



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

Council Session

Item G-2

Approving Minutes of April 4, 2017 City Council Study Session

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

April 4, 2017

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Study Session of the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska was conducted in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 100 East First Street, on April 4, 2017. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on March 29, 2017.

Mayor Jeremy L. Jensen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Mitch Nickerson, Mark Stelk, Julie Hehnke, Linna Dee Donaldson, Michelle Fitzke, Vaughn Minton, Roger Steele, and Mike Paulick. Councilmembers Chuck Haase and Jeremy Jones were absent. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator Marlan Ferguson, City Clerk RaNae Edwards, Finance Director Renae Griffiths, City Attorney Jerry Janulewicz and Public Works Director John Collins.

Mayor Jensen introduced Community Youth Council member Sarah Sugita.

INVOCATION was given by Community Youth Council member Sarah Sugita followed by the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

Discussion on City Sidewalks. Public Works Director John Collins reported that in July and August, 2016 the City Council discussed the sidewalk repair process and requested the issue of sidewalks be studied for potential changes to policy. Concern was expressed by Council about how sidewalk issues were identified (complaint based), as well as the cost to the property owners.

Mr. Collins stated there were three types of issues with sidewalks: Absent – no sidewalk present; ADA – fails to meet federal American Disabilities Act standards, and Deficient – broken or uneven sidewalks.

The following Absent Actions were presented:

- Sidewalks added as properties are developed
- Sidewalks added as streets are brought up to current standards (except for some industrial streets)
- Sidewalk Districts (last was in 2007)
- Gap Sidewalk Projects (funding discontinued FY 2015)

ADA actions would allow for an annual \$165,000 program to add ramps to curbs where projects were recently completed. Ramps and driveway slopes were required as property was developed. Property owners were to correct deficiencies as they became aware of them and/or the City would take action to require owners to correct deficient sidewalks. Issues with the current policy were the City taking action on a complaint basis and the cost to the property owners.

The following Cost Sharing Options were presented:

- Budget \$25,000/year for Sidewalk Rehabilitation program
- Establish reimbursement at 50% of ADA unit bid
- Exclude owners who refuse to cooperate and require Council resolution

Discussion was held regarding complaints, property owner request, ADA project areas, and other areas identified. Comments were made concerning funds available through Habitat for Humanity for people who needed help with their sidewalks. Mr. Collins answered questions regarding State Statute language of “reasonable condition”. The Public Works Department follows ADA requirements. Mentioned was educating the public regarding sidewalk repair and identifying only the deficient areas that needed repaired.

Discussion was held regarding a reimbursement program. Mentioned was using the homeowners homestead exemption, if there was one, to figure a reimbursement amount. Sidewalk improvement districts were discussed.

Discussion on Complete Streets: Regional Planning Director Chad Nability introduced Amy Roberts from the Central District Health Department (CDHC). Ms. Roberts explained what complete streets were and the benefits to the city. She stated the CDHC had received a grant in 2015 related to the Walkable Communities Initiative sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. As part of the process they sponsored a walking and biking summit and several public meetings with citizens and interested parties in Grand Island. One of the goals from the summit was to create a complete streets policy for the City of Grand Island. A complete streets policy recognizes that all modes of transportation (motor vehicles, transit, walking, & biking) are important to a community.

Mr. Nability reviewed the complete streets policy for the City of Grand Island. He mentioned the reasons to have a complete street policy were for consistency, clear direction, sustainability, and long term impact. Discussion was held regarding the enforcement of the policy, gaps, and retrofitting.

Discussion on City Owned Parking Lots: Public Works Director John Collins reported that the City currently had 10 public lots, 2 YMCA lots, Grand Generation Center lot and city employee lot. Based on the August 1, 2016 report provided by Olsson Associates there was \$2,390,000.00 in necessary repair costs to the parking lots evaluated. Reviewed were the results from the study.

The following alternatives were presented:

- Increase assessments
- Contribute Other City funds
- Divest/Sale
- Lease

Amos Anson, 4234 Arizona Avenue spoke in support of the City being a partner in downtown. Mentioned was the possibility of acquiring parking lots and charging for parking.

Mr. Collins stated there was \$750,000 in this year's budget that could be used on the parking lots. Discussion was held concerning the costs of repairing the parking lots. It was recommended that the Public Works start working on those parking lots that were used the most and proceed with the repair work.

Director of Downtown BID Cara Lemburg, 1507 West 1st Street answered questions regarding where the employees of the businesses in downtown park. President of the Downtown BID Tom Ziller, 324 West 18th Street spoke concerning a parking management strategy that they were working on.

Comments were made concerning the downtown assessments not being equitable.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

RaNae Edwards
City Clerk