

Mayor Schuster opened the discussion for anyone that had any questions or concerns regarding the sales tax proposal. City Administrator Tempelmeyer noted that this will be a continual agenda item until the vote in the May Primary election.

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 in 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.

Eliminate All One-Way Streets

The Traffic Committee (including City Attorney Greg Butcher, Chief of Police Bruce Lang, City Engineer James Burroughs, and Street Superintendent Jason Moore) made their recommendations regarding the removal of one-way streets in Beatrice. The first recommendation was to leave the Truck Route as is until the possible relocation of Highway 136

is decided. The Committee was ok with the removal of one-way traffic along 8th Street but noted due to the configuration of the intersection at 8th and Grant that parking may need to be removed on the Southeast corner. James Burroughs explained the deflection issue at this intersection. Chief Lang explained the Committee recommendation to remove one-way traffic along 7th Street from Monroe Street to Lincoln Street noting this would avoid issues with the US Postal Mail Box at the Courthouse, the parking at the Courthouse, and the issue of leading two-way traffic into the intersection of 7th and Ella Streets. The Committee reviewed the options that could take place at the intersection of 7th and Ella Streets, including reduction of lanes, and the possibility of two way traffic proceeding south. The Committee also recommended removal of the one-way traffic on 7th Street from Perkins Street to Market Street. It was noted that traffic would be temporarily blocked during school drop off and pick up at Stoddard Elementary. The School was in favor of the change. The Council was in favor of the Committee Recommendations and they will be considered for a vote at a future City Council meeting.

Possible Revision of the Beatrice Plus Program

City Administrator Tempelmeyer reviewed the history and the current revenue being generated by the Beatrice Plus program. Due to the new accounting and billing software the Beatrice Plus amount cannot appear on all utility bills. The Beatrice Plus program currently generates approximately \$250 per month. Four ideas were floated to the Council for discussion: (1) continue the program as is, (2) auto enroll all consumers, (3) auto enroll only new consumers, and (4) get rid of the program. Councilmember Fairbanks asked how auto pay consumers were participating. City Administrator Tempelmeyer noted that some do and some do not participate. Councilmember Fairbanks noted that property he owns in Missouri has utilities that auto enroll you in a similar program. Mayor Schuster asked that if we decided to auto enroll every one, that we have a very obvious and easy opt-out policy and provisions. Councilman Parde felt it was the wrong idea to force people into the program and make them opt out. It was discussed that a three (3) month buffer time would be offered to allow people to opt out before the implementation of the auto enrollment. This item will be considered formally at a future council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Catlin, seconded by Tiemann, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Roll Call: Yea: Carey, Catlin, Cook, Fairbanks, Langdale, Parde, and Tiemann.

Nay: None

MOTION CARRIED.

Dennis M. Schuster, Mayor

Attest:

Linda S. Koch, City Clerk