

MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
Conference Room A
July 17, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Laura Helle, Michael Postma, Jason Baskin, Joyce Poshusta and Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert and City Clerk Ann Kasel

Mayor King opened the meeting at 4:46 p.m.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Fisher, closing the meeting at 4:48 p.m. pursuant to Minn. Stat. Section 13D.05 Subd. 3(b) to consider and receive attorney-client privileged information related to pending litigation. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Baskin to reopen the meeting at 5:10 p.m. Carried.

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin to adjourn the meeting to attend the Council meeting at 5:11 p.m. Carried.

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Paul Fischer, Laura Helle, Michael Postma, Jason Baskin, Joyce Poshusta and Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert and Police Chief David McKichan
Public Works Director Steven Lang, Assistant City Engineer Mitch Wenum, City Attorney Craig Byram, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace and City Clerk Ann Kasel

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald, KAUS Radio

Mayor King opened the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Item No. 1 – I-90 Bridge Replacement Project Update

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated he recently received updated funding projections for the I-90 bridge replacement project. He stated the Hormel Foundation is funding the community entrance sign in the amount of \$175,021. The WWTP fund is estimated to pay \$67,616 and the Municipal Street Aid Fund is project to pay \$610,883 for the project. He reviewed the project by bridge and the funding thereof.

Council Member Postma stated he would like to be involved with the design of the sign.

Mr. Lang stated in 2015 a group was formed for the visual quality manual for the bridges and other improvements, including the sign. He stated that manual has been approved by MnDot and it is too late for major changes to the sign. He added that it is difficult to make changes this late in the process.

The Council discussed the proposed welcome sign and the necessity for it.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert stated the Gateway to Austin committee originally designed the bridge improvements and they were approved by the Hormel Foundation.

Moved by Council Member Baker, seconded by Council Member Fischer, to remove the sign from the project. Motion failed 5-2.

Mr. Dankert noted that prior Councils have committed to the project.

Mayor King agreed that the City should honor the past commitments.

For Council information only; no action needed at this time.

Item No. 2 – Policy for Affiliation with Outside Agencies

City Attorney Craig Byram presented a proposed policy for employee affiliation with outside agencies. He stated the state law is ambiguous as to if employees should be accepting mileage reimbursement or other reimbursements from outside agencies. He stated the outside group must be affiliated with the scope of the employee's job duties. The benefit allowed to accept required to be nominal such a mileage, hotel, food cost, per diem, would not be an hourly wage or salary, The outside agency membership must be approved by your supervisor to make sure City functions are still being completed. The employee must disclose if there are changes to the reimbursement.

Council Member Baker was concerned about organizational consistency for the policy.

Mr. Byram stated the policy would set the parameters for employee participation in outside groups.

After additional discussion, the Mayor directed Craig Clark to discuss the policy at staff meeting and to report back to Council.

Item No. 3- Administrative Report

None

Item No. 4 – Open Discussion

None.

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adjourning the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann M. Kasel
City Clerk