

North Branch City Council

Work Session

Date of Meeting: June 18, 2015
Present: Councilmembers Theresa Furman, Kathy Blomquist, Robert Canada, and Kirsten Hagen-Kennedy
Absent: Councilmember Joyce Borchardt
Also Present: City Administrator Konrad, Finance Director Hill and Public Works Director Williams; Planning Commission Members vonLange, Swanson and Ramaley

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. MS 4 Engineering Standards/Joint Meeting with Planning Commission

Holly Wilson from WSB provided MS 4 Engineering Standards information for the Council and Planning Commission. Furman questioned whether timeframes should be added. The City Engineer said that timeframes are situation based and handled case by case. The Engineering Standards were referenced in the recent amendments to the City Code that are required to meet our MS4 stormwater permit. The standards will be adopted by the Council at an upcoming meeting.

III. Countryside Village Reimbursement Request

Council and staff discussed the reimbursement request. Hill explained that the refund affects users on the system and may potentially affect all city taxpayers if there is not a certain amount of development of the system. Konrad indicated that if there is a city error those corrections or refunds are administratively handled. Hagen-Kennedy asked if there is concern with handling refunds on a case-by-case basis that might lead to claims of discrimination. Konrad suggested an established policy. Furman asked if this can be handled prior to the policy at the meeting since they have already asked about this. Hagen-Kennedy said she only wants to see no sanitary sewer fees will be refunded due to excessive use so she is not in favor of this. Hagen-Kennedy said the City cannot afford to give away money unless this is something that were the fault of the City, which it is not in this case. Blomquist agreed but it is only the first paragraph to be concerned with because if there is no refund then there is no refund. Furman and Canada were in favor of the policy as discussed and Hagen-Kennedy and Blomquist were not. Konrad noted that at some point Council needs to make a decision one way or the other on Countryside's request and suggested putting it on the July 14 meeting so there was closure on the issue. Councilmember Furman noted that she would not be at that meeting. The Mayor stated that Countryside has been patient and it would be put on the July 14 meeting for a vote and the policy be placed back on the agenda when the full Council was available.

IV. 20 Year Growth Utility Installation Standards

Williams provided information on the 20-year growth utilities. Landowner spoke at the meeting regarding selling his property and the concern with the proposed 20-year growth area. Planning Commissioner Swanson commented on growth slowing by changing the lot size requirements. Konrad noted that anyone that applies for one-acre lots would also have to apply for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment because the Comp Plan does not allow one-acre lots. Furman asked if there is wiggle room to come to compromise where the city service area is smaller and shifted. Blomquist said she would want compromise that the homes have services. Hagen-Kennedy would want the growth but wants the homes on the services. Hagen-Kennedy thanked everyone for the discussion and said there are some

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things to follow up on for further discussion. There was discussion on compromise and possible shifting of the growth area. Konrad noted that there needs to be careful consideration of any financial impacts by making changes to the plan. At this time there seems to be a stalemate where there are not enough votes to change the comp plan or the zoning ordinance so the two will continue to be contradictory. She noted that it appears there may be some areas where there may be some areas for compromise. She will send out maps of the current boundary and asked that the Council mark up those maps with areas they would consider possible changes. She will then review everyone's suggestions and see if there may be common ground. The Planning Commissioners asked if they could also be included in that exercise.

V. Sewer Rate Study

Hill suggested Council move forward with a sanitary sewer rate study using the same firm as the Water and Light. Two proposals were presented to Council for review. Blomquist asked what information Hill hopes to find. Hill explained the purpose of the rate study. He then said he does not expect rates to go down but believes the study is necessary for planning purposes. Council agreed to move forward with the rate study. The matter will be placed on the regular agenda for approval. Blomquist felt that a rate study should be conducted for storm sewer not sanitary sewer. Staff will get a cost from the consultant to add a storm sewer rate study option.

VI. TIF Pooling Options

Hill provided information on TIF pooling options. There is an opportunity to utilize TIF from a district that has met it's obligation to pool and utilize in other districts. This would require a public hearing to amend the budget for the TIF district. Council was in favor of moving forward with this. Staff will bring that request forward to call for the necessary public hearings.

VII. Sunday Liquor Sales Hours

Konrad noted that new legislation was passed that allows on-sale alcohol sales at 8 am on Sundays, it was previously 10 am. City Code can be more restrictive than the State law. She asked if Council wanted to change the City Code to be more restrictive. Council consensus was to go with the state law. She noted that no change is needed so license holders will be able to begin alcohol sales at 8 am on Sundays.

Motion by Furman to adjourn.

Adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridgitte Konrad, City Administrator
jrl/TOSS