

MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
October 21, 2019
City Hall Council Chambers

PRESENT: Mayor Stiehm. Council Members Steve King, Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, Jason Baskin, Laura Helle, Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

ABSENT: Council Member Joyce Poshusta

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Park and Rec Director Kevin Nelson, Police Chief David McKichan, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace and City Clerk Ann Kasel

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Mark Ciota, Kristin Johnson, Saville Lord, Sandy Bell, Austin Daily Herald, KAUS Radio

Mayor Stiehm opened the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

Item No. 1 – Optimization Plan

Dr. Mark Ciota and Kristen Johnson presented Mayo Health System's optimization plan for the Austin facility. They stated that the inpatient surgeries will take place in the Austin facility and outpatient surgeries will take place at the Albert Lea facility along with psychiatric services in Albert Lea. The Austin facility is currently expanding for additional rooms for surgery and labor and delivery.

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

Item No. 2 – Turtle Creek 2 Update

Public Works Director Steven Lang provided an update on the Turtle Creek 2 sanitary sewer project. He stated the City held a resident meeting on October 16, 2019. He reviewed the project area with 40 homes and stated the estimated construction cost is \$1,980,000. The project is eligible for a Point Source Implementation Grant for 80% of the eligible costs. The estimated amount of that grant is \$1,310,000. There is a 20% local match requirement of \$327,500 and some non-eligible costs of \$342,000 resulting in a total cost to the City of \$670,000.

For the project to move forward, the City would need to get the necessary easements from property owners to complete the project. Then property owners would need to pay the connection fee, permit fee and water meter fee to the City. They would also be responsible for the cost to make the private connection to their property plus the removal or abandonment of their old septic system, resulting in a total estimated cost of \$18,500 to \$23,000 per property. The City would bid the project in early 2020 with construction in the summer of 2020.

Mr. Lang stated that if residents wanted 40th Street and 5th Avenue upgraded to asphalt pavement then it would be an additional \$5,000-\$6,000 per parcel on those streets. Residents also could hook into water service for an additional \$14,700 per parcel.

If the project is constructed then property owners with non-compliant systems would need to hook into the system immediately. Property owners with compliant septic systems would not be required to hook into the system until their current system is non-compliant.

Council Member King noted that these residents asked to come into the City.

Council Members Helle and Baskin spoke in support of the City helping residents to finance the large fees to come into the City.

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

Item No. 3 – Annexation Update

Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace provided an update of twelve parcels that the City may annex in the future. She stated the parcels located in Lansing Township haven't been supported for annexation by the Lansing Township board.

Ms. Wallace asked the Council if they would like to annex all the properties over the property owner's objections or let them stay out of the City even if they are within the City limits.

After discussion, the Council stated they would like that to be a general City policy of annexing properties into the City that are surrounded by City boundaries. However, each property could be evaluated on an individual basis.

No additional Council action needed at this time.

Item No. 4 – 2020 Budget Discussion

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert stated he had no additional updates for the 2020 budget.

Item No. 5 – 5-year Capital Improvement Plan Review

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert stated he had no additional updates for the 5 year CIP.

Item No. 6 - Open Discussion

Mayor Stiehm discussed Freedom Fest and having one night of events or two nights. He stated that the City has funds for the fireworks. The Council would like to discuss the topic on a future work session.

Sandy Bell and Saville Lord made a request for funding for downtown decorations in the planters for the winter months. Sandy stated there are 29 planters they would like to fill at a cost of \$175 per planter resulting in a request of \$5,075.

Council Member King stated he supports the idea but the timing is less than ideal with the funding needed for the comp and class study.

Council Member-at-Large Austin stated he would like to see the summer contributions for flowers to be increased to help cover the planters year-round. He would like others to also contribute to the project.

Council Member Helle noted that she didn't think the planters looked good by the end of the winter last year. She stated she would like to see a more specific proposal of which planters would be filled, what the filling would look like and what the budget for the project is.

After additional discussion, moved by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member Baskin, to use \$5,000 of 2019 contingency funds for winter decoration in the downtown planters. Carried.

Council Member-at-Large Austin noted that this would be a one-time allocation and the downtown association would need to come up with additional funding in the future.

Moved by Council Member Austin, seconded by Council Member Helle, adjourning the meeting at 7:28 p.m

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann M. Kasel
City Clerk