



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, April 10, 2007

Council Session

Item G3

Approving Minutes of April 3, 2007 City Council Study Session

Staff Contact: RaNae Edwards

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

April 3, 2007

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 Community Meeting Room of City Hall, 100 East First Street, on April 3, 2007. Notice of the meeting was given in the *Grand Island Independent* on March 29, 2007.

Mayor Margaret Hornady called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Councilmember's Walker, Cornelius, Nickerson, Gericke, Brown, Gilbert, Whitesides, Haase, and Meyer. Councilmember Pielstick was absent. The following City Officials were present: City Clerk RaNae Edwards, Finance Director David Springer, and City Attorney Dale Shotkoski.

INVOCATION was given by Reverend Royce Rinehart, Trinity Lutheran Church, 212 West 12th Street followed by the PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Community Appearance Plan Presentation. Paul Briseno, Assistant to the City Administrator reported that City Council had requested the development of a Community Appearance Plan as one of their Council Retreat goals. This plan would strategically address issues that cause negative appearances of properties throughout the community, primarily residential properties.

Presented were preliminary goals and objectives for the following categories: Problem Resolution Team, Residential, Commercial, Code Enforcement Program, Repeat Code Violators, Cleanup Budget, Funding, and Residential Resources.

Problem Resolution Team (PRT):

Mission – address situations of immediate concern as well as long term recurring problems, targeting properties and situations that need a multi-resource approach.

Goals – pursue abatement/condemnation/rehabilitation of abandoned and dilapidated properties that meet the PRT requirements; establish funding sources to address PRT properties; develop an efficient process for resolution of properties that streamline and expedite the process; and report successful resolution of properties.

Residential:

Mission – reduce the number of dilapidated/dangerous properties that cause a nuisance or blemish neighborhoods by utilizing available resources.

Goals – perfect the PRT Established Community Standard; create a list of counter actions/resources available for major problems for staff and residents; and create a system of communication for collaborative efforts.

Commercial:

Goals – promote Business Improvement Districts and Neighborhood districts

Code Enforcement:

Goals – continue a no bias re-active approach to code enforcement, and work toward a proactive approach; outline code enforcement process and procedure to be followed; research technology – research and study the cost/benefit of utilizing software and mobile hardware; communication – Community Service Officer's (CSO's) and Legal Department meeting every 2 months to increase communication/ relationship and effectiveness of cases going to court, dismisses, concerns, etc.; update/review city codes; conduct an in-house study to evaluate the number of CSO's needed, service areas, and work schedule to create the most efficient CSO program.

Repeat Code Violates:

Mission – expedite the abatement process and identify a procedure for reoccurring problem properties.

Goals – create a process that speeds up the resolution process and eliminates repeat offenders.

Cleanup Budget:

Mission – identify funding for immediate demolition and cleanup of properties.

Goals – 1st year – identify local, state, and federal funding available, identify resources within community; 2nd year – reevaluate budget for future years.

Residential Resources:

Mission – create a single place for residents to find multiple resources available from the city and other agencies.

Goals – empower residents to help neighborhoods/community appearance by utilizing resources available, and help facilitate a clean appearance plan for neighborhoods; education of residents is key in the success of the Community Appearance Plan; create a Clean Neighborhood Award/Certificate for owners who go above and beyond to work with SCO's and other neighbors/organizations to clean their property and neighborhood and promote current programs including the Regional Planning Commission and the Community Beautification Award.

Mr. Briseno stated anyone who had questions concerning the Community Appearance Plan could contact him at 385-5444 Ext. 149. If it was a code compliance issue they should contact the Police Department of 385-5400, building issues should contact the Building Department. Craig Lewis, Building Department Director explained the process of building permits. Steve Riehle, Public Works Director explained Adopt a Street Program.

Police Sgt. Dennis Osterman explained trash, garbage, and health hazards are dealt with by the Police Department daily. February 2007 statistics: 307 calls, 229 cleared. Enforcement was discussed regarding time, legal issues, etc.

Lewis Kent, 624 East Meves commented on the process and lack of enforcement.

Downtown Main Street Presentation: Cindy Johnson, President of the Chamber of Commerce reported that in its efforts to improve the health of the downtown, the Business Improvement District Board became a “Nebraska Lied Main Street Community” effective January 1, 2007. The Main Street philosophy encouraged a four pronged approach to downtown redevelopment: 1) organization; 2) economic restructuring; 3) design and 4) promotions.

K.C. Hehnke, representing the downtown Business Improvement District commented on train noise in the downtown area. Requested was that the city budget for directional horns for eight railroad crossings.

Steve Riehle, Public Works Director reported an estimated cost of \$365,000 for quiet zones and wayside horns in the downtown area.

Victor Aufdemberge, 403 East 17th Street and Mark Stelk, 3117 Brentwood Drive spoke in support of funding for directional horns along the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

Craig Hand, 4220 Calvin Drive requested that council consider the return on the investment of a vibrant downtown.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

RaNae Edwards
City Clerk