

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Council Work Session of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Council Chambers on March 12, 2021. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. The following were present remotely through Zoom for roll call: Council Members Steiner, Norland, Oachs, and Mayor Dehen, City Administrator Harrenstein, Chief of Police Gullickson, Finance Director McCann, Community Development Director Fischer, Finance Director McCann, City Planner Lassonde, and City Clerk Van Genderen. Council Member Whitlock arrived by zoom at 12:55 p.m. Citizen monitoring was available through a conference call.

Request for the use of Golf Carts on City Streets

City Administrator Harrenstein reported the request was brought to City Council by a citizen. In October 2020, the Traffic and Safety Committee reviewed the proposal and recommended Council not move forward with amending City Code to allow golf carts to be driven on City Streets. The City Council requested additional research be completed concerning the request. City staff has completed the additional review of the proposed changes and would recommend the Ordinance change as presented.

City Planner Lassonde reported that Minnesota State Statute 169.045-Special Vehicle Use on Roadway allows establishing an ordinance to authorize motorized golf carts, all-terrain vehicles, utility task vehicles, or mini trucks on designated roadways or portions of roadways under their jurisdiction. He reported City staff researched to understand how other cities manage their Motorized Golf Carts. He stated the City reviewed twelve cities with Motorized Golf Cart ordinances.

City Planner Lassonde stated the proposed Ordinance would allow the operation of motorized golf carts from sunrise to sunset and would not be permitted if there was inclement weather. The proposed Ordinance limited the use of motorized golf carts to roadways with a posted speed limit of thirty miles per hour or less and on roads identified on the "permitted roadways" map included with the Ordinance. Additional requirements included a valid driver's license, operations permitted from April through October, must display a slow-moving vehicle emblem, be equipped with rearview mirrors, headlights, and taillights, maintain insurance coverage, observe all traffic laws, obtain a permit from the City of North Mankato and the Motorized Golf Cart must be inspected. City Planner Lassonde reviewed the map, which outlined where Motorized Golf Carts could operate.

Council Member Norland commented it appeared the main roads were not permitted. City Planner Lassonde responded they were not allowed but could be crossed by a golf cart if it intersected a road where golf carts were permitted. He noted there is no way to travel from Upper North to Lower North. The main roads were not deemed safe to travel on with a Motorized Golf Cart. Police Chief Gullickson reported a lengthy discussion was held concerning accessibility to roadways. He stated discussion with other law enforcement officers who have a similar ordinance in their cities and maintaining safety. Council Member Norland requested clarification on where the motorized golf carts would be driving. Chief Gullickson commented they would be to the far right but may need to move into the traffic lane if a car is parked on the street. City Administrator Harrenstein noted that if Council moved forward with a Motorized Golf Cart ordinance, the City would probably be contacted by those interested in permitting ATVs, UTVs, or four-wheelers for City street use. He clarified that significant roads could be crossed by Motorized Golf Carts but could not be driven on eliminating the ability to get from Upper North to Lower North and crossing Highway 14. Council Member Norland requested clarification on why Lookout Drive could not be used as there are many walkers and bikers who utilize the road. City Administrator Harrenstein commented that there was not enough width for safety, and there is a lot of concern about the current safety of bicycles and walkers on the road. Council Member Norland commented there are many alternative forms of transportation, and the City may need to consider alternative routes and options. Mayor Dehen stated he was concerned with people who would want to use the Motorized Golf Cart to travel to Big Dogs or Spinners to visit the

bars but will not be legally allowed due to lack of access based on where golf carts are permitted to travel. He also expressed concerns about golf carts driving on the narrow crowded streets of lower North. Mayor Dehen was also concerned about the burden on the Police Department. Mayor Dehen suggested if the Council moves forward to restrict drivers to 18 and older. Council Member Norland suggested moving forward with a Public Hearing to obtain additional input. Council Member Oachs commented that there is increased use of UTVs in other cities and is interested in the Ordinance. She noted the use of trails to travel around the area and requested clarification on if this would be an option.

