



# City of Grand Island

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Council Session

## Item G-2

### Approving Minutes of February 18, 2020 City Council Study Session

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

February 18, 2020

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 February 18, 2020. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on February 12, 2020.

Mayor Roger G. Steele called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Mike Paulick, Jeremy Jones, Mark Stelk, Vaughn Minton, Julie Hehnke, Mitch Nickerson, and Chuck Haase. Councilmembers Justin Scott, Jason Conley, and Clay Schutz were absent. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator Jerry Janulewicz, Deputy City Clerk Jill Granere, Finance Director Patrick Brown, Interim City Attorney Stacy Nonhof, and Assistant Public Works Director Keith Kurz.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was said:

SPECIAL ITEMS:

Presentation by Grow Grand Island (GGI). GGI Chair Tonja Brown gave a presentation about the hopes for GGI. How GGI was formed and given a mission to cultivate bold ideas that create business and quality of life opportunities through planning, partnerships and community visioning. The following committees were acknowledge:

- Executive Committee for leading GGI with the directions and decisions to move the committee forward.
- The Grant Committee for reviewing and scoring grant applications and making recommendations to Executive Committee.
- Advisory Committee for serving as the sounding board.

Mr. Brown stated there was \$948,704.00 in the bank of which \$303,425.60 was committed in approved grants. She stated that left \$636,944.77 and had \$685,000.00 projects in the Pipeline which brought them to -\$48,055.22. After the disbursement from the City of \$500,000.00 that would leave them with \$451,944.77 for future projects.

Ms. Brown mentioned the food and beverage tax and its growing trend. Currently there are \$303,425.60 in approved grants.

Mentioned were funds outside the food and beverage funds:

- \$1,403,230 in leveraged completed projects
- \$260,750 in grants, investments/pledges
- \$87,065 cash in bank
- \$5,000 in annual operating expenses

Cindy Johnson from Chamber of Commerce presented Targeted Talent Attraction which targets recruitment of individuals to our workforce. GGI Workforce Committee developed three different incentives.

- Career and Workforce Booth. They had a booth at UNK and talked with 17 people and received 14 resumes that they will forward on to Grand Island Businesses.
- Good Life is Calling. An opportunity to collect information about the community of Grand Island.
- Recruitment and working with the Department of Labor.

Dave Taylor from Grand Island Area Economic Development discussed the Future Builders Challenge, a regional partnership to encourage growth in high school students that have interest in entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, innovators and builders. This included Grand Island Senior High, Centura, Grand Island Central Catholic, Wood River, Heartland Lutheran, St. Paul and Aurora. There is a team of 35 advisors, 20 judges and 28 teachers and counselors that will be trained in this program to help students. There are four steps for the Future Builders Challenge:

- Builder Profile 10 – January 13-17, 2020
- Inspiration Rally – February 20, 2020
- Builder Boot Camp – March 20, 2020
- Builder Pitch Challenge – March 23, 2020

Mr. Taylor stated the biggest challenge is recruiting young individuals to our area. This program brings great opportunity to Grand Island. Only Lincoln and Omaha have done this so this is leading the way for Greater Nebraska.

Brad Mellema from Grand Island Convention & Visitors Bureau discussed Event Incentive Fund. They currently are bidding on a National Horseshoe Pitching Tournament which could have a 4 million dollar economic impact over the 3 weekend period. He discussed the tourism impact from January-December of 2019 of 32 million in hotel revenues and tax revenue for 2018 for lodging, food, beverage, service and retail in the amount of 425 million dollars. It is important to have the incentive fund to bring these events to Grand Island. Brad mentioned projects in the pipeline which included entryway signage which represent our community. He mentioned Grow Grand Island and over the last 3 years we have had over 60,000 people. They would like to use the incentive funds to help market this to get out to other communities.

Chris Kotulak from Fonner Park also spoke on the importance of incentive funds. He mentioned the United States Team Pinning Association expressed interest in coming to Fonner. He said with the incentive funds they were able to give them a fantastic offer and without them it was something they would have not been able to do. He stated Fonner Park has the highest lease in the nation, but people said they are ok with paying for it but would like services along with it which the incentive funds help with.

Cindy Johnson discussed Workforce: EDGE (Upskilling) & Internships. This helps current employees retain jobs in Grand Island. A report done by University of Nebraska Business Bureau Research confirmed the annual flow of Grand Island workforce is less than projected needs of the business which means jobs are going unfilled. At any given time we have roughly 2,000 jobs which is significant. They have caught the attention of the Sherwood Foundation who

will work with them on EDGE and make sure there are no holes. They have potential to be the recipient of their grants and that would be significant for Grand Island.

Cindy Johnson discussed internships and filling the hole we have with not having a 4 year institution. Looking for an internship program that a senior college student could be working and getting paid in Grand Island, 60% of these internships will stay in that job if they are getting paid.

Tonja Brown mentioned that GGI hopes are to renew their agreement with the City of Grand Island, determining an effective way to engage and inform City Council, continuing to impact Grand Island with the program of work and continuing to be good stewards of funds entrusted for their work.

Zach Moul; 503 Johnson Drive, Grand Island, Nebraska spoke on the contract with GGI in regards to the funds and how he thought they could be better spent and maybe doing a 1 year contract if any.

Councilmember Nickerson asked a question about number of grants and how do you market them and is there a shortage of interest. Tonja Brown said they do not put a call out for grant applications and push their initiatives. Councilmember Nickerson asked how hard it was to filter through the grant applications. Tonja Brown said it is a huge challenge and anytime the food and beverage funds are to be used they are in communications with city officials and find the appropriate ways to use the funds. They have a form they use and has to be signed off by four people to make sure they are doing it correctly.

Mitch asked Brad Mellema how they are meeting the needs to keep getting events. Brad said they look at long standing events and costs.

Discussion regarding the Grand Island City Cemetery Capacity and Expansion. Parks & Recreation Director Todd McCoy presented two ideas for maximizing cemetery space. Mr. McCoy stated on the south side of the current cemetery there were no lots available. The City Cemetery currently has an inventory of 614 traditional burial spaces, 183 flat marker spaces, 125 ash spaces, 54 infant spaces and 18 columbarium spaces. Based on current trends, space would run out in 2025.

Mentioned was changing City Code to all upright markers in Section J which would add 80 potential traditional spaces.

Mr. McCoy stated the second idea they came up with would be to develop gravel roadways into burial spaces which would add an additional 1,160 burial spaces.

The Parks Department had done some research and found 1,218 spaces that had been unclaimed from a 1969 resolution. Discussion was held regarding ground penetrating radar to see if there were any burials in these spaces which would cost about \$100 per space. Staff had identified an additional 2,066 spaces that had been inactive since the 1930's.

With all of the recommendations presented there is potential for 5,138 spaces and could extend the cemetery to 2050.

Mr. McCoy answered questions regarding notifying public on unclaimed spaces and penetrating radar.

Kelly Lepler; 3009 W. Stolley Park Road, Grand Island, Nebraska spoke in regards on the cemetery finding unclaimed spaces and checking with funeral businesses because they may have records. She mentioned moving the cemetery to the north side of town and the water tables. Who is reliable for the upkeep on them, when they settle you have to fix them and sometimes comes out of their own budgets.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Jill Granere  
Deputy City Clerk