



# **City of Grand Island**

**Tuesday, April 8, 2014**

**Council Session**

## **Item G-2**

### **Approving Minutes of April 1, 2014 City Council Study Session**

**Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards**

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

April 1, 2014

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 1, 2014. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on March 26, 2014.

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

INVOCATION was given by Community Youth Council member Rebecca Riley followed by the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mayor Vavricek introduced Community Youth Council member Rebecca Riley.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

Presentation of Parking Code Changes and Pre Pay Fuel Ordinance. Police Chief Steve Lamken reported that the Police Department was requesting changes to the parking code to update language, create a “Scofflaw” violation in code, and formalize policy on release of vehicles from impoundment.

Some of the language updates would be to change “tag” to “ticket”, “Police Officer” to “employee”, “notice of towing tag” to “towing report”, and “Officer in charge” to “Police Department”.

Chief Lamken explained the scofflaw provision in Section 22-106 (1) which would allow the towing and impoundment of vehicles with two or more unpaid parking tickets from streets or public parking lots. Section 22-1-6 (1) Public Safety provision would allow the towing of a parked vehicle that was creating a hazard to public safety. Reviewed was Section 22-106 with regards to the release requirements for impounded vehicles.

Chief Lamken answered questions regarding the location of most traffic tickets. He stated they were all over the City. All fines go to the school district which ranged from \$20.00 to \$25.00 per ticket. Handicapped parking tickets were more. Impound costs were approximately \$150.00 to \$175.00. Chief Lamken stated he hoped these changes would gain better compliance. He stated cars had 72 hours on street parking before they were towed. The most common parking tickets were parking on sidewalks, blocking drives, and parking on front yards. Comments were made concerning the number of days before towing.

Chief Lamken stated the Police Department was proposing the implementation of a “pre pay” ordinance for the retail sale of fuel in Grand Island. The prepay ordinance would reduce crime,

provide more time for strategic policing initiatives and provide a level playing field for all retail vendors in the City. He stated prepayment ordinances were common in other locations in the United States and after researching found them effective in other cities. These recommendations were mentioned in the ICMA study.

With fuel prepayment, customers would have the option of prepayment, preauthorization or full service. The Police Department took a survey of vendors and received a couple of responses. The inconvenience was for persons using cash and wanting to fill their tank.

Lewis Kent, 624 Meves Avenue spoke in opposition and stated drive offs were a part of business. Doug Luth, 2012 North Webb Road commented on the cost to the business for the use of credit cards. Randy Stueven, 233 So. Gunbarrel Road spoke in opposition.

Comments were made about this being punitive in nature and they were the responsibility of the businesses. Chief Lamken stated some businesses don't even report drive offs. Discussion was held regarding who could take the reports. He stated the Police Officers took these reports as they were criminal offenses. Comments were made that the City was not ready for this change. Chief Lamken commented on the process of drive offs and the demand on resources. He stated most drive offs were during the day. City Attorney Bob Sivick commented on prosecuting these cases.

Presentation on Cemetery Planning. Parks and Recreation Director Todd McCoy gave a brief history of the Grand Island Cemetery. The cemetery was started in the 1860s with 20 acres south of Stolley Park Road which was privately owned. In 1897 the City began cemetery operations when Council approved the acquisition of the private cemetery. At the same time Council approved the "new" cemetery to the north of Stolley Park Road.

In June of 2000 the City Council authorized the acquisition of 22 acres of land just north of the cemetery formerly known as the Webb Road Sale Barn for \$345,000. Resolution #2000-307 stated 'that the property will be used for athletic fields until such time as it is needed for cemetery use.'

Currently there were 1,000 lots available, but by 2020 they could be full. Traditional burials were staying about the same as the last three years. Ash burials had increased in numbers over the years but had remained stable over the last three years.

The following short term ideas were presented:

- Construct columbarium system – estimated construction cost was about \$15,000 per 50 niche unit
- Request City Council change City Ordinance requiring flat markers in Section J. Allowing upright headstones would not increase the total available spaces, but would increase selection.
- Discount the price of the flat marker section

Mr. McCoy presented the following three options with pros and cons: 1) develop Webb Road property – pros were the close proximity which would allow efficient use of staff and supplies. The cons would be the eventual loss of the athletic fields. 2) Acquire alternate cemetery expansion location – pros would keep the athletic fields. The cons would be to repay the cemetery trust fund and acquire land which would likely increase the operations cost to manage a

remote site. 3) Do not expand the cemetery operation – pros would keep the athletic fields. The cons would be to repay the cemetery trust fund and the new cemetery lots sales would eventually conclude.

On January 28, 2014 the hiring of a consulting firm to complete a cemetery master plan was put on hold. It was recommended to continue down that path in order to have a professional analysis and provide strategic direction. A consulting firm would evaluate current cemetery and operations; offer alternate site recommendations; and submit a phased cemetery master plan including construction cost estimates.

Dan Naranjo, 1328 Hagge Avenue spoke in support of the city cemetery. He commented on the increase of cremations over the years, partly due to the cost. Discussion was held regarding different areas for a new cemetery. City Administrator Mary Lou Brown cautioned the Council on discussing specific areas of land as it could drive the price up. Mr. McCoy stated that was why he was recommending a consulting firm to look at different locations and form a master plan.

Columbariums were mentioned and supported by the Council. Comments were made regarding the use of the current athletic fields for future expansion as originally planned. Mr. McCoy stated the cost of the study would be approximately \$32,500. He also reviewed costs of purchasing land at a different location. Mr. McCoy stated the Webb Road location would carry us through the next 75-100 years.

Mark Sands, Cemetery Superintendent commented on the flat markers and the need to change the Ordinance to allow upright markers and possible columbariums. He stated there were 350 spaces that could be used for upright markers that would sell faster than flat markers. He supported the use of the Webb Road location for expansion. Discussion was held regarding the expense of columbariaums. Mr. McCoy stated they would have to put that cost in the budget.

City Attorney Bob Sivick commented on the Executive Session during a Study Session and that it was permitted by state statute.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion by Hehnke, second by Nickerson to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:46 p.m. for the purpose of a strategy session with respect to real estate purchase. Upon roll call vote, Councilmembers Minton, Paulick, Stelk, Nickerson, Hehnke, Haase, and Mann voted aye. Councilmember Gericke voted no. Motion adopted.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION: Motion by Hehnke, second by Nickerson to return to Regular Session at 9:35 p.m. Unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

RaNae Edwards  
City Clerk