

City of Comfrey Minutes
April 8, 2025 at 6:30 PM
Comfrey Community Center

Mayor Richter opened the public hearing on the CSAH Reconstruction Facility Plan at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 8, 2025. Owen Todd and Rhett Oelke of Bolton & Menk presented the Facility Plan and reviewed the summary handout with the council and public attendees. Discussed project location, description of proposed improvements, review of alternatives and the selected option, also reviewed project schedule and rate impacts. No comments or questions were received from the public. Hearing no comments a motion was made by Arnsdorf, second by Evers to close the public hearing at 6:37 PM.

Mayor Richter opened the Comfrey City Council regular meeting at 6:37 PM on Tuesday, April 8, 2025 in the community center with all council members present. Also in attendance were S Berberich, J Veerkamp, L Wallin, M Kastner A Vogel, C Schleif and Attorney Paul Muske.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited.

The agenda was reviewed with no additions.

A Resolution Receiving and Accepting the Facility Plan for the reconstruction of deteriorated underground infrastructure along and adjacent to CSAH 17 East from White Street to Dewey Avenue was adopted on a motion made by Evers, second by Redman and carried unanimously.

The March 11, 2025 regular meeting minutes were approved with typo correction on a motion made by Redman, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

Total bills in the amount of \$59,666.12 were reviewed and approved on a motion made by Kastner, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

A resolution expressing acceptance and appreciation for memorial donations from the Janice Evers Family to the first responders of \$60; the Bruce Toll Family to the first responders \$50; and a donation from Mathiowetz Construction to the first responders for \$250 on a motion made by Redman, second by Arnsdorf and carried unanimously.

The March financial report was reviewed and approved on a motion made by Redman, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

Berberich reported a pump has gone out at the wastewater treatment plant. Electric Pump is coming to look at this week. This is the 4th pump out of 7 to be in need of repair. He is hopeful it can be rebuilt and does not have to be replaced. Water through the plant has gone down drastically since finding the leak. The plant showed 1.7 million gallons in January, 1.58 million in February and 793,000 gallons in March after the leak finally surfaced. Things are moving along with the fiber install. The contractor Vikor, has been good to work with on the boring of the fiber cable in town to date.

Fire Chief Berberich reported the fire department started doing some controlled grass burns this month and have completed 3 to date. All have gone well.

First Responder Captain Veerkamp said it has been a busy month but all going well. May is EMS month and they will be sponsoring a coloring contest at the school

The library board has approved the purchase of a new computer for the office. They will be starting the Summer Reading Program in May and will be holding a free concert on May 10th which is paid for by a grant. TDS costs will be decreasing in the upcoming year.

The police report was reviewed.

A representative from Hanson Communications gave an update on the fiber internet install for Comfrey. They are hoping to have all the main lines in by May with drops starting up

to houses in May and June. If things go well, they hope to have fiber internet operational by the end of Summer. They will be offering phones over fiber and also looking into a possible streaming service. Currently there is no charge to households to bring the fiber up to the home and no commitment to purchase the internet service required.

City Assessor Amos Vogel has been in town reviewing properties. He stated some areas of town are going up more than others. He is working with the new system on the tablets and still learning the process. He proposed a rate increase of .90 cents per property for 2026. A motion was made by Arnsdorf, second by Kastner and carried unanimously to approve the increase. Vogel also presented his 2025 assessment bill for \$3822.60 and it was approved for payment on a motion made by Redman, second by Evers and carried unanimously.

No updated information on the cannabis agreements from the counties. No action taken until new information is presented.

The Zoning Commission held a public hearing prior to the city council meeting today and has recommended approval of the variance for Daniel & Jessica Riordan from the maximum square footage allowable for the construction of a garage of approximately 2000 square feet of floor area attached to a residential structure in the Samuelson First Addition Block 1, lots 1 and 2. The variance and building permit for a new home and attached garage were approved on a motion made by Arnsdorf, second by Kastner and carried unanimously.

Proposed MPCA grant updates for the solar project at the wastewater treatment plant were reviewed with a contract being prepared for approval. Concerns were raised about unknown costs to the city with the project. Mayor Richter will contact Tim Zinniel and invite him to a council meeting to go over the project and answer additional questions.

The council would like Darren Haugen, a licensed dealer, to put together options for the sale of the remaining equipment from the police department for review at a future meeting.

A motion was made by Evers, second by Kastner and carried unanimously to purchase \$250 in flower pots from Blue Stem to be placed on Brown Street and maintained by the garden club. Discussion was also had for a donation of two trees by the club.

A motion was made by Kastner, second by Redman and carried unanimously to hire SW Dust Treatment to treat our gravel roads in town at an estimated cost of \$2427.

A motion was made by Redman, second by Evers and carried unanimously to not waive the monetary tort limit set by the State of Minnesota.

A motion was made by Evers, second by Kastner and carried unanimously to appoint Kevin Ludewig to the zoning commission to replace the vacancy left by the untimely death of Mark Evers.

The address of 303 White St South was assigned to the home being built in the Samuelson First Addition, Block 1, Lots 1 and 2 on a motion made by Redman, second by Kastner and carried unanimously.

Congratulations to Steve Berberich for receiving recognition by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for outstanding operations of the Comfrey Wastewater Treatment Plant in 2024.

A building permit was issued by the Zoning Commission to the Comfrey Public School to build a storage shed to be placed out by the school garden.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Arnsdorf, second by Redman at 7:31 PM.