a project. Downtown offers proximity to retail, restaurants and services while presenting visitors with easy access to the cultural and civic core of the City. Downtown would benefit from the increased number of visitors and their use of the district after business hours. The construction of such a project would be mutually beneficial to both the convention center and the district. On behalf of the BID and CRA, Mr. Chick requested the Council’s support for the invitation for redevelopment proposals for the block of the City owned property known as the City Parking Plaza and the adjacent area.

The Mayor stated as he said before, we have been working on this for a couple of years and we have kind of an idea of what we want over there and what we think is going to happen over there and we’ll see if anyone activating the RFP is going agree with us.

**CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**MAYOR’S COMMUNICATIONS:** The Mayor read a proclamation proclaiming May 18 through May 24, 2014 as Emergency Medical Services Week

The Mayor congratulated Give Hastings, what an incredible project that was. The Mayor stated he believes they raised \$260,000 and matching funds of either \$85,000 or \$90,000. For a first time event that is incredible, they worked very hard on this project and believes everyone in town got excited about it. The Mayor stated we beat our neighboring City by \$100,000, they had three or four counties involved and they had less money given. The Mayor thanked Chuck Shoemaker and the Hastings Community Foundation and others for all their work on this.

Moved by Niemeyer, seconded by Harrington that the following items on the Consent Agenda be approved:

1(a) Minutes of the Council Meeting of April 28, 2014.

1(b) Minutes of the Council Retreat of April 22, 2014.

2(a) Request of the YWCA of Adams County to close city streets for annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Celebration on July 4, 2014.

2(b) Request of Bullseye's, Inc. for a Special Designated License at the Adams County Fairgrounds on May 31, 2014.

2(c) Request of Bullseye's, Inc. for a Special Designated License at the City Auditorium on June 7, 2014.

2(d) Request of Bullseye's, Inc. for a Special Designated License at the Colonial Estates on June 13, 2014.

2(e) Request of Bullseye's, Inc. for a Special Designated License at the City Auditorium on June 14, 2014.

2(f) Request of Mary Lanning Healthcare for street closure on June 14, 2014 for the Mary Lanning Fun Wun event.

2(g) Request of the Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce for street closure on May 22, 2014 for the Walk Out On Work event.

4(a) Payroll for the period ending May 10, 2014, paid May 16, 2014.

4(b) Authorizing the City Clerk to issue checks against the various funds for payment of claims. (Claims attached to and made a part of these minutes).

4(c) Authorizing the City Clerk to issue checks against the various funds for payment of pre-paid claims. (Pre-paid claims included in list of claims attached).

5(a) Department Monthly Reports received and placed on file.

Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel.  
Nays: None. The motion carried.

At this time a public hearing was held on the request of Great Plains Communications, Inc. for a Conditional Use Permit to allow for a structure to house electronic equipment for fiber optic cable and related fiber optic equipment to be stored outside. (Southeast corner of North Baltimore Avenue and West 70<sup>th</sup> Street).

No one appeared to speak in favor.

No one appeared to speak in opposition.

The City Clerk advised that her office had received no written objections.

The Mayor declared the hearing closed.

Moved by Harrington, seconded by Skutnik that the request of Great Plains Communications, Inc. for a Conditional Use Permit to allow for a structure to house electronic equipment for fiber optic cable and related fiber optic equipment to be stored outside on the Southeast corner of North Baltimore Avenue and West 70<sup>th</sup> Street be approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to construction, all building/fence permits shall be applied and reviewed by the Building Inspector.
2. A six (6) foot high privacy fence shall be placed around the perimeter of the site. The fence shall be a minimum of 40 feet back from the centerline of North Baltimore Avenue and West 70<sup>th</sup> Street.
3. No motor vehicles shall be stored on site.
4. Crushed rock or gravel shall be placed within the confines of the fenced in area.
5. All weeds shall be kept to a minimum and in compliance with Hastings City Code Chapter 40, Property Maintenance.

Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel.  
Nays: None. The motion carried.

At this time a public hearing was held on the request of Selective Site Development, Inc. for a Conditional Use Permit to construct a wireless (cellular) communications tower at 427 South Showboat Boulevard (MPH Raceway).

