

MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
March 7, 2016
City Hall Conference Room

PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Stiehm, Council Members Steve King, Michael Jordal, Jeremy Carolan, Jeff Austin (5:09 p.m.), Judy Enright, David Hagen and Council Member-at-Large Janet Anderson

ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Public Works Director Steven Lang (7:22 p.m.), Police Chief Brian Krueger (7:22 p.m.), Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann, City Clerk Ann Kasel

ALSO PRESENT: Austin Daily Herald, Public

Mayor Stiehm opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Item No. 1 –Closed Session

Moved by Council Member Jordal, seconded by Council Member Carolan, to close the meeting pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.05 (subd.2) 3. Carried.

[See DVD of Closed Session](#)

Moved by Council Member Enright, seconded by Council Member King, to open the meeting at 5:14 p.m.

Moved by Council Member Enright, seconded by Council Member Carolan, to adjourn the meeting to attend the City Council meeting at 5:14 p.m.

Mayor Stiehm reopened the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Item No. 2 –City Administrator Review

Moved by Council Member Jordal, seconded by Council Member Austin, to close the meeting pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.05 subd. 3. Carried.

[See DVD of Closed Session](#)

Moved by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member King, to reopen the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Item No. 3 –Police K-9 Program

Police Chief Brian Krueger requested the Council approve the purchase of a K9 in 2016 which is currently budgeted for 2017. Chief Krueger stated the opportunity arose the purchase a K9 now and he proposed paying for it out of the forfeiture funds. The dog is in Cambridge, Minnesota and is 1 ½ years old. The initial cost for the dog is \$3,500 and would be approximately \$9,000 total once the dog is trained.

Officer Holten wants to retire from the K9 program and stated Sonic may be too much for a new handler or a home with children. He is proposing to donate \$500 for Sonic and would help with fundraisers to pay for training of the new dog.

After additional discussion, moved by Council Member-at-Large Anderson, seconded by Council Member King, to recommend approval of the purchase of a K9 in 2016. Carried.

The matter will be placed on the March 21, 2016 Council Meeting.

Item No. 4 – Lions Park Flood Control Program

Public Works Director Steven Lang reviewed the Lions Park Flood Control project. He stated the project is projected to cost \$3.5 million dollars and includes a 500 foot berm and a 350 foot levee. The alternative to the levee option is property acquisition. There are 20 structures which could be purchased for approximately \$1.2 million. The properties would be appraised and the owners offered the appraisal amount.

City Administrator Craig Clark noted this area may be an area used for redevelopment.

Council Member Hagen asked why these houses were included in previous buyouts.

Mr. Lang stated that the previous buyout funds were designated for homes around specific waterways and this area was not eligible to use any of those funds. He added that the options for this area are to build the berm, buyout the area or do nothing.

Moved by Council Member Enright, to construct a berm around the homes in the Lions Park area. The motion died for lack of a second.

After additional discussion, moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Austin, to complete a resident survey of buyout interest to obtain additional information on the issue and have Mr. Lang bring the matter back to a Council work session. Carried.

The item will be placed on a future work session.

Item No. 5 – 10th Drive SE Project

Public Works Director Steven Lang reviewed the 10th Drive SE project which was previously reviewed at a work session in May of 2015 stating that the pedestrian trail/sidewalk is going to be removed from the project. The County has received the federal grant for the project and is

designing the project. The Council needs to pass a resolution approving the design of the project.

Mr. Lang went on to state there is business opposition to the trail in that area and that is why it was removed from the project. He stated it makes sense to remove the trail because there are no sidewalks or trails leading to this area of town.

After additional discussion, moved by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member King, approving the design of the 10th Drive SE reconstruction project in conjunction with Mower County. Carried.

The item will be placed on the March 21, 2016 work session.

Item No. 6 – City Hall Remodel Project

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert requested the Council approve an architectural services contract with Zenk Read Trygstad in the amount not to exceed \$48,000 for the City Hall remodel. Mr. Dankert reviewed the project stating that the improvements are anticipated to cost \$500,000 to \$600,000. This amount is higher than originally anticipated due to the building needing to be brought up to ADA code and required energy efficiencies.

Council Member-at-Large Janet Anderson asked what would be done with the Austin Utilities board room.

Mr. Dankert stated it would be divided into offices.

After additional discussion, moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Hagen, approving an architectural services contract with Zenk Read Trygstad for the City Hall remodeling project. Carried.

The item will be placed on the March 21, 2016 Council agenda.

Item No. 7 – Administrative Report

None.

Item No. 8 – Open Discussion

County Coordinator Craig Oscarson thanked the City for their support on the Highway 218 project. He added the County is looking at a proposal where the assessor would do all of the assessing in Mower County. There will be a League of Cities meeting on March 17, 2016 where the County Board will seek input on the matter.

Council Member Austin stated he was disappointed in the retreat and he would like to have more open discussions with the Council.

Moved by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member Enright, adjourning the work session at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Ann M. Kasel
City Clerk