

North Branch City Council

Work Session

Date of Meeting: August 6, 2015

Present: Councilmembers: Theresa Furman, Kathy Blomquist, Joyce Borchardt, Robert Canada, and Kirsten Hagen-Kennedy.

Also Present: City Administrator Konrad, Finance Director Hill, Liquor Store Manager Dahlberg, GIS Specialist Sondrol and Parks Commissioners Heinzl, Pantelis, Dahlberg and Novlan

I. Call to Order

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

II. Joint Discussion with PTOS – Park Issues

a. Wildridge Park Skating Rink

b. Legacy Parks & Trails Fund - GMRPTC

Sondrol explained the usage of Wildridge Park Skating Rink last season as well as the costs associated. Sondrol indicated that the Homeowner's Association will not be able to contribute toward the cost of keeping the rink open this year. Sondrol reported that they would like to get the cost of purchasing a used construction trailer for a warming house. Chair Heinzl of the PTOS said they would like to look at the cost of the City providing a warming house of some type. Hagen-Kennedy would like to check with the Lions and other civic groups to see what kind of help can be found on this. Council agreed to have staff look into some type of construction trailer for a warming house at Wildridge. Borchardt suggested a larger ice house of some type that could be used as a warming house or maybe a concession stand.

Sondrol asked whether Council was open to applying for funding through the Legacy Parks & Trails Fund for purchase of the Carlson property adjacent to Harder Park. The previous application had partnerships with the Historical Society. Borchardt asked if anything can be done with existing parks. Sondrol explained the types of things that qualify for the use of legacy funds. Council agreed to move determine if there was still an interest from previously interested partners.

III. Sewer Refund Policy

Konrad reviewed the proposed sewer refund policy. Hagen-Kennedy commented that she is concerned about refunding as it affects the fund and, essentially, other users. Konrad explained the proposal is to allow for no refund for faulty equipment. Hagen-Kennedy asked if there would be a cap on the refunds or what the plan is to fund this. Hill indicated that this is a Council decision. Konrad noted it is impossible to plan for every possible scenario. Furman said she does not consider this giving away money but returning money that is not the City's. Furman indicated she would consider a running hose differently than a running toilet. Furman would like something that says it is the residents' responsibility to check that the toilets are not running and things like that. The policy will be revised and presented to Council for consideration of approval.

IV. 2016 Budget

Liquor Store Manager Dahlberg reviewed the proposed Liquor Store budget with Council. Konrad and Hill reviewed the remaining budgets and discussed possible areas for reductions to get down to a 5.8% levy increase. Hagen-Kennedy would like to consider the salary reduction for Council. Furman said she would like to go back since it has been four years. Canada would like to keep the reduction. Blomquist would like to keep the reduction. Borchardt would like to cut conferences and trainings for elected officials. Consensus was to

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agree to the continued reduction. Konrad noted WSB, City Engineer, has changed their monthly fee with a rate increase of \$1,500 per month for 2016. Council discussed the proposed Planner/EDA position. Konrad noted that the City needs to let the County know whether it wishes to continue sharing a planner for 2016. Council agreed to continue moving forward with a city employee for the Planner/EDA position. Hill continued review of the proposed budget general items. Konrad reviewed different tax and valuation increases to demonstrate impact to residents' taxes with the proposed budget. Canada asked if staff feels comfortable with the 5.83%. Hill indicated that it is a Council decision and not his. Konrad wrapped up by noting there is one more budget session and staff will be looking for any further changes to this budget other than already discussed before the preliminary levy is brought forward for adoption.

Motion by Borchardt to adjourn.

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bridgitte Konrad, City Administrator
jrl/TOSS