No one appeared to speak in favor.

No one appeared to speak in opposition.

The City Clerk advised that her office had received no written objections.

The Mayor declared the hearing closed.

Moved by Odom, seconded by Niemeyer that the request of Selective Site Development, Inc. for a Conditional Use Permit to construct a wireless (cellular) communications tower at 427 South Showboat Boulevard (MPH Raceway) be approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. The communication tower shall not exceed 199 feet in height.
2. The applicant shall obtain a building permit from the Hastings Development Services Department.
3. No structures shall be erected within a 360 degree radius from the base of the tower for a distance of 195 feet with the exception of Accessory Equipment as described within Hastings City Code Chapter 34-315.2.a.
4. The tower shall abide by all other regulations as written within Hastings City Code Chapter 34-315.

Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel.  
Nays: None. The motion carried.

Moved by Niemeyer, seconded by Harrington that the Mayor and Council approve the Final Plat of Cimarron Meadows 8<sup>th</sup> Addition. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

At this time a public hearing was held on the request of Dennis Engel to bring proposed Cimarron Meadows 8<sup>th</sup> Addition into the corporate limits of the City of Hastings.

No one appeared to speak in favor.

No one appeared to speak in opposition.

The City Clerk advised that her office had received no written objections.

The Mayor declared the hearing closed

Moved by Skutnik, seconded by Goebel that the Mayor and Council approve the request of Dennis Engel to bring proposed Cimarron Meadows 8<sup>th</sup> Addition into the corporate limits of the City of Hastings. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

Moved by Niemeyer, seconded by Hoops that the Mayor and Council approve contract for Project R-2014-A1 (Baltimore Avenue-North Shore to Lochland Road) to Vontz Paving, Inc., in the amount of \$448,777.75, contingent upon approval of the Adams County Board by Interlocal Agreement. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nay: None. The motion carried.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2014-15**

**INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH ADAMS COUNTY, NEBRASKA**

WHEREAS, City of Hastings, Nebraska desires to participate in road construction project with Adams County, Nebraska, to provide for the resurfacing of Baltimore Avenue from North Shore Drive to Lochland Road, Project R-2014-A1; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hastings, Nebraska, has provided for the preparation of engineering drawings and specifications, the advertising for bids for construction of the PROJECT, and the execution of the contract documents, and will further provide for the construction inspection and project management of Project R-201-A1; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hastings, Nebraska, and Adams County, Nebraska, shall each pay fifty percent (50%) of the cost of construction of Project R-2014-A1; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the City of Hastings, Nebraska enter into an Interlocal Cooperation Act Agreement with Adams County, Nebraska, for the improvement of said Baltimore Avenue.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska, that the City of Hastings, Nebraska, enter into an Interlocal Cooperation Act Agreement with Adams County, Nebraska for the improvement of Baltimore Avenue, under Project R-2014-A1, and that the Mayor be authorized to sign said Interlocal Cooperation Agreement on behalf of the City of Hastings, Nebraska.

Moved by Hoops, seconded by Skutnik that Resolution No. 2014-15 be passed and approved.  
Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel.  
Nays: None. The motion carried.

Moved by Goebel, seconded by Skutnik that the Mayor and Council approve contract for Project 2014-A2 (Adams Central Avenue - 12<sup>th</sup> Street to North City limits) to Vontz Paving, Inc. in the amount of \$116,941.00. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

Moved by Krings, seconded by Goebel that the Mayor and Council approve Safety Plan and closure of 6<sup>th</sup> Street for Russ's IGA with the following modifications and conditions:

1. Change Road Closed sign from Type II barricade to Type III barricade. Remove from center of street and relocate to terrace.

2. Place advance warning signs on Burlington Avenue north of 6<sup>th</sup> Street and south of 6<sup>th</sup> Street advising of street closure.
3. Placement of Road Closed sign west of 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue.
4. Request to remove covered walkway is denied. Covered walkway is to be constructed and utilized until demolition is completed and debris is removed.
5. Final Agreement with First St. Paul's Lutheran Church.
6. Final insurance materials with City Clerk. City Attorney has approved submitted intents in packet.
7. City will provide additional portable "No Parking Signs".
8. All signs and placement and upkeep are responsibility of Russ's IGA until cessation of project.

Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel.  
Nays: None. The motion carried.

Moved by Odom, seconded by Niemeyer that the Mayor be authorized to enter into Broker's Agreement with Arthur Gallagher and Company to provide insurance broker services.

City Administrator Joe Patterson stated we have been looking at our insurance coverage as our commitment to LARM is completed in October. Four cities (Papillion, LaVista, Holdrege and Hastings) have signed off on a Interlocal Agreement. The next step is to secure the services of a brokerage firm. We interviewed about six brokerage firms about three weeks ago in Lincoln and unanimously chose Arthur Gallagher & Company as our broker. They will formulate all the information we need to put into a form to go out for competitive proposals from the various insurance companies and will also serve as an administrative capacity for us in moving forward. We will get about one-third of our costs from Hastings Utilities as they are involved on the Workers' Comp side.

Vote on the motion. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

At this time discussion was had on a downtown redevelopment project.

The Mayor stated as has been mentioned, we did receive the grant which would remodel the City Auditorium which would be the first stages of what comes with the City Auditorium, i.e., additional convention center, some type of redevelopment project in the city parking lot. The

redevelopment project would entail additional parking in the neighborhood, it would probably be a pretty high dollar amount to the City of Hastings, but could really shape us for the next 20 or 30, maybe 100 years. Ever since this group has been on the Council, we have tried to reposition the town with restructuring debt, paying off debt and getting economic development programs going which Hastings Utilities did with us and we are so proud of them working as a team with us. The Mayor stated we are trying to send this town into a different direction. The Mayor stated he and Mr. Rippe were talking last week and he gave him the 1957 Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the City of Hastings and it is almost exactly what we are hoping to happen over here now. If they would have done that back in 1957, what a wonderful area this whole downtown would have been. There were mezzanine walkways, there were tree plantings, strategic road closures and it went from east to west encompassing 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to 5<sup>th</sup> Street; it was a beautiful and incredible piece of work and if we could duplicate that now it would really be something. With the Council's approval tonight, we will send an RFP out tomorrow to some developers and they can give us their ideas of what they think this ought to be and we will also kind of guide them and tell them what we think we might want. Our anticipation of what this can do to revitalize the downtown is just endless. The Mayor stated he told Mr. Chick that he would love to get this project done and then hand him a downtown with filled up buildings and if they need to be built, let's get them built; do utility infrastructure and do walking spaces. With all of that being done, there will be more shops and more people moving down here, it will turn this area back into the vibrant area that it was when he grew up in the 1960's. When we were young, the downtown was really hopping and by the time the mall was built west of Hastings it started draining the downtown of vibrancy and now is the time to get that back.

Councilman Krings thanked everyone involved in the project, some of them we heard from tonight and others we have yet to hear from. There has been a lot of discussion and work done on this potential project up to this point, but with that being said, he also thinks there is a lot of work to do and there is going to be a lot of discussion moving forward. Councilman Krings stated he would ask the Council to keep an open mind and consider all options with regards to this project and any other. The grant award we got was fantastic and is very helpful in what we are trying to do and regardless of any other development, we all know the renovations to the City Auditorium is long overdue. Councilman Krings stated we have a lot of work to do and we need to prepare ourselves what that might look like and what that would mean from our end of it as a community and as a City. Councilman Krings stated he agrees with the Mayor, the potential here is fantastic and it could do a lot, not only for this area here, but for our entire community. A project like this could spur visitors and local development; what has occurred now is already fantastic, but this could take it to another level. The community should be excited about what we could potentially be seeing over the next few years with regards to this project and all the other great things going on in our community.

Moved by Odom, seconded by Krings that the Council approve the publication for Redevelopment Proposals for an area bounded on the north by the north line of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, on the east by the east line of Denver Avenue, on the south by the south line of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and on the

west by the west line of Hastings Avenue; an area approximately 264' x 264' or 69,696 square feet.

Councilman Odom stated the City Auditorium has been one of those buildings that he has certainly been interested in and had part in some repairs years ago, but questioned exactly what are we talking with that particular building.

The Mayor stated new plumbing, new HVAC system and re-purposing the interior.

Mr. Rippe stated we worked with the City in order to prepare the grant application for the community civic center financing fund and had a proposal in there to renovate the City Auditorium to address significant code deficiencies that exist as well as potential expansion of the facility. It is kind of, at this point, undefined because that property would be included in the redevelopment area for the city block project. The City in using that asset as a tool of leverage to attract private development would later fully define what the project is going to be at the City Auditorium. At such point that the City Council works with a private developer on a Redevelopment Agreement for the city block, they would have the opportunity to work on a Redevelopment Agreement that would define exactly what happens at the City Auditorium and adjacent to it. Mr. Rippe stated the full extent of what it is that might or might not happen there is not defined today, the City would work in concert with a private developer to help determine that.

The Mayor stated we do know that the HVAC system, plumbing system, windows, tuck pointing and any roof problems we have would be addressed first and then it would go beyond that.

Councilman Odom stated he believes that that is important, people who have used that facility over the years understand the heating and cooling and lack of Wi-Fi. There are a lot of things that will be improved that will modernize that building to make it much more accessible and useful to the public.

The Mayor stated when you look at just virgin space, putting up a 60,000 square foot convention center would be very costly. We are already half way or three quarters of the way there and yes that facility gets used quite a lot, about 150 days per year. If we can get that up to 240 days a year with the facility we already have, then we have a head start on an incredible project. This is a going to truly be a public/private partnership in all respects that taxpayers want us to do. If the RFP comes out like we think it is going to, it is going to be a high dollar private investment and a public investment of some sort. The Mayor stated he believes we are going to get some incredible interest from some developers.

Councilman Goebel stated he really believes we are in a fantastic position here sitting with \$750,000 that we can use to improve our facility that really needs it. We will certainly save on our water bill with a new HVAC system. We aren't sending out an RFP with a completely

empty slate, we are saying the City Auditorium is going to be there and it is going to be an important part of the project, but also we haven't drawn the lines in black ink of where we want and what size we want that hotel to be. We are giving the commercial entities the ability to put their ideas into it and is sure we will receive some really good proposals.

The Mayor stated when you talk about the town, we are going to get something at the Hastings Regional Center, something is going to open up out there, whether it is 60 beds, 200 beds or 600 beds, we don't know. Our objective right now is to try and get as many as we can back in health services out there; the jobs that go with that are very high paying jobs and there are ancillary services that go along with that job. Tomorrow we have a chance to vote on a school bond issue which could be an incredible deal for the City of Hastings also. The Mayor stated there is another government entity that we have a good chance of getting and we will hear about that at the next legislative session and that could bring in another 200 jobs. It is an incredible time right now in the City of Hastings and we all should be positive about all the things that are happening right now. The Mayor stated he hopes the town really embraces this project, the school project and the Hastings Regional Center project; we should have nothing to complain about, we have lots of positive energy going right now and we are going to capitalize on it. We have a great town and let's make it better.

Vote on the motion. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2014-16**

WHEREAS, City of Hastings, Nebraska has formally advertised for the receipt of bids on Project 3-31-0040-13, a Federally funded project for improvement of the Hastings Airport; and

WHEREAS, a single bid was received on said project from Werner Construction, Inc., P. O. Box 2003, Hastings, Nebraska, 68901, in the amount of \$1,118,845.24; and

WHEREAS, this bid received is substantially over the Engineer's Estimate of \$646,863.25; and

WHEREAS, officials of the City of Hastings, Nebraska and Nebraska Department of Aeronautics have reviewed said bid and find it not in the best public interest, based on prices received and to funds available, to award said contract.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska, that the bid received by Werner Construction, Inc., P. O. Box 2003, Hastings, Nebraska, for Project 3-31-0040-13, Airport Pavement Maintenance in the amount above is hereby rejected.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the bid bond be refunded to the contractor and the contractor be notified of same.

Moved by Harrington, seconded by Skutnik that Resolution No. 2014-16 be passed and approved. Roll Call: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

At this time Robert Samuelson of 505 West Lochland Road addressed the Mayor and Council on the nitrate issues.

