



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, June 25, 2013

Council Session

Item G-2

Approving Minutes of June 18, 2013 City Council Study Session

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

June 18, 2013

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 June 18, 2013. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on June 12, 2013.

Mayor Jay Vavricek called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Mike Paulick, Scott Dugan, John Gericke, Peg Gilbert, Mitch Nickerson, Julie Hehnke, Chuck Haase, Linna Dee Donaldson, and Bob Niemann. Councilmembers Vaughn Minton and Scott Dugan were absent. The following City Officials were present: City Administrator Mary Lou Brown, City Clerk RaNae Edwards, City Attorney Robert Sivick, Finance Director Jaye Monter, and Public Works Director John Collins.

INVOCATION given by Community Youth Council member Ashley Bykerk followed by the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

Recognition of 2013-2014 Community Youth Council. Public Information Officer Wendy Meyer-Jerke introduced Emma Kreutzer and Miranda Wieczorek who gave an update and video of activities the CYC students participated in over the past year. The Mayor and City Council recognized the following Community Youth Council (CYC) members: Sophomores – Kennedy Martinez; Juniors – Kerrigan Anspauch and Jordyn Barnett; Seniors – Ashley Bykerk, Stephanie Chandler, Emma Kreutzer, Josh Sugita, Alex Trejo, and Miranda Wieczorek; and Board Members – Erin Blauhorn, Jennifer Cramer, Craig Garrett, Maria Lopez, Randy See, and Roy Swan. Those not present were: CYC students: Sophomores – Bethany Hollman, Marlena Ramirez, and Rebecca Riley; Senior – Danny Gamboa; and Board Members – Jared Stockwell and Elizabeth Mayfield. The “Above and Beyond Award” was presented to Emma Kreutzer and Miranda Wieczorek.

Mayor thanked the CYC students and Public Information Officer Wendy Meyer-Jerk for their work over the past year.

Discussion Concerning Water Related Issues. Public Works Director John Collins stated his department received frequent complaints of water related issues. A PowerPoint presentation was given covering groundwater levels, water in basements, standing water in yards, ditches & detention cells, overgrowth of vegetation in ditches and detention cells, and neighbors pumping water or blocking drainage.

Water in basements was usually due to one or more of the following conditions: ground water, lot drainage, subdivision drainage, city drainage or structure error such as roof drain, poor seals, etc.

Standing water on property and in ditches could be due to: lot drainage, subdivision drainage, city drainage, crop irrigation, lawn sprinklers, ground water discharge – from pumping, blocked drainage – ditches and/or storm sewers, inadequate detention, and poor ditch grades, pipe grades, and culvert slopes.

Overgrowth of vegetation in ditches with regards to maintenance difficulties were mentioned due to: standing water, inadequate equipment/insufficient staff, inappropriate design or construction, and confusion over who was responsible (Streets, Department of Roads, private owner, etc.).

Reasons for standing water in detention cells mentioned were: city drainage, ground water discharge from pumping, crop irrigation, lawn sprinklers, block drainage from ditches and/or storm sewers, poor ditch grades, pipe grades, and culvert slopes, inadequate outlet, inadequate capacity, too deep, and vegetation.

The following maintenance difficulties with overgrowth of vegetation in detention cells were: standing water, inadequate access, inappropriate design or construction and confusion over who was responsible (Streets, Parks, private owner, etc.). It was mentioned that several detention cells are owned privately.

The following solutions were presented: citywide dewatering system, individual dewatering, city drainage construction, subdivision drainage construction & regulation, lot drainage regulation and proper infrastructure maintenance.

The Public Works Department had performed a number of maintenance activities over the last two years to assess the condition of the City's drainage system and the effectiveness of various corrective methods. They partnered with the Wastewater Division Collections Unit to clean storm sewer, resetting ditch grades, setting a higher priority for existing catch basin cleaning, and testing specialized equipment.

Discussion was held on limiting where homes with basements could be built due to high ground water. Sewer backups were mentioned.

Public Works Engineer Terry Brown commented on an RFQ development for a Drainage Master Plan. Reviewed were numerous ongoing projects throughout the city. Street Superintendent Shannon Callahan reported on system assessment.

The current Streets staff handled pavement repair, pothole patching, crack sealing, mowing, sweeping, and seasonal drainage work. The Traffic & Drainage staff handled traffic signals, signs, and striping as well as cleaning catch basins and detention cells, and adjusting the drainage system to flow properly. The Traffic & Drainage crew was staffed at a level to handle the traffic function or the drainage function, but not both. Existing equipment was geared more for traffic work. Public Safety and the law required that the traffic work be given priority over drainage.

The following recommended division changes were presented:

- Separate the functions of traffic and drainage among two crews

- Re-establish existing Traffic and Drainage crew into a dedicated Traffic crew
- Create a new Drainage crew
- Budget will include recommendations for additional FTE

The Drainage crew's areas of responsibility would be: flush culverts and storm sewer pipes; reestablish ditch grades and reset culverts; remove spoil and fill low areas in ditches and detention cells; repair manholes; remove debris and trim vegetation in ditches and detention cells, repair storm water pumps; remove debris and flush under bridges; and install liners in ditches and detention cells.

Discussion was held regarding seasonal employees vs. full-time employees, detention cell safety issues and chemical maintenance, and cost of city wide drainage.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

RaNae Edwards
City Clerk