



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Council Session

Item G-2

Approving Minutes of March 20, 2018 City Council Study Session

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

March 20, 2018

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 March 20, 2018. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on March 14, 2018.

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

Mayor Jensen introduced Community Youth Council members Rosalinda Sebastian and Ashley Diaz.

INVOCATION was given by Community Youth Council member Rosalinda Sebastian followed by the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

2018 City Tree Board Update. Parks & Recreation Director Todd McCoy introduced Tree Board members Bob Loewenstein, Bryan Fiala, Steve Meyer, Bob Thomas, Leon Van Winkle, Darwin Wicht, and Barry Burrows. Barry Burrows gave an update on the Tree Board. He stated the City had been a Tree USA City for several years. The Tree Board's mission was to preserve, educate, and enhance the quality of life in the City of Grand Island by widely managing our community urban forest.

The following projects the Tree Board was involved with in 2017 were:

- 2017 Arbor Day Event at Engleman School
- South Locust Tree Assessment and Recommendations
- Members assisted with Hall County Veterans Memorial Park Tree Planting Project
- State Fair Fun Zone Tree Planting
- Grand Island Rotary Support
- Hall County Tree Champion Program

Mr. Burrows presented the Emerald Ash Borer Response Plan Development. He stated Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) had been detected in Nebraska and communities were preparing for the impact to Ash trees. Considerations to consider were the impact to city budgets, disposal of infected wood, tree replacement with diversity, and public education.

Reviewed were the following Tree Board goals for one, three, and five years:

One Year

- Continue Engleman annual tree planting
- Arbor Day Celebration
- Facebook posting – tree info
- Update/Improve Tree Ordinance
- Advocate/promote Hall County Champion Tree programs
- When requested, assist/advise City of tree related issues

Three Year

- Annual fall workshop
- City wide tree inventory
- Education at grade schools with trifold flyers
- Speak at groups, etc.
- GI TV Exposure
- Develop flyer for Sucks Lake Arboretum & Hall Co.
- Hold Tree Board Retreat
- Obtain 501c3 status
- Seek grants & other funding sources

Five Year

- State Fair Booth
- Speak at groups, schools, etc.
- Programs info regarding what, where and how to plant trees
- City Arboretum tours
- Educate our citizens on all things related to trees

Mr. Burrows stated currently \$1,005.00 had been donated to the Tree Board. Reviewed were changes to the Grand Island City Code Section 24 relating to trees. Comments were made concerning having a website where citizens could go and get information concerning ash trees in their yards and what to do with them. Mr. McCoy stated the City Code changes would come before the Council in the form of an Ordinance.

Presentation of Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study. Public Works Director John Collins introduced MPO Program Manager Allan Zaff who presented the Grand Island - Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study.

Since the mid-1970s, Hall County, using FTA Section 5311 Rural Transit Funding, had provided portal-to-portal services through Senior Citizens Industries, Inc. Over the years, this service had evolved into a full-scale, portal-to-portal transit service, providing transportation to all residents of Hall County through a combination of buses, vans, and discounted cab vouchers.

The City of Grand Island occupies the predominant portion of an area designated as an Urbanized Area (UZA) by the Bureau of the Census following the 2010 census. In 2013, the

Grand Island Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (GIAMPO) was established to serve as the formal transportation planning body for the greater Grand Island metropolitan region.

In July 2016, the City Council approval an inter-local agreement where the City agreed to provide public transit services within Hall County and the City of Grand Island through contract services with Senior Citizens Industries, Inc. for an initial twelve month term.

Olsson Associates, Inc. of Omaha, Nebraska was hired to perform engineering services for the Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study.

The study had recommended the Fiscally Constrained Plan over the Illustrative Plan as the five year plan for the City of Grand Island and Hall County. The Fiscally Constrained Plan was based upon technical data analysis, the public engagement process for this study, and the realistic financial projections for the City for the next five years. This plan included 24-hour Reservation, Demand Response Service (Status Quo) as the primary service for Grand Island and Hall County, van pool services in coordination with Enterprise, rideshare program, planning study for Intercity Bus Service to/from Kearney and Hastings, branding for the transit service (new look, new image, new name), and increase in transit marketing.

Discussion was held concerning the intercity transportation to Kearney and Hastings and if there was a need. Mr. Zafft stated there were Federal and State funds available for this service.

Transit Program Manager Charley Falmlen presented the Implementation Plan. The next step was for a service contract bid to be released in 2018. The City would enter into a status-quo service contract with only minor changes to the service being offered currently. Branding was scheduled for spring of 2018. It was mentioned that a new name would be implemented (on buses and brochures) and a new website and social media would be established.

The Inter-City Service part of the plan would be routes based in Grand Island which would travel to and from Hastings and Kearney. Emphasis would be on the Grand Island-centered Inter-Modal travel (bus and airport connections). Phase I of this plan would establish drop off/pick up sites and would roll out the initial routes. Phase II would include additional stop along Hwy 30 and Hwy 281.

The last part of the plan was for a rideshare app and vanpool. The rideshare app was very simple to implement which was purchase and go. Much marketing and publicity would be needed to establish working base of users. The Vanpool was a State program which the City would participate in. Vans were provided to employees to commute together to and from work. It would require extensive outreach to be conducted with industries and employers in town.

Discussion was held concerning fixed routes, flexible routes, and the demand for these services. Those people who are currently using the service would have no change with this plan.

Ron Depue, 1508 Warbler Circle complimented Mr. Zafft and Ms. Falmlen on the job they were doing. He also complimented Olsson Associates for the study they performed confirming the need for public transit. Access to reliable transportation was a need within the City and the City

needed to make an attempt to meet that need. He recommended cooperating with Hall County and businesses to bring that to fruition.

Valarie Roth, 2003 West Division Street commented on those people who needed transportation.

Discussion was held regarding the current 24 hour notification for rides through the Hall County Public Transportation service. Ms. Falmlen stated the 24 hour notification was a requirement through the service contract.

Karen Rathke representing the Heartland United Way commented on the limited options for public transportation in Grand Island and supported the plan.

Mayor Jensen thanked reporter Austin Koeller from *The Grand Island Independent* for his coverage of government news. This was his last meeting as he would be covering education.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

RaNae Edwards
City Clerk