Mr. Samuelson stated for 35 years he has farmed and raised hogs and for the last 15 years he has traveled selling bearings. In his travels, when he tells people that he is from Hastings, lots of people comment on what a nice town Hastings is.

In the early 1990's he was on the greens committee at Lochland Country Club. We needed to drill a new well for watering the golf course; water was hard to find on the golf course. His brother, Joel Samuelson, and his friend, Jamie Askey, offered to use their gift of dowsing to locate, in their opinion, the best place to drill a new well. The well was drilled exactly where they suggested and it was excellent, it produced approximately 1200 gallons per minute and was very low in nitrates.

The middle of April of 2014 he collected water from that same well and his own faucet and took the samples to Servi-Tech to have them tested for nitrates. His faucet sample tested 8.42 and the Lochland well water tested 3.11.

This well was located by dowsing and has remained low in nitrates for the last 20 plus years.

Mr. Samuelson stated he believes we can agree on two things and that is 1) Nobody is excited about spending 85 million dollars on a water treatment plant and 2) Nobody wants our water to be full of chlorine and taste like the water in Lincoln and Omaha.

Mr. Samuelson stated his thoughts on how we might be able to remedy the nitrate issues are 1) About ½ mile west of the Lochland well is a city well that he believes has been shut down because of high nitrates. He can't speak for Lochland Country Club, but perhaps a trade could be negotiated. Lochland golf course takes the higher nitrate water and the City uses the lower nitrate water. 2) Incorporate the services of a dowser to locate the best place to drill new test wells. He knows some people don't believe in dowsing, but he is convinced it works. He has personally felt the "pull" himself. The key is you have to believe it will work. It's kind of like going to Church. If you don't believe, it's probably not going to work. Possibly that is why they call them divining rods, perhaps there is some divine intervention. There was an article on the internet the other day that told of how some of the major wine producers in California are hiring dowsers to locate better wells because of the extreme drought they are going through. Mr.

Samuelson stated we should also try dowsing for water. 3) Mr. Samuel's mother is 103 years old and still lives alone on the farm near Trumbull and has had the benefit of chemical free water her entire life. Harriet McFeeley is his mother's part-time care giver and she used to run Country Meadows, which is located just northeast of the Softball Complex. Mrs. McFeeley told him that she used to test her water twice a year because of state regulations and it has always tested low in nitrates. A week ago, he took a sample of Mrs. McFeeley's water to Servi-Tech and it tested 3.32. Mrs. McFeeley told him that about ¼ to ½ mile north of her house there is a draw that runs northwest to southeast. People north of that draw have always had high nitrates while her water has always remained low in nitrates. This tells him that there are veins of low nitrate water close to Hastings. We just have to find them. If we can pump water all the way to Trumbull that opens up a large area we can search for water even if the City of Hastings had to buy an irrigated farm for the water and turn it into dryland, it would still be way less expensive than 85 million dollars. 4) Drill deep. He has had several well drillers tell him there is another reservoir of water much deeper than our 120 foot level we currently pump from.

Mr. Samuelson stated there are cons to a water treatment plant and they are: 1) "The cancer risk to people who drink chlorinated water is 93% higher than those who don't" according to the U.S. Council of Environmental Quality. 2) Initial Cost. 3) Cost to Maintain. 4) It will use excessive water. 5) Chlorine is bad for your health in many ways. 6) Our water will taste horrible. 7) Water will be so expensive no one will be able to afford to water their lawn and Hastings will turn brown. 8) Chlorine could leach the iron and copper out of our pipes and we could end up with brown water like what is going on in Minden. 9) People will have to buy expensive filtration systems to remove the chlorine.

Try running Hastings water thru a simple little Brita filter and freeze it, the thawed water is the best tasting water in the world. It would be a shame to screw it up by adding chlorine. Hopefully we can all put our heads together and come up with a better solution than an 85 million dollar water treatment plant.

Moved by Niemeyer, seconded by Skutnik there being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourn at 7:52 P.M. Roll Call: Ayes: Harrington, Peterson, Odom, Niemeyer, Krings, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Nays: None. The motion carried.

APPROVED:

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Mayor

5-12-2014

ATTEST:

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City Clerk

( S E A L )