

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on March 5, 2018. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. asking that everyone join in the Pledge of Allegiance. The following were present for roll call: Mayor Dehen, Council Members Freyberg, Steiner, and Norland, City Administrator Harrenstein, Finance Director McCann, Attorney Kennedy, Community Development Director Fischer, and City Clerk Van Genderen. Absent: Council Member Whitlock and Public Works Director Swanson.

Approval of Agenda

Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the agenda as presented. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Council and Open Forum Meeting Minutes

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to approve the minutes of the Council and Open Forum meeting of February 20, 2018. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Public Hearing, Consider Amendment to City Code Section 155.50 (B) Ravine Dedication.

Community Development Director Fischer reported currently when someone plats property adjacent to a ravine it is required to dedicate the property to the City for ravine maintenance purposes. A developer expressed concern that the regulation may affect ravine property appraisals and presented an ordinance change providing an option to use conservation easements to allow the private ownership of ravine property. The Planning Commission discussed the recommendation and reviewed examples of conservation easements, and reviewed the practices of other cities. The Planning Commission recommended the Ordinance change that would allow the use of conservation easements instead of a ravine dedication. Community Development Director Fischer read the current code into the record:

“City Code Section 155.50 (B) Ravine Dedication. The subdivider shall dedicate to the city that portion of all hillsides, ravines, and slopes of bluff lands below the ravine breakline as determined by the Building Official.”

Community Development Director Fischer then read the code as proposed into the record:

“City Code Section 155.50 (B) Ravine Dedication. The subdivider shall dedicate to the city that portion of all hillsides, ravines, and slopes of bluff lands below the ravine breakline as determined by the Building Official or record an easement approved by the City for the conservation and preservation of the terrain and vegetation.”

With no one appearing before Council, Mayor Dehen closed the Public Hearing.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the Consent Agenda which included:

- A. Bills and Appropriations.

- B. Approved Park and Audio Permit for Southern Minnesota Autism Coalition's WALKdo 2018, at Spring Lake Park on April 28, 2018, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- C. Approved Parade Permit for Southern Minnesota Autism Coalition's WALKdo 2018, 5K on April 28, 2018, at Spring Lake Park from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- D. Approved Concession Permit for Southern Minnesota Autism Coalition's WALKdo 2018, on April 28, 2018, at Spring Lake Park from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- E. Approved Large Group Park Permit for Monroe Elementary PTO's Monroe Color Run on May 5, 2018, from 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Spring Lake Park.
- F. Approved Parade Permit for Monroe Elementary PTO's Monroe Color Run on May 5, 2018, from 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Spring Lake Park.
- G. Approved Audio Permit for Feeding Our Community Partners, Beer Brats and Bourbon for Backpack event on Thursday, June 14, 2018, from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at 2120 Howard Drive West.
- H. Approved Large Group and Audio Permit for YWCA's 10th Annual Girls on the Run 5K on April 21, 2018, from 6:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Spring Lake Park.
- I. Res. No. 23-18 Approving Design & Wine's Application for Consumption and Display (Set Up) Permit.
- J. Authorized City Administrator to Approve Service Agreement with Jaguar Communications and Authorize the Update of the Wiring in City Hall.
- K. Res. No. 24-18 Approving Consent Assessment Agreement for 1763 Orchid Drive South.
- L. Accepted Property Owner Petition to Annex 2.38 Acres into the City of North Mankato and Set a Public Hearing for 7:00 p.m. on April 16, 2018.

Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.

Public Comments Concerning Business Items on the Agenda

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before Council and requested Council table Agenda Item #10B Consider Resolution Regarding Wildlife Management.

Stefanie Jaquette, 509 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council and stated she did not see a downside to having a deer count and gathering the data.

Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council and stated if the Council proceeds with a survey concerning automatic read water meters there should be more ways than just electronic to answer the survey. Ms. Church said the Council should consider a deer count.

Lucy Lowry, 2263 Northridge Drive, appeared before Council and stated she believed Council should involve residents in solving their issues.

Business Items

Ordinance No. 100, Fourth Series an Ordinance of the City of North Mankato, Minnesota, Amending North Mankato City Code, Title XV Land Usage Chapter 155.50 (B) Ravine Dedication.

Attorney Kennedy stated the Planning Commission held a lot of discussion concerning the use of a conservation easement or dedication and determined there would be little to no difference between the two, the property just remains in the property owner's name. **Council Member Freyberg moved, seconded by Council Member Norland to adopt Ordinance No. 100, Fourth Series an Ordinance of the City of North Mankato Minnesota, Amending North Mankato City Code, Title XV Land Usage Chapter 155.50 (B) Ravine Dedication. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Steiner, Norland and Dehen aye; no nays. Motion carried.**

Res. No. 25-18 Regarding Wildlife Management.