Mayor Dehen commented that the UTV is different than a motorized golf cart. He expressed concerns about those that would want to use their golf cart to bypass liquor laws. He also noted the hilly terrain in North Mankato is difficult for visibility and could create a dangerous situation. Council Member Oachs wondered if Mary Lane's trail to Spring Lake Park could be used to move golf carts from upper North to lower North. City Planner Lassonde stated the path is really steep and relatively narrow and would cause golf cart drivers problems. City Administrator Harrenstein reviewed possible trails that could be used in linking upper and lower North Mankato, including the Bluff Valley Trail and Old Belgrade Hill. He noted there was not a good option. Mayor Dehen commented the City could reach out to MnDOT to determine if they would allow Motorized Golf Carts on the Bluff Valley Trail. He also suggested further discussion with Mankato to learn more about their thoughts on Motorized Golf Carts, commenting he did not want to pit North Mankato Ordinances against Mankato Ordinances.

2020 Annual Report North Mankato Police Department

Police Chief Gullickson reviewed the 2020 North Mankato Police Department Annual Report. He commented that 2020 was a challenging year due to COVID-19, George Floyd's death, and the year's political upheaval. He stated the Police Department strived to provide quality service amid the upheaval and challenging times. Police Chief Gullickson reported a 22-year-old man died due to a narcotic overdose, and he reported a suspect had been charged with murder.

Police Chief Gullickson reported the Police Department invests in police officers by requiring training and encouraging officers to attend additional training. The Police Department had 981 hours of continuing education which is 70 hours of training per officer. The training is a practical investment in the officers to help them keep and improve their skills.

Police Chief Gullickson reported the Patrol Division consists of 10 patrol officers who patrol 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Changes in patrol include two new officers and the resignation of Mikeal Tordsen.

The Investigation Unit consists of Lieutenant Adams and Investigator Gagelhoff, who investigated 630 cases in 2020. Police Chief Gullickson thanked the administrative support staff of Senior Police Secretary Junker and Part-time Police Secretary Clark for their work, including managing data requests. In 2020 there were 843 data requests. Police Chief Gullickson noted he served on several committees and task forces reiterating the regional scope of the work performed in North Mankato.

Police Chief Gullickson reviewed the Use of Force information. He noted the officers strive to control and de-escalate situations. Unfortunately, not everyone encountered by the police department is cooperative, and force is needed to protect themselves and take people into custody. He noted in 2020, officers responded to 8377 calls for service, with 27 incidents requiring the use of force.

Police Chief Gullickson thanked the Police Reserve for their commitment to assisting the Police Department and keeping North Mankato safe.

Police Chief Gullickson reviewed the Crime Statistics, noting the change from Summary Crime Reporting to NIBRS (National Incident-Based Reporting System) in July of 2021. He noted a crime rate of 4.2%, making North Mankato a safe community.

Police Chief Gullickson commented that the Police Department continues to strive for continued Community Outreach, noting that Public Education was down in 2020 due to COVID-19 limiting the ability to meet face-to-face. The department continued to look for ways to meet the community, including participating in many Birthday Parades for residents. Staff is looking forward to additional events in 2021.

Police Chief Gullickson thanked the North Mankato City Council for their continued support and engagement with Police Officers.

Council Members Steiner, Oachs, Norland and Whitlock all thanked the Police Department for their continued work. Council Member Norland noted the Police Department strives to remain educated by learning about crisis intervention, de-escalating mental health events, and learning about bias. Mayor Dehen requested clarification on if the department continues to collect data concerning racial profiling. Police Chief Gullickson reported they continue to capture the information, and NIBRS will help by requiring the capture of the data. He noted it is more challenging to capture the data during traffic stops because race is not indicated on driver's licenses. Officers must make their own determinations which can be difficult. The department continues to strive to track the information and learn from what they discover.

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Norland, to adjourn the meeting at 1:37 pm.

Mayor

City Clerk