

LITTLEFORK CITY COUNCIL

Littlefork City Council plans water/sewer project

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

The Littlefork City Council Tuesday heard a report from John Mattonen of JPJ Engineering on a water/sewer project the city is planning to undertake. In 2015, the city is scheduled to replace water and sewer mains on Fourth Avenue, Sixth Avenue, and Central Road, as well as some interior piping and

valves at the water treatment plant. The more than \$1 million project will likely be funded through a variety of grants and other sources. Mattonen's preliminary engineer's report will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development program, which is the first step towards applying for funding. City Administrator Sonja Pelland said the city set a public hearing

for the project for 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 17. "We set a public hearing date to inform people about the project and why we're doing it," Pelland said. In other business, the city appointed Kelly Meyers as the city's building inspector, who will look into some dilapidated buildings on Main Street. Meyers is also the building inspector for the City of International Falls, though Pelland said he is

working as an independent contractor for the City of Littlefork. He'll be working for the City of Littlefork on his own time, she said. The city council approved resolutions to send the annual tax levies for the ambulance service and fire department to Koochiching County for approval, Pelland said. Both levies are for the same amount as the previous year, she said. The city council also ac-

cepted the resignation of administrative assistant Dana Larson, who is moving to Warroad, Pelland said. Larson's husband is taking a physical education teach-

ing position at Warroad High School, and will also do some coaching, she said. Larson is taking a business office manager position at the high school as well.

FLOOD

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"If the forecasts are accurate, the additional rainfall will result in a swift rise in inflow to rivers and lakes across the basin as conditions are already nearly saturated in many areas," the report said. "Lake and river levels will likely rise faster than forecast earlier this week in response." Jespersen and Koochiching County Board Chairman Rob Ecklund said the community is prepared should the lake and rivers rise. "If this does hit, we're looking at what we should be doing," he said of Thursday's meeting. The Minnesota National Guard is still activated with Gov. Mark Dayton's extension by 30 days of the state of emergency in 35 counties. "If we need them, I won't hesitate to call them back," Jespersen said. In addition, they said sandbags will be filled if needed. About 5,000 bags



Rob Ecklund
Sheriff Brian Jespersen

are now filled for people to use to fortify existing dikes. "We can fill bags fairly quick if we need," Jespersen said. Ecklund and Jespersen said the past two weeks have shown action can be taken quickly if needed. Communications are in place if people are needed to volunteer and information about an emergency situation can be provided quickly and as it is needed. They asked people monitor the situation, but remain calm. "We'd rather have (the information out there) than not tell people," Ecklund said. "I'd rather be wrong and on the cautious side

"At this time it's just a projection. We can prepare, but don't panic. If we get it, it will be a slow rise and rivers might come up again."

Brian Jespersen
Koochiching County Sheriff

than thinking let's wait and see and all of a sudden things change." Ecklund said people are using and will continue to use common sense dealing with the flooding, and Jespersen said people should not feel a sense of urgency or panic because of the projected rise in lake level. Jespersen and Ecklund also urged people who have sandbagged dikes at their property — both on the rivers and lake — to leave them in place. Meanwhile, Jespersen urged people to stay out of standing water. Tests conducted at an isolated and small sewer line break near Town Road 46 has now been

cleared of contamination, he said. Ecklund said Dale Olson, county Environmental Services director, will be looking at residences with individual septic systems east of where the sewer collection line ends. Olson is expected to provide information to residents about how to avoid backups, Ecklund said. The area's sewer collection and treatment system is doing fine now, Jespersen said. Should additional rains add to flooding issues, people may be asked to hold back on adding water to the system to avoid issues, he said. Jespersen also said the city's water treatment system is working fine.

COUNTY

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the Littlefork City Council, two Koochiching County commissioners, and the LMC director, she said, and

it will be responsible for reviewing the budget as it relates to the annual levy. The county board held a public hearing in Littlefork on May 6, and in Big Falls on May 12, as is required by Minnesota law for creating

a subordinate service taxing district. Some Big Falls area residents also lie in the Northern Itasca Hospital District, and to prevent double taxation, Koochiching Development Authority funds will

be used to provide a yearly tax relief grant to the city of Big Falls. The grant will be equal to the amount of tax assessed on properties in the ISD 362 LMC Taxing District that are also in the NIHD.

BUSINESS

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RVs from the spots near the beach, and those vacationers had to leave the resort, as they had nowhere to stay. The tourists staying in the three cabins on the lake had to cancel as well, she said, and they've had cancellations for the cabins the past two weeks. The Hogans also had to sandbag around their cabins to keep the floodwaters at bay, and received a lot of help from the community in the effort to keep things dry. "The community was wonderful coming out and helping, the neighbors have been wonderful," Mary said. The resort is usually booked solid the Fourth of July weekend, Mary said, but this year, they've already had those people cancel, because they come to fish or use the dock, which they can't do now. "We've had to return a lot of deposits this week," Mary said. With reports saying the lake may crest Monday, the water may start coming down, but Mary said it might be another three weeks before they can get the resort cleaned up and ready for tourists. "It'll probably be August before we have people back up and using the facilities

at the beach," Mary said. For a seasonal resort that closes by the end of September, Mary said, that only leaves two months to possibly host vacationers. With most of the resort's customers returnees, she said, that makes it extra difficult to have cancellations. "The impact financially is loss of customers, and possible loss of dock," Mary said. "And emotionally it's heartbreaking, because most of our people are people we've been seeing for years and years, so having to turn them all away this year has been very hard." In spite of the rising waters, Area Convention and Visitor Bureau Executive Director Pete Schultz said he thinks most of the tourism-related businesses in the area have seen an increase in business. "People are going to come regardless, and find out about the conditions when they get here," Schultz said. "The floodwaters aren't such a detraction." Schultz said he's spoken with a couple resort owners who haven't seen cancellations, and are still getting their customers out on the lake for fishing. The flooding may actually have more of a long-term impact, he said. "Will it affect the future, yes," Schultz said. "People hear about the flooding and remember it, and associate the area with worse conditions."



Recovery Fortunately for businesses like Birch Point Resort trying to recover from the flooding, there are grants and loan programs available to help with the financial recovery. The first step, Koochiching County Commissioner Rob Ecklund said, is to document everything you can. "Before and after pictures are best, and that's mainly for their insurance purposes," Ecklund said. "Most of this stuff they're going to have to deal with their insurance carrier for their property." County Assessor Len Peterson has been out looking at properties in the western part of the county, Ecklund said. For commercial properties on Rainy Lake, however, he said it's hard for the Assessor's Office to get out and look at those, as the water levels are still so high. "But he's ready to have his team, his crew from his office go out and do those when time permits, and when the water recedes," Ecklund said. For now, Ecklund said, any property owner who feels they've experienced damage due to the flooding needs to first call the county Assessor's Office at 283-1122. They also need to make sure they're taking photos and documenting the damage, he said. "Len's been very good,"

Ecklund said. "He can't tell people where to go or what to do, but he can give them advice as he's looking at their place." One such place to go is the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, which is offering grants of up to \$1,000 to veterans and their families in the counties named in Gov. Mark Dayton's state of emergency declaration made June 19. These Disaster Relief Grants, available to Koochiching County residents, are for veterans, their families, or surviving spouses, if they have not received state or federal assistance. Applicants must provide expense receipts dated no earlier than June 11 and no later than Aug. 31, and applications must be completed by Sept. 30. To see if you qualify, call Koochiching County Veterans Service Officer Candance Ritch at 283-1179. The U.S. Small Business Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture also have multiple low-interest loans available to those who have experienced damage due to a declared disaster. For more information on the variety of programs available, visit www.sba.gov/content/disaster-assistance. While help and relief appear to be on the way, for now, businesses like Birch Point Camp will try to stay dry and above the tide.

Ken & Sharon Obermaier Celebrate their 50th

Congratulations Mom & Dad on your Golden Wedding Anniversary!

It started in 1964, fun and love, the two of you adored. Mom turned 18 and 5 days later, your wedding march On June 27th in Littlefork Lutheran Church Built a home and filled it with love, First one giggly girl, and 18 months later, another. The years flew by, filled with snowmobiling, playing cards, nurturing family members, holiday gatherings with relatives, attending school events, and fun memories camping. Good times and hard times, but through it all, you two have endured. An "empty nest", the addition of two sons-in-laws, and five grandchildren, Mom's successful nursing career and Dad still operating the "feller buncher", one quickly realizes time has marched on. Mom in her "retirement" loves to travel, while Dad enjoys watching football without pause. We pray you find new horizons to explore and successful fishing and football seasons ahead. Treasure these memories forever of your fifty years together. We love you and thank you for all you've done for us through the years! Love your daughters Tracy & Leah Sons-in-laws Chris & Mike Grandchildren Julia, Briana, Emily, Nicole, and Cole



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Koochiching County
SP 036-707-001 (CSAH 107), Minn. Proj. No. HPPH H141(001), Aggregate Base, Bit'm. Surface, Curb & Gutter, Storm Sewer
BIDS CLOSE Wednesday July 9, 2014 at 2:00 pm, local time

