

North Branch City Council

Work Session

Date of Meeting: May 19, 2016

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

Also Present: City Administrator Konrad, Finance Director Hill, the Community Development Director Vita, Police Chief Meyer, and Public Works Director Williams.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Overlay Project

Williams provided an overview of the proposed overlay project for the Northwest Olde Town. Council agreed to direct staff to go out to bid on the project.

III. CIP & Staffing Plans

Konrad overviewed the staffing plans. Furman asked why this is being changed. Konrad explained that this is a staff recommendation. Konrad reviewed the proposed staff additions that were outlined in the staffing plan. Staff and Council discussed the positions and the space limitations at City Hall. Hill reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan focusing the discussion on items in 2017. This along with the staffing plan items will be integrated into the 2017 budget with options for Council's consideration.

IV. COPS Grant Opportunity

Chief Meyer provided an overview of funding an officer position. Chief Meyer noted the grant application must be submitted by June 21 and asked for direction on whether to proceed. The grant would pay 75% of the salary for three years and the fourth year the City has to fully fund the position. Furman noted the City applied years ago and did not get it. After discussion, Council agreed that staff should make the application.

V. Comprehensive Plan

- a. Cost Estimate
- b. Comp Plan v. Zoning Ordinance

Vita provided an overview of the reasons and need to consider an update to the Comprehensive Plan. Three cost estimates were obtained ranging from \$18,000 to \$120,000. Furman provided information on the last Comp Plan update. Furman said she believes it is time for a full rewrite and she would support an outside firm but is concerned with cost. Furman asked for specific information on companies to use for updating Comp Plans and the costs. Blomquist commented that she thinks the work done should not be completely discarded and she does not want to start completely over. Council directed staff to get formal quotes from WSB & Associates and Jordan Zeller for a full rewrite and then Council would then interview the two firms.

VI. Preventing Developers From Walking Away

Blomquist posed the question to the Council on what we were going to do so that developers don't continue to walk away from projects here. Canada led a discussion regarding the available property in the City and suggested a committee be formed to study this. Konrad said that, despite that it is difficult to consider, maybe the City needs to serve as developer to get this property developed and back on the tax rolls. Blomquist noted there is community sentiment up in the Northwoods area against a project. Borchardt said that looking at the maps the project proposed didn't fit and she could agree with a steering committee to holistically review development. Canada will write a memo to the Council on his ideas.

VII. Commission Attendance Ordinance

Council discussed and asked that staff be called if Council or Commissioners will not be present at a meeting or will be late. Blomquist would like to do away with excused or not excused because that puts staff in the position of evaluating the reasons for missing meetings. Council asked staff to email Commissioners and ask them to contact the staff liaison for the meeting if they are not going to attend or will be late. The code language should remain but the bylaws could be amended to better reflect the expectation.

Motion by Furman, seconded by Borchardt to adjourn.

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridgitte Konrad, City Administrator
jr/TOSS