

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Council Work Session of the North Mankato City Council was held in the North Mankato Police Annex on January 14, 2019. Mayor Dehen called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. The following were present for roll call: Mayor Dehen, Council Members Norland, Oachs, Whitlock, and Steiner, City Administrator Harrenstein, Finance Director McCann, and City Clerk Van Genderen.

City Administrator Harrenstein opened the meeting by explaining the purpose of the Council Work Sessions. The purpose is to create an opportunity for open discussion between Council Members and Council Members and staff. No formal decisions will be made during the Council Work Sessions, and Robert's Rules of Order will not govern the discussions.

Scam Prevention Utility Flyer

Council Member Norland reported a personal experience with a scammer where she almost lost some money, because of this experience Council Member Norland is working with Police Chief Gullickson, Library Director Heintz and Victim/Witness Coordinator Bonnie Petersen from Nicollet County to educate the public. The team is willing to present to local groups concerning potential scams and providing handouts at the library. A letter will be going out in an upcoming utility bill highlighting the availability of the offerings.

St. Cloud Bonding

City Administrator Harrenstein reported St. Cloud has made a 24 million dollar plan to expand their sports facility and leaders plan to ask for \$16.2 million in bonding from the legislature. He reported that it would be wise for the City of North Mankato to lay the groundwork for a bonding request in 2019, as the next bonding year is 2020. City Administrator Harrenstein reported meetings had been held with a variety of stakeholders. The City did consult with the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission who did not discourage the City from applying for legislative bonding money. The request should have the type of facility, what the City can afford, user groups, and operation costs. City staff will have a final report by the end of the month. Mayor Dehen reported most requests that go to the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission are for new facilities and that is why the Sports Commission has not deterred the City from requesting bonding from the legislation. Caswell Park is in need of rehabilitation by way of upgrading concessions, lights, restrooms, and reconfiguring the parking lot. He noted any indoor recreation must fund itself and have a Proforma that works by partnering with user groups and other forms of revenue. The goal would be to increase traffic in the area promoting economic growth. He noted Mankato had the State legislature authorize a 1% Food & Beverage Tax but only enacted ½%, but they can change to a 1% when Council decides to increase the tax. He noted North Mankato could ask the state legislature to authorize a Food & Beverage Tax but wait to enact until needed. City Administrator Harrenstein noted that Caswell Park is absolutely worth state bonding because it has been the home of MSHSL for over 30 years, and has visitors from outside the state and country. The City has enjoyed Caswell Park for 30 years, and for the park to maintain its regional and national status, the City must invest in the park.

Council Member Norland requested clarification on a possible indoor recreation center. Mayor Dehen indicated the building must account for both tournament and practice opportunities. City Council must also explore options for community uses. Council Member Norland requested clarification on if the School District had reached out concerning pool space. City Administrator Harrenstein reported the district is in its long-range planning and they will continue to review options.

Council Member Oachs wanted to know if the City knew how much user groups were willing to pay. Mayor Dehen reported staff knew some of that information but that will continue to be discussed and will be brought back at a later time.

Mayor Dehen stated the Local Option Sales Tax dollars are last dollar in, because the City does not want to go to property owners to support the facility, and the goal would be to use Food & Beverage Taxes rather than property taxes.

Council Member Steiner requested clarification on when Local Option Sales Tax dollars would become available. City Administrator Harrenstein reported that information would be brought forward at the next Council Work Session. Mayor Dehen noted the City would probably not be ready to move forward until 2021 or later. Mayor Dehen also requested Finance Director McCann to review the Sales Tax dollars as additional revenue should be coming in due to sales tax on internet sales.

Council Member Whitlock reported he liked that there was a varied approach and not just relying on Sales Tax but approaching the legislature, user groups, and other options.

Council Member Oachs noted she liked that increased visitors would increase taxes and spur growth.

Council Member Norland indicated this facility could also encourage a healthy North Mankato and provide additional opportunities for women athletes.

Council Member Norland requested clarification on possibly having the park sponsored. City Administrator Harrenstein reported this is the second year staff has sold sponsorships, and they are looking for additional opportunities.

Draft Legislative Priorities for 2019

City Administrator Harrenstein reported the resolution would include Caswell bonding dollars, a 1% Food & Beverage Tax authorization and a grant request for expansion of transit services to residents. City Administrator Harrenstein reported the transit pilot results would be completed later this year and the results will be reviewed, but there is an opportunity to consider an expanded/different service that would be more on call. Additional information will be brought before Council at the January 28, 2019, Council Work Session.

Strategic Plan Review

City Administrator Harrenstein reviewed the structure of the Strategic Plan and stated a review/updates on the progress would be provided in the coming months. He did request Council provide feedback and suggestions.

Council Handbook Overview

City Council will review the Handbook and ask questions at the next Council Work Session.

Huntley Wilmarth Update

City Administrator Harrenstein provided background on the project. The project is a large 345 KV transmission line connecting the Huntley line to the Wilmarth line. The City Council has passed a resolution opposing one of the proposed lines which runs near County Road 41 which is planned by the City for residential development. He stated the latest action was a draft environmental impact from the Department of Commerce which was positive for North Mankato because it recognized that the proposed lines are detrimental to residential areas and planned residential growth and provided alternative routes. Mayor Dehen encouraged everyone to attend a meeting on the Huntley-Wilmarth line on January 30th from 1 pm to 6 pm at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Mankato. Mayor Dehen stated the City's Comprehensive Plan has been beneficial during this process to show planned expansion and growth.

Mayor Dehen closed the Council Workshop at 1:05 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk