

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Council Workshop of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on November 21, 2011. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. The following were present for the meeting: Mayor Dehen, Council Members Freyberg, Schindle, Steiner and Norland, Administrator Sande, Finance Director Thorne and City Clerk Gehrke.

Report on Caswell Park Activity

Administrator Sande reported on Caswell Park activity for 2011. Lynette Peterson has recapped the tournaments held in 2011 and the total number of teams participating. A number of the teams do not charge at the gate; however, MAYBA, MAGFA and the Girls State Fast Pitch Tournaments are always large draws. There will be more MAGFA tournaments in 2012. They recently returned from the ASA National Conference and were awarded the Boys and Men's Fastpitch Tournaments and the Girls' Slow Pitch Nationals for 2013. We were fortunate to receive the James Farrell Award for hosting four of the highest rated tournaments in 2011. Council Member Schindle asked if costs were broken down for attending the conference and asked for a report outlining the cost of the out-of-state travel, employee overtime and other costs of attending. Council Member Schindle asked how many employees are working the ASA tournaments. Administrator Sande reported one full-time employee and six seasonal employees work the tournaments, except for the very large tournaments when additional staff is needed.

Continuation of 2012 Budget Discussion

Council Member Freyberg asked how it is in the next 40 days that we will use up 24 percent of the budget. Currently we are at \$4,475,000 of a projected \$5,549,000. Administrator Sande reported all fire salaries of approximately \$100,000 have not been paid plus there is a lag of 30-60 days for costs already incurred but expenses not paid out. At year end there will be accrued payroll expenses. Through 10 months of the budget we should be at 83 percent of the budget, and we are just under 79 percent. He reported we are angling for some savings to allow for the State cuts. He also reported we are a modified accrual basis. Council Member Norland wants the newsletter to be restored to four times a year since a number of people do not have computers. She believes that having a newsletter only twice a year will not keep the residents informed. She would like the summer reading program restored. Council Member Steiner agreed with restoring both of these items. Additional discussion was held about the newsletter, reducing the size of the newsletter and publishing it in black and white instead of color.

Council Member Freyberg stated that another police officer should be hired. He believes that it is unwise to bank on other communities for backup and that at least two police officers should be scheduled at all times for the safety of the police officers and the citizens. He reported that the Council needs to look at their priorities as a government. Some discussion was held about the staffing of Nicollet County. Administrator Sande reported the Police Chief has been requesting the hiring of an additional police officer for two years. He suggested hiring the police officer at July 1st to save costs. Mayor Dehen suggested using savings from 2011 to hire the officer. Administrator Sande reported final numbers would not be available until the end of the year, however, items could be moved around after the final levy number is set. Mayor Dehen asked if the Council was comfortable raising the fees and being in alignment with the City of Mankato, pursuing signage at Caswell, increasing the rental fees for community rooms and park

shelters and moving the purchase of the Varda alarm to 2011. The Council confirmed their agreement.

Council Member Norland suggested assembling an email delivery list for the newsletter. Administrator Sande reported the website update will go into effect on or about December 1, 2011 and residents will still be able to sign up to receive the newsletter electronically. Mayor Dehen also suggested that sign-up be made available for snow emergency notification.

Administrator Sande reported staff added two items to the revenues. One was a 5 percent increase to building permits and plan review fees. He spoke with Mankato and they are contemplating a change in their building permit fees of 5-10 percent. He also reported in a review of the current equipment certificate fund sufficient money was available to purchase the Varda alarm this year and taking this out of the proposed 2012 Budget. Those two items totaled \$16,900 in adjustments. Mayor Dehen reported in order to maintain the 7.5% levy as our maximum, a reduction of \$225,007 is necessary. Staff compiled a list of revenues and reductions totaling \$251,600 leaving \$26,000 for adjustments. Council Member Norland reported the street lighting user fee would pay for the officer. Council Member Schindle stated this user fee would be an additional tax.

Discussion was held about the ads placed in the City newsletter. Administrator Sande reported the ads are free to businesses, one issue the lower businesses and the next issue the hilltop businesses. The Council suggested polling the businesses and asking them if they would support paying for the ads.

Council Member Freyberg asked that mass transit be reviewed and look at more efficient routes to lower the cost. Administrator Sande reported the Council made a commitment in July for mass transit in 2012. Mayor Dehen asked staff to inform Mankato that the Council is looking at making the system more efficient.

The Council directed staff to come up with a final budget for approval at the December 5, 2011 Council meeting and look at adding a police officer as quickly as possible.

Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan, 2012-2016

Administrator Sande reported there are a minimum number of items for 2012 in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan. He reported that much of the equipment acquired would be from equipment certificates. He reported discussions have been held with Nicollet County to purchase a chip spreader jointly with them. The City's chip spreader is a 1973 model and the County's chip spreader is a 1969 model. A new chip spreader would speed with the process, putting less rock down. Administrator Sande reported that once an agreement with Nicollet County is in place it will come before the Council for approval.

Council Member Norland stated she believes that by delaying projects such as the street department building roof, equipment replacement, the repair of RoeCrest Drive and the Municipal Building HVAC system, we are just kicking the can down the road, and that holding the tax levy low prevents the City from doing the necessary maintenance.

Council Member Schindle stated he noted a series of shelters scheduled in the CIP for neighborhood parks and he doesn't believe picnic shelters should be a priority at this time.

Council Member Freyberg asked that a separate Council workshop be scheduled to discuss the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan. A Council Budget Workshop to discuss the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and finalize the budget was set for 6 p.m. on Monday, December 5, 2011.

There being no further business, the Council Workshop was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk