
City of Grand Island



Tuesday, November 19, 2002

Study Session Packet

City Council:

Joyce Haase

Margaret Hornady

Gale Larson

Glen Murray

Jackie Pielstick

Larry Seifert

Robert Sorensen

Scott Walker

Tom Ward

Fred Whitesides

Mayor:

Ken Gnadt

City Administrator:

Marlan Ferguson

City Clerk:

RaNae Edwards

7:00:00 PM

Council Chambers - City Hall

100 East First Street

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

A - SUBMITTAL OF REQUESTS FOR FUTURE ITEMS

Individuals who have appropriate items for City Council consideration should complete the Request for Future Agenda Items form located at the Information Booth. If the issue can be handled administratively without Council action, notification will be provided. If the item is scheduled for a meeting or study session, notification of the date will be given.

B - RESERVE TIME TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

This is an opportunity for individuals wishing to provide input on any of tonight's agenda items to reserve time to speak. Please come forward, state your name and address, and the Agenda topic on which you will be speaking.



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Item -1

Presentation by Central Nebraska Humane Society for Use of Stolley Park for Holiday Lighting Display Fundraiser

As per Council request representatives of the Central Nebraska Humane Society will present a plan for the use of Stolley Park for the Holiday Lighting Display Fundraiser. The representatives will address the various concerns presented at the Council meeting dated October 22, 2002. It is the goal of the Central Nebraska Humane Society to develop an agreement with the City for the use of Stolley Park for the fundraising activity. Given Council approval staff anticipates developing an agreement with the Humane Society for the use of Stolley Park to be presented for Council action at the November 26, 2002 Regular Council meeting.

Staff Contact: Steve Paustian



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Item -2

Presentation by Progress for Grand Island Regarding Economic Development Program

Each year the City Council goes through a day long process discussing community needs and identifying City goals and priorities for the upcoming year. It is always exciting to celebrate the accomplishments, identify changes in needs from year to year, and reiterate the importance of working on goals that went unmet throughout the year. The Retreat is an opportunity for some real soul searching by not only the elected officials but for the professional staff and community at large. A lot of effort is put into preparing for the Retreat and ensuring accurate “pictures” of the community, as well as the City’s role in meeting the community’s expectations are presented.

For the past several years, economic development has emerged as a priority for the City Council at their annual Retreats. Even more important, economic development or JOBS, JOBS, JOBS was the #1 priority of the community during the 1997 Heartland Vision process – a strategic planning process that involved over 2,300 residents of the Grand Island/Hall County area. From a City Administrator’s perspective I believe the following to be true: 1) people in Grand Island and central Nebraska want to work; 2) People need good paying jobs to support themselves and their families; 3) Municipalities benefit from diverse business and industry in the community; 3) Those who aren’t moving ahead are falling behind.

An economic development program is a huge tool the Nebraska Legislature made available to cities across the state. The benefits of positioning a city for economic growth can not be underestimated. Most importantly, the Legislation comes with safeguards. The checks and balances required by the economic development program can help a Mayor and City Council, City Administrator and Finance Director feel comfortable that the funding allocated for economic development activities are actually used for this purpose. Specifically, the program requires three levels of approval. The first is through the Economic Development Corporation; the second by the Citizen Review Committee (of which the Administrator and/or his designee serve as advisory members) and the third, and most important, is through the City Council. This approval process means that each request for assistance is reviewed thoroughly by people who are intimately familiar with the project, the finances, and the process.

Representatives from the community and the Progress for Grand Island committee will be asking the City Council to consider holding a special election in May 2003 for the voters to consider implementing an economic development program. The question of why a special election instead of the regular elections in 2004 has been asked. In my opinion, the special election is the right time. The special election allows the Council to be responsive to the

increasingly important issue of economic development; allows the voters to really educate themselves on this single issue ballot question; and, most importantly, does not confuse the economic development program with the 1/2 cent sales tax ballot issue already scheduled for May 2004.

Staff Contact: Marlan Ferguson