

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Monday, April 19, 2021

Regular Meeting

Item Consent2

Council to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2021 Special Meeting.

Staff Contact: City Council

Special Meeting
April 12, 2021

The Scottsbluff City Council met in a Special Meeting on Monday, April 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Scottsbluff High School Board Room, 313 East 27th Street, Scottsbluff, NE. The meeting was requested by a written call therefor by City Manager Dustin Rief. A notice of the meeting had been published on April 9, 2021 in the Star Herald, a newspaper published and of general circulation of the city. The notice stated the date, hour and place of the meeting, that the meeting would be open to the public, that anyone with a disability desiring reasonable accommodation to attend the council meeting should contact the city clerk's office, and that an agenda of the meeting kept continuously current was available for public inspection at the office of the city clerk in City Hall; provided, the city council could modify the agenda at the meeting if it determined that an emergency so required. A similar notice, together with a copy of the agenda, also had been delivered to each council member, made available to radio stations KNEB, KMOR, KOAQ, and television stations KSTF and KDUH, and the Star Herald. The notice was also available on the City's website on April 9, 2021. Mayor McKerrigan presided and City Clerk Wright recorded the proceedings. Mayor McKerrigan welcomed everyone and informed those in attendance that a copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available for the public's review. The following Council Members were present: Jeanne McKerrigan, Jordan Colwell and Angela Scanlan. Absent: Nathan Green and Terry Schaub. Also present were City Manager Dustin Rief and City Attorney Kent Hadenfeldt. Mayor McKerrigan stated no other business shall be transacted at the special meeting unless all Council Members are present to consent and the City Council declares the existence of an emergency. She then asked if there was such an emergency. There was none.

Regarding the agenda item of entering in discussion of potential collaborations and partnerships to develop an indoor aquatics facility, Mr. Zac Karpf of Platte Valley National Bank and Chairman of the YMCA Board gave a brief Power Point presentation on the subject. The presentation centered on items such as aquatics and community partnerships, project costs with timeline, community pride and tourism.

Mr. Karpf explained the first meeting held regarding a new aquatic center was in May of 2019, where they conducted research on 13 sites in the Scottsbluff/Gering area. Eventually they narrowed the research down to two sites, but originally, one of the 13 sites was the Splash Arena and possibly renovating it. He went on to reiterate they are committed to identifying a new facility, but have not ruled out the possibility of revitalizing the Splash Arena at Scottsbluff Public Schools if a funding source is not found for a new facility.

He went on to explain, regarding the Splash Arena, the main pool shell would need to be reconstructed, equipment replaced and family fun enhancements added. The estimated cost to renovate it would be around \$7 to \$9 million. Consequently, the projected cost of a new aquatics facility is estimated between \$13 and \$15 million. Mr. Karpf added both would be indoor facilities with year-round availability to patrons and either would take about 18 to 24 months to complete depending on what time of year the construction would begin.

Mr. Rick Myles, Superintendent of Scottsbluff Public Schools addressed a question regarding capacity, as far as parking and expansion is concerned with the Splash Arena. Mr. Myles explained there are advantages and disadvantages to using the facility. He added the school does have access to funding if it is a matter of renovating the Splash Arena. He went on to add the Board of Education did commit several years ago to set aside \$75,000 per year for a yet to be determined community swimming pool, totaling \$300,000 after this year. In addition they are increasing parking to the west and north of the school with a partnership including 23 Club and the City. They do recognize there are advantages to the pool being elsewhere, commenting there are many pieces to the puzzle.

The question of the two locations where the new facility could be built was brought forward. Mr. Karpf explained there is land between Panhandle Coop and Safeway and land adjacent to WNCC. These sites are perceived as neutral sites and are centrally located. They are also big enough to for the 8-10 acres needed for the facility.

Concerning funding for a new community aquatics facility, the subject of LB357 was brought forward and explained. With LB357, part of the funding would come from an additional half cent sales tax imposed on the local tax. This measure would first have to be approved by a super majority of City Council for it to appear on a ballot for the next primary or general election in 2022. The estimated cost of the additional half cent sales tax would garner approximately 1.8 million per year, at which Mr. Karpf would like to see half of the proceeds go to the aquatics facility. The other half could be used for whatever infrastructure project the City deemed appropriate. Because of LB357 and the bonding needed to help complete the funding portion of the facility, it would have to be City owned and operated, but that would not determine usage hours or operations. Mr. Karpf also added the YMCA would work diligently to help get this initiative passed because the City Council would not be able to promote or hold community forums with respect to the facility and LB357. In addition, the YMCA would also work on getting donations to help with funding the project.

City Manager Rief commented that because a big portion of funding the building of the new community aquatics center lies within City Council approving the additional half cent sales tax, he will within 30 days have an agenda item brought forward to Council to see if they would consider moving forward with the request.

Mr. Karpf also added if the project moves forward with the different funding possibilities in place, an interlocal agreement with the community partners should be entertained. This agreement would address who would be responsible for different aspects of the facility, as well as identifying voting members of each partner. He, along with the different partners present, agreed they all have something different to bring to the table.

At the end of discussion, Council Member Scanlan moved, seconded by Council Member Colwell to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m., “YEAS,” Colwell, Scanlan, McKerrigan. “NAYS,” None. Absent: Green and Schaub.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

“SEAL”