

M I N U T E S
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
June 17, 2013
City Hall Conference Room

PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Stiehm, Council Member-at-Large Janet Anderson, Council Members Jeff Austin, Jeremy Carolan, Roger Boughton, Steve King, Michael Jordal, and Judy Enright.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Police Chief Brian Krueger, Community Development Director Craig Hoium, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, and City Administrator Jim Hurm.

ALSO PRESENT: Laura Helle and Geoff Baker (Vision 2020), and Austin Daily Herald.

Mayor Stiehm opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Item No. 1a and 1b. Vision 2020 Budget request for 2014 and DCA request for economic development funding related to Vision 2020– Geoff Baker and Laura Helle from Vision 2020 discussed their budgetary requests for 2014, noting that last year (2012) the City invested \$10,000 through the DCA for some help with start-up cost funding. Mr. Baker noted they are on pace to deliver ten projects by 2020, and this will be a huge economic development benefit for the City of Austin. There are more than 300 citizens actively involved in the different committee's. Mr. Baker also discussed the status of the ten Vision 2020 projects.

Council Member Boughton stated he would expect a total budget for each program, and also would like to know what other organizations have some “skin in the game”. Mr. Baker stated the operating funds are primarily through public/private donations, and Mower County is going to be asked for the same amounts. Baker said they are currently seeking \$10,000 in operating funds again for both 2013 and 2014. Ms. Helle stated other groups may come forward for direct funding for some projects. Council Member Boughton stated we need to know who the other partners are.

Mr. Hurm also stated Vision 2020 is requesting an additional allocation of \$45,000 for the following projects for 2014:

- \$10,000 – Community Arts Funding
- \$5,000 – Feasibility study for Fiber to the Premises Project
- \$10,000 - New Signs
- \$10,000 – Bike Lanes and Bike Trail Enhancements
- \$10,000 – Marketing

Ms. Helle stated each one of these will actually come back to the Council to get specific approval for each project, but we are asking the City to set aside these funds in the 2014 budget. Council Member Austin questioned if this will be an ongoing operational funding request for 2015 and beyond. Ms. Helle stated they would look in 2014 for a 2015 budget amount.

Council Member Carolan questioned how private donations are coming. Ms. Helle stated it depends on the project. For example, the Recreational Center is planning on having a huge community campaign. Mayor Stiehm stated sometimes if the City government says yes first, then others usually come forward and help out with the project.

Mr. Baker clarified that the current request is for operational dollars of \$10,000 in both 2013 and 2014, plus the \$45,000 in the 2014 for specific project funding.

No action taken at this time.

Item No. 2. Police Department simple budget adjustment – Chief Brian Krueger discussed his request to swap funding in the 2013 budget. We currently have \$13,500 allocated in 2013 for in-squad cameras. Chief Krueger stated he would instead like to use this funding for the replacement of the mobile computers in the squad cars. Chief Krueger stated that most of the computers are six years old, and we are now ordering refurbished ones. Chief Krueger stated he would look at working the cameras into a future budget. Council Member Boughton questioned why we don't just do both now.

Council Member Enright suggested that we switch the cameras for computers this year, and budget for the cameras then next year with the extra LGA we are receiving.

After further discussion, motion by Council Member Boughton, seconded by Council Member Enright to recommend to Council the approval of purchasing both cameras and squad computers out of the 2013 budget. The additional \$21,600 would come from the Contingency line item to cover all of the camera costs. Carried 7-0. Item will be added to the next council agenda.

Motion by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member Enright to recommend to council the approval of swapping the in-squad camera purchase allocation and instead purchase the computers for the squad cars. Carried 7-0. Item will be added to the next council agenda.

The end result of the above two motions are as follows:

1. The \$13,500 currently allocated for in-squad cameras will be used to buy in-squad replacement computers.
2. An additional \$21,600 will be taken out of contingency to purchase in-squad cameras.

Other Item. Hazardous Structures – Mr. Hoium stated when it comes to hazardous structures like what was discussed at the most recent Conversations with the Council, we have some limitations. If the property is in tax forfeiture, there is very little we can do by law. If the house is in bankruptcy, then the different types of bankruptcy law will determine what can legally be done with a hazardous structure. Mr. Hoium stated there are approximately six structures that need to be taken care of.

Council Member Enright suggested that we set aside some additional funds in the 2014 budget to take care of some of these hazardous structures.

Item No. 3. Administrative report – Mr. Hurm stated he has met with the prosecuting attorney law firm regarding their contract that expires on December 31, 2013. The Baudler Law Office has suggested a new three-year agreement frozen at the same rate of \$15,539 per month.

Motion by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member King to recommend to council the approval of a new three-year agreement with the Baudler Law Office for prosecuting services at the same rate of \$15,539 per month for the full 36-month period. Carried 7-0. Item will be added to the next council agenda.

Item No. 4. Open discussion – Pay Adjustment – Mayor Stiehm stated a pay adjustment is needed for Police Captain David McKichan and Parks and Recreation Director Kim Underwood. This has been discussed over the years and we just need to put this to the top of the agenda, stated Mayor Stiehm. Chief Krueger stated he is looking at requesting around a \$2,000 annual compensation increase for Captain McKichan as his work is invaluable to the Chief and the department, and his rate is lower than his peers.

Council Member Boughton stated we should get a packet back from Administration with comparables and recommendations. Council Member Austin agreed, noting that Parks and Recreation Director Kim Underwood should get the same consideration from the City Council.

Council Member King stated to be careful with comparables, as Albert Lea only does half of the police calls that we do here in Austin. Mayor Stiehm agreed noting Captain McKichan is a dedicated police officer.

Council Member Enright questioned the status of the annual reviews of department heads. Mr. Hurm stated we now do annual department head reviews, but it has been two years or so since the last reviews. Mayor Stiehm stated there has never been a set date for these to be done by.

Motion by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member Boughton to have the reviews of Police Captain David McKichan and Parks and Recreation Director Kim Underwood on a work session agenda by August. Carried 7-0. (After the meeting had adjourned Mayor Stiehm stated he spoke with other council members and that MIS Administrator Don Tomlinson should also be included here). No immediate action necessary as this will be handled sometime by August.

Motion by Council Member Enright, seconded by Council Member Boughton to require the City Administrator to complete annual department head reviews by September 1 of each year. Carried 7-0. No further action necessary.

Mayor Stiehm stated Mr. Hurm will work with Human Resources Trish Wiechmann to get the forms out to council ahead of time.

Item No. 1b. Vision 2020 Budget request for 2013 – Council Member Austin stated we never did vote on the \$10,000 funding request for Vision 2020 operations like Mr. Baker requested.

Motion by Council Member-at-Large Anderson, seconded by Council Member Boughton to recommend to council the allocation of \$10,000 from Contingency to help fund some of the vision 2020 operational costs for 2013. Carried 7-0. Item will be added to the next council agenda.

Item No. 5 Matters In Hand – No discussion.

Motion by Council Member Austin seconded by Council Member King to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Dankert