

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DASSEL CITY COUNCIL
MAY 7, 2015, 7:00 P.M.
DASSEL CITY HALL**

The work session of the Dassel City Council was called to order by Mayor Putnam at 7:05p.m. on May 7, 2015 at the Dassel City Hall.

Present: Council members Asplin, Bjork, Hungerford, Nelson, Mayor Putnam (5)

Absent: (0)

The purpose of the work session was to gather public input on the possibility of purchasing the tax forfeited portions of Summit Hills for \$1.00 from the state of MN through Meeker County.

Mayor Putnam explained the purpose of the meeting was fact finding and no action would be taken at the meeting. He asked Meeker County EDA Executive Director David Kruger to provide a recap of the County's efforts to date on the project. Kruger gave a rundown of the city and the county's efforts in seeking relief from this tax forfeited parcel. He stated he had been working with the Department of Revenue to find a work around solution to get the property back to the city and eventually back on the tax rolls. Kruger explained that the County Commissioners have agreed off the record to waive the \$24k in back taxes owed to the county. He cautioned that they have not voted on this item yet.

The following individuals provided input to the council:

Wayne Medcraft, recommended the council proceed with the purchase explaining that more homes in Dassel would increase the number of customers to local businesses and new residents with children would also help the school district.

Mike Scanlon, advocated that the council review: demographic studies, which shows 18-25 years moving out of rural areas; banking lending rates; and he cautioned that building is not taking place in rural areas. He also stated he did not want to see the city complete with local developers. He suggested that if the covenants on the property were the problem that the Council contact Representative Urdahl and have special legislation written to remove them. He was opposed to the idea of the city purchasing the property.

Brian Bessingpas, expressed his concerns about the repairs needed to the road (Summit Cove).

Mike Housman, County Commissioner stated the Board has informally agreed to wipe out the back taxes through the tax forfeiture process. He explained that the property is owned by the State of MN and managed through the county. The county is responsible for maintenance but not improvements to the property on behalf of the state.

Bob Ness, informed the council that special legislation should not be a problem to get approved. He urged the council to review the special assessments which were recertified in 2012 and to conduct a comprehensive financial analysis of the project prior to city purchasing the property. He also stated that if the city did purchase the property they would need professional help to market and process the sale of the lots.

Kari Wendroth, requested the city move forward with the purchase of the property as she would like to purchase a lot and build a home.

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Justin Wendroth of Bludorn Builders, stated he gets requests monthly to build homes in this area. He questioned the restrictions in the covenants.

City Engineer, Chuck DeWolf presented preliminary costs for: removal of the existing pavement; replacement of problem/damaged curb and gutter areas; spot repair and overlay of 5th Street North; removal of sediment from the retaining ponds and installing rip-rap in the damaged drainage areas; in the amount of \$695,000. He stated the storm sewers would need to be flushed out.

The council also reviewed the preliminary purchase agreement that was drafted by the County and estimated property value increase scenarios, which were presented by the City Attorney and City Clerk.

Mayor Putnam thanked those in attendance for their input and stated the council will need to weigh the risks and costs associated with the purchase of Summit Hills before a decision can be made.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

ATTEST:

Jeff Putnam
Mayor

Terri Boese
Clerk/Treasurer