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS: Sealed proposals will be received by the Board of County Commissioners of Koochiching County, Int'l. Falls, Minnesota until 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday July 9, 2014 at the office of the County Auditor/Treasurer in the Koochiching County Courthouse 715 4th Street Int'l. Falls, Minnesota 56649 at which time they will be opened and read publicly for the following:

Project Designation: SP 036-707-001 (CSAH 107), Minn. Proj. No. HPPH H141(001), Aggregate Base, Bit'm. Surface, Curb & Gutter, Storm Sewer

Project Location: On CSAH 107 between T.H. 71 and CSAH 2 in Int'l. Falls, Total Length – 1.05 Miles

Major Project Quantities include:
-- 25,038 CY of Common Excavation (P)
-- 5,189 Linear Feet of Storm Sewer
-- 6,600 Tons of Bituminous
-- 24,778 SY of Geotextile Fabric
-- 18,464 Tons of Aggregate Base Class 5 (MOD.)

Project Completion: 75 Working Days

Proposals, Plans and Specifications are available at:
Koochiching County Highway Department
715 4th Street
Int'l. Falls, MN 56449

Cost for Plans: Cost of one set of plans and proposals is \$75 (Minnesota State Sales Tax Included). There is no cost for electronic plans and specs, they are at <https://egram.co.koochiching.mn.us> or phone (218) 283-1186 or email to joe.sutherland@co.koochiching.mn.us.

Bidder's Bond: Bids must be accompanied by a certified check or bidder's bond made payable to the Treasurer of Koochiching County in an amount not less than 5% of the total bid.

Bid shall be plainly marked on the exterior of the containing envelope: **"CSAH 107, Letting Date, July 9th, 2014"**.

Minimum wage rates to be paid by the Contractors have been predetermined and are subject to the Work Hours Act of 1962, P.L. 87-581 and implementing regulations.

READ CAREFULLY THE WAGE SCALES AND DIVISION A OF THE SPECIAL PROVISIONS AS THEY AFFECT THIS/THESE PROJECT/PROJECTS

The Minnesota Department of Transportation hereby notifies all bidders: in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Act), as amended and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Subtitle A Part 21, Non-discrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the Department of Transportation, it will affirmatively assure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded maximum opportunity to participate and/or to submit bids in response to this invitation, and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, disability, age, religion, sex or national origin in consideration for an award;

in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, and Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 230 Subpart A-Equal Employment Opportunity on Federal and Federal-Aid Construction Contracts (including supportive services), it will affirmatively assure increased participation of minority groups and disadvantaged persons and women in all phases of the highway construction industry, and that on any project constructed pursuant to this advertisement equal employment opportunity will be provided to all persons without regard to their race, color, disability, age, religion, sex or national origin;

in accordance with the Minnesota Human Rights Act, Minnesota Statute 363A.08 Unfair discriminatory Practices, it will affirmatively assure that on any project constructed pursuant to this advertisement equal employment opportunity will be offered to all persons without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age;

in accordance with the Minnesota Human Rights Act, Minnesota Statute 363A.36 Certificates of Compliance for Public Contracts, and 363A.37 Rules for Certificates of Compliance, it will assure that appropriate parties to any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement possess valid Certificates of Compliance.

If you are not a current holder of a compliance certificate issued by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights and intend to bid on any job in this advertisement you must contact the Department of Human Rights immediately for assistance in obtaining a certificate.

The following notice from the Minnesota Department of Human Rights applies to all contractors:

"It is hereby agreed between the parties that Minnesota Statute, section 363A.36 and Minnesota Rules, parts 5000.3400 to 5000.3600 are incorporated into any contract between these parties based on this specification or any modification of it. A copy of Minnesota Statute 363A.36 and Minnesota Rules, parts 5000.3400 to 5000.3600 is available upon request from the contracting agency."

"It is hereby agreed between the parties that this agency will require affirmative action requirements be met by contractors in relation to Minnesota Statute 363A.36 and Minnesota Rules 5000.3600. Failure by a contractor to implement an affirmative action plan or make a good faith effort shall result in revocation of its certificate or revocation of the contract (Minnesota Statute 363A.36, Subd. 2 and 3)."

A minimum goal of **2.7 % Good Faith Effort** to be subcontracted to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises.

The Koochiching County Board reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive irregularities and informalities therein, and to award the contract in the best interests of Koochiching County.

Dated at International Falls, Minnesota**June 11th, 2014.**

Joe Sutherland, Koochiching County Highway Engineer
Phone: 218-283-1186
Email: joe.sutherland@co.koochiching.mn.us

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