



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, April 12, 2011

Council Session

Item F2

**#9293 - Consideration of Council Observation in Union Contract
Negotiations**

Staff Contact: Councilman Larry Carney

Council Agenda Memo

From: Larry C. Carney, Councilman – 4th Ward

Meeting: April 12, 2011

Subject: Approving Council Observation in Union Contract Negotiations

Item #: F-2

Presenter: Larry C. Carney, Councilman – 4th Ward

Background

It is felt there is need to allow City Council members to observe the union contract negotiations.

Discussion

To allow City Council members to observe the union contract negotiations that are soon to begin, if they have not already, will help the Council members better understand the negotiation process as it is carried out in good faith. The negotiation process is thus made more transparent to the elected Council members who represent the citizens of Grand Island. In the final analysis, these same Council members will be asked to approve any contracts that are agreed upon by the negotiating parties.

Alternatives

It appears the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand. The Council may:

1. Approve the proposed ordinance.
2. Disapprove or deny the proposed ordinance.
3. Modify the ordinance to meet the wishes of the Council.
4. Table the issue.

Recommendation

I recommend the Council, in its own interest only, pass an ordinance allowing Council members to attend and silently observe the union contract, collective bargaining process for all such contract agreements.

Sample Motion

Move to approve the proposed ordinance as presented.

ORDINANCE NO. 9293

WHEREAS, the Industrial Relations Act regulates relations between the City of Grand Island and its employees and requires good faith negotiations with respect to mandatory topics of bargaining; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, by authority of Section 2-19 of the Grand Island City Code, can bind the City of Grand Island, Nebraska, by their acts when they are duly assembled; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, by authority of Section 2-15 of the Grand Island City Code, may authorize the Mayor to sign contracts; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Nebraska State Statute Chapter 16, Section 253, the City Council may provide an ordinance providing the details necessary for the full exercise of power conferred upon the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wants to allow any member of the City Council members, not to exceed five (5) members at any one time, to observe negotiations of each labor contract the bargaining units negotiate, prior to authorizing the Mayor to sign such contract, and to allow Council members to better understand the negotiation process; and

WHEREAS, the City Council members choosing to observe the negotiations agree that all observed negotiations are to remain confidential and not be revealed or discussed in any manner, except while in an Executive Session; and

WHEREAS, all City Council members shall remain silent at all times while observing the negotiations; and

Approved as to Form	☐ _____
April 7, 2011	☐ City Attorney

ORDINANCE NO. 9293 (Cont.)

WHEREAS, it should be the duty of any City Council member to notify the City Clerk of his/her intention to attend any labor contract negotiation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wants to promote open and transparent government to the benefit of all Grand Island, Nebraska citizens by allowing the elected representatives to observe the process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA, that the City's negotiation team shall inform all City Council members at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to any labor contract negotiation session for the purpose of allowing any City Council member to attend, and plan for, a scheduled negotiation.

Enacted: April 12, 2011.

Jay Vavricek, Mayor

Attest:

RaNae Edwards, City Clerk