Attorney Kennedy stated the resolution does not say a deer hunt will not occur, it simply says at this time a deer hunt will not occur and the Parks Department and Green Space Advisory Committee will consult with the DNR to monitor the deer population. He stated it was clear that the City would continue to observe and monitor the deer population. Council Member Steiner indicated he believed the City should wait until Parks Foreman Jason Lobitz had additional time to monitor the deer population before stating there would not be a deer hunt. Mayor Dehen noted the resolution indicates a deer hunt will not occur at this time and that monitoring will continue. **Council Member Norland moved, seconded by Council Member Freyberg to adopt Res. No. 25-18 Regarding Wildlife Management. Vote on the motion: Freyberg, Norland, and Dehen aye; Steiner nay. Motion carried.**

Receive Update on Automatic Read Meters.

Bolton & Menk Engineer Herman Dharmarajah appeared before Council and reviewed information concerning the proposed use of Automated Meter Reading (AMR) and Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). He stated discussions were still being held with possible suppliers so a total cost was not available but an estimation would be \$4.00 a month per meter for a total of 3 million dollars. Engineer Dharmarajah stated there were approximately 5285 customers billed monthly and about 25% submit water meter readings online. He indicated about 20% pay a late fee of \$3 a month for not submitting a meter reading online which results in an additional \$35,000 a year in revenue for the City. Engineer Dharmarajah reviewed water usage in the City and the area utility rates for local selected cities, and North Mankato had the second to the lowest total utility bill. He reviewed potential problems with the current system which included prolonged leak detection, tampering, inaccurate meter readings, billing issues and lost revenue due to inaccurate meters. Engineer Dharmarajah reported possible benefits include fast and efficient data collection, more accurate and precise measurement of water consumption, leak detection capabilities, and low ongoing maintenance costs. The system would also minimize the need to access customer property to read meters or shut off meters and improve operational efficiency and enhance customer service. Engineer Dharmarajah reviewed proposed methods for data collection noting that the system may not allow 100% reading by radio due to the terrain. Engineer Dharmarajah stated the next proposed step would be to survey North Mankato Residents through the monthly utility bill. City Administrator Harrenstein said Finance Director McCann and Engineer Dharmarajah had looked into grants but have not identified any available grants. He stated the proposed changes were brought up by residents and this would not necessarily be for operational efficiency, rather, the thrust would be customer preference. Attorney Kennedy requested clarification on the coverage. Engineer Dharmarajah reported due to the terrain it may not be possible to pull readings from all of the houses and once the houses were identified staff would need to go out with handheld devices to collect the missing data. Council Member Freyberg stated the City should proceed with the survey of the citizens. Mayor Dehen stated Council would not be under obligation to continue it would just gather data.

Review 2019 Budget & Proposed 2019-2028 CIP Schedule.

Finance Director McCann reviewed the proposed Bluff Park Trail which would reestablish the trail from Mary Lane to Lake Street. The existing trail is partially covered by debris and vegetation, finishing this trail was identified as one of the top projects during the North Kato Ideas Questionnaire. The project would include retaining walls, stormwater diversion, and lighting. The estimated project as proposed would be \$215,710. Finance Director McCann stated that although the project is small in scope regarding debt financing, it is large regarding the \$350,000 of general fund park improvement

funding set aside in the yearly budget. City Administrator Harrenstein requested clarification on the cost of the lighting. City Engineer Dan Sarff reported the lighting was estimated at \$85,000 and it would not be required and could be eliminated. City Administrator Harrenstein stated the total cost without lighting would be \$130,000. City Council expressed interest in completing the project.

City Administrator and Staff Comments

None.

Mayor and Council Comments

Council Member Freyberg presented a PowerPoint showing spring flora in Bluff Park and Benson Park in 2017. He reviewed early spring flowers blooming and maple saplings sprouting up. He also showed pictures of flowerbeds in his backyard with a mixture of perennials growing inside a deer fence due to a deer trail in his backyard. He encouraged the public to visit Bluff Park in the spring.

Council Member Norland presented a summary report on the 2007 Parks and Green Spaces Committee. She reviewed the mission and indicated Public Works has been incorporating the ideas into their work in the parks and green spaces. Council Member Norland stated she also reviewed the Parks Plan developed in 2014 and 2015 indicating the new planning included resident participation, with the Greenway Committee developing from that planning. She reported that Parks Superintendent Duane Rader presented a comprehensive review of the work the Parks staff and volunteers have completed in the past years which includes developing groups to help guide specific projects. Council Member Norland reported there would be a group developing for the neighborhood surrounding Wheeler Park. She summarized by stating she did not see a reason to institute a Parks Board. Council Member Norland invited citizens who had ideas or concerns to visit the City Council Open Forum. She also stated if anyone was interested in working with the Parks crew to contact Parks Superintendent Duane Rader.

Mayor Dehen reported he received a thank you note from Boy Scout Troup 29 for the City's donation.

There being no further business, on a motion by Council Member Steiner, seconded by Council Member Norland, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk