

A meeting of the Board of Public Works of the City of Beatrice, Nebraska, was published for 7:00 p.m. on February 24, 2014 at the BPS Administration Meeting Room, 320 North 5th Street, Beatrice, Nebraska.

Present: Don Vetrovsky, Darin Baehr, and Bob Moran.

Absent: Dave Eskra and Rich Moon.

Others: Tobias Tempelmeyer and Greg Butcher.

A special meeting of the BPW Board was advertised to be held concurrent with the Beatrice City Council's Work Session in the event more than a quorum of Board Members were present to discuss the Elimination of the BPW Board. No formal meeting of the BPW Board was called.

Mayor Schuster announced that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is available in the meeting room and is accessible to members of the public.

Eliminate the BPW Board

City Administrator Tempelmeyer presented information regarding the impact that eliminating the BPW Board would have on the outstanding and future BPW bonds. Bond Counsel reported that there would be no effect currently or in the future. A list of pros and cons developed by BPW Superintendents were presented. It was noted that of the thirty one (31) first class cities only five (5) have a separate board of public works. State Statutes and Beatrice City Codes were also included in the Council's packet items. Councilmember Fairbanks noted that he had brought this idea forward and thought that it may have more traction. Councilmember Cook asked if the BPW Board meeting were open to the public. City Administrator Tempelmeyer noted that they are open to the public and subject to the open meetings act. Councilmember Cook wondered if the decision on many BPW projects are made in advance and thus the Council was just a rubber stamp. Councilmember Tiemann noted that the savings are minimal and that all the big decisions including all budgeting come before the Council. Councilmember Fairbanks went through the list of pros and cons, he felt the meeting minutes of the BPW Board did not provide enough information on the discussions, and that he had not seen any members of the BPW Board bring forward their own proposal to the BPW Board. Councilmember Fairbanks, thinks that in some way or another BPW funds are being comingled with City funds, for example the renovation of City Hall. Councilmember Fairbanks also noted that BPW meetings are not televised and that public participation is minimal, but did agree that the BPW Board does provide an extra set of eyes in BPW matters. Don Vetrovsky, Chairman of the BPW Board, noted that the Board serves at the discretion of the City Council. Chairman Vetrovsky also spoke about the history of the Board, how Board members pay for their own meals, and that meetings are scheduled to begin at 12:15 p.m. per the agenda. Boardmember Darin Baehr noted that the Board looks at every item that comes before it and that their minutes do not always reflect the level of depth of their discussion. Boardmember Bob Moran asked Councilmember Fairbanks what items that come before the Board, that the Councilmembers do not have a say in. Councilmember Fairbanks stated that he wants the City Council to be in charge of BPW issues at the beginning, middle, and end. Councilmember Fairbanks noted that the conversion of the BPW General Manager and the City Administrator into one position was successful and this would be similar. Fairbanks questioned the working relation between the Board Members and the BPW Superintendents. Councilman Parde noted that many of the "advisory" boards help assist the City. Councilmember Carey wanted to know the reason why the other four (4) communities still had their Boards of Public Works. Mayor Schuster asked if the Council wanted to have a public vote on this matter in the future. Councilmember Fairbanks stated that he did. This item will come before the Council for consideration at a future meeting.

Chairman

Secretary