

MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
May 4, 2020
City Hall Conference Room A

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Stiehm. Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin and Council Member Joyce Poshusta.

MEMBERS APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Council Members Steve King, Paul Fischer, Rebecca Waller, Laura Helle and Jason Baskin.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Police Chief David McKichan, Park and Rec Director Kevin Nelson, City Attorney Craig Byram, Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann and City Clerk Ann Kasel

STAFF APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Library Director Julie Clinefelter and Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace

OTHERS PRESENT: Austin Daily Herald

OTHERS APPEARING ELECTRONICALLY: Honorary Council Member Oballa Oballa, Austin Utilities General Manager Mark Nibaur

Mayor Stiehm opened the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Item No. 1 – SMMPA Power Sales Contract Update

Austin Utilities General Manager Mark Nibaur requested the Council approve an updated to the Power Sales Contract to accurately reflect Austin Utilities' power delivery and metering points. He stated the Austin Utilities Board of Commissioners approved the amendment at their April 14, 2020 meeting. He noted that any long-term contracts need to be approved by the Council.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member King, approving an updated power sales contract with SMMPA.

The item will be on the March 18, 2020 Council Agenda.

Item No. 2 – COVID 19 Update

Police Chief David McKichan stated Mower County was at 28 cases for a long period of time and today they moved up to 32 today. The only way to mitigate it is to social distance, wear a mask in public and to stay home. State modeling shows a peak the first or second week of July.,

No Council action needed at this time.

Item No. 3 – Municipal Pool Season

Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Nelson requested Council guidance on the summer pool season. He stated the City usually starts the process to open the pool at this time. He stated full-time staff that usually maintains the pool are working in different areas. The Council would need to exempt pool staff from the hiring freeze. He noted that part-time teenage staff would have to sanitize the locker room and enforce distancing in and at the pool. Mr. Nelson noted he would like the Park and Recreation Board to discuss the matter.

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert stated the City provides funding in the approximate amount of \$115,000 in a good fiscal year for the pool. If the season is shortened or there are less passes sold then that amount may increase.

After additional discussion, the Council referred the matter to the Park and Recreation board for a recommendation.

Item No. 4 – 4th of July Fireworks

City Clerk Ann Kasel stated based on the Council's direction she contacted the major property owners in the NW business area and the following businesses stated they would allow parking for a fireworks display on the 4th of July: Walmart, Hy-Vee, Runnings, Ashley and Holiday Inn. The consensus of the businesses was they were supportive of the event if the City would provide police presence and parking lot clean up after the event.

However, she stated with the extension of the Governor's stay at home order and other communities cancelling their fireworks, it looks like it is not practical or feasible to have Austin's fireworks display.

Council Member Baskin stated he would like additional citizen input into the matter.

After additional discussion, moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Poshusta, cancelling the 2020 4th of July fireworks. Carried 6-1 with Council Member Baskin voting nay.

The item will be placed on the May 18, 2020 Council agenda.

Item No. 5 – Administrative Report

None.

Item No. 6 – Open Discussion

Honorary Council Member Oballa Oballa stated he has heard the Asian community is fearful with the COVID 19 pandemic.

Moved by Council Member Poshusta, seconded by Council Member-at-Large Austin, adjourning the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann M. Kasel
City Clerk