

1. Agenda And Packet Work Session

Documents:

[OCTOBER 19, 2020 WORK SESSION AGENDA.PDF](#)
[OCTOBER_19_2020_WORK_SESSION_PACKET.PDF](#)

City of Excelsior
Notice of City Council Work Session
of the Excelsior City Council

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Excelsior will hold its Work Session on October 19, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via a telephonic and/or electronic meeting. The agenda for the meeting is attached hereto.

In accordance with the requirements of Minn. Stat. Section 13D.021, the Mayor, the city manager, and the city attorney have determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of the "COVID-19 Health Pandemic" emergency declared under Chapter 12 of the Minnesota Statutes. Due to the measures necessary to contain and mitigate the impacts of the Pandemic Emergency, it has been determined that attendance at the regular meeting location by members of the public is not feasible and that the physical presence at the regular meeting location by at least one member of the body, chief legal counsel or chief administrative officer is not feasible. Therefore, all staff and City Council members will be participating by telephone or other electronic means.

Members of the public may attend the work session by joining via Zoom either online or by telephone at:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88093355565>

Meeting ID: 880 9335 5565

Dial by your location

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Meeting ID: 880 9335 5565

City of Excelsior
City Council Work Session

Agenda

October 19, 2020

5:30 p.m.

(Please Note: Times Listed Are Approximate)

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Agenda Approval
3. Staffing Study Follow-up
4. Delegation Parameters and Making Meetings Efficient
5. Adjournment

Note: The purpose of a Work Session is for the Council to discuss matters informally and in greater detail than is allowed at formal Council meetings. All meetings of the Council including Work Sessions will be open to the public. While the privilege of participating in these discussions is generally limited to the Council, staff, and consultants, the Mayor may open a discussion from the floor.

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MEMORANDUM

Work Session Item 3

Re: Staffing Study Follow-up

Date: October 19, 2020

To: City Council

From: Kristi Luger, City Manager

At the last work session, the Council was presented the Staffing Study and requested that a discussion occur at the next work session regarding how to implement the Study. A table is included in the packet, which summarizes the Consultant's suggestions with suggested follow-up and a timeline.

Staffing Study Follow-Up

Consultant Suggestions	Suggested Follow-Up	Timeline
<p>Enhance Staff Capacity <i>Suggestion 2, Page 3</i> The new part-time clerk position be extended full-time.</p>	<p>Staff is in the process of hiring for a part-time accountant position and the 2021 preliminary budget includes a part-time administrative assistant position. It is intended that the two part-time positions will cover the front desk and assist staff with various projects so that staff can concentrate on more significant Council priorities.</p>	<p>2021 & 2022 Budgets Only if additional help is needed to meet the needs of the City Council</p>
<p>Working Conditions <i>Suggestion 3, Page 3</i> A space analyst should be brought in immediately to develop a remodeling/ space improvement plan to improve the working conditions. At some point a new City Hall should be considered, but for the short term, a space analysis is important.</p>	<p>Staff has been reluctant to invest any money into improving the working conditions until the Council decides on a long-term plan for City Hall. It is becoming increasingly obvious that if City Hall is going to remain in its current building that investments need to be made to the space. Beyond general aesthetics, there are the following issues: the roof is noticeably leaking in two locations, limited outlets to meet technology needs, occasional brown water, a floor drain that overflowed once, and holes in the walls. It is imperative that a decision be made regarding the future of City Hall.</p>	<p>December 7th and/or 21st Work Session(s)</p>
<p>Salary Modifications <i>Suggestion 4, Page 3</i> Bring the City Manager and Public Works Supt's Salaries to a Competitive Average.</p>	<p>The 2021 preliminary budget includes higher market rate adjustments for these two positions than other positions that are recommended to receive an adjustment. The salaries will become more competitive with annual market rate adjustments for one or two more years.</p>	<p>2021 & 2022 Budgets</p>
<p>Streamline Council Meetings – Suggestion 5, Pages 3-5</p>		
<p>Maintain the integrity of the consent agenda.</p>	<p>If a Councilmember has major questions about a consent item, it is suggested the staff be contacted before the meeting to ascertain if the item can be handled at that level, as opposed to the item being pulled and being discussed extensively at the meeting. <i>Consultant suggestion</i></p>	<p>N/A – suggestion, no action required</p>

Consultant Suggestions	Suggested Follow-Up	Timeline
Facilitate enhanced decision making.	Include additional materials that the Council would like to be included as part of future agenda items. <i>Consultant suggestion</i>	N/A – suggestion, no action required
Decisions should be made on issues and not continued if possible.	The Council may want to consider more extended work sessions that facilitate more detailed work and subsequently, save the Council meetings for more of a focus on action. <i>Consultant suggestion</i>	Council may want to discuss suggestion further
Decide what items need to go to the Council.	Have the committee of Lou, Dale, and Kristi conduct a comprehensive analysis of what is more administrative in nature and what could be handled by staff to simply be an administrative process to subsequently be ratified by the Council. <i>Consultant suggestion</i>	Lou, Dale, and Kristi follow-up on and report back to Council
Contact staff before the meeting to address issues and resolve any concerns beforehand.	When other unique issues may be occurring, staff should be aware of them by Council and have the opportunity to ascertain if these issues can be resolved before the Council meeting. <i>Consultant suggestion</i>	N/A – suggestion, no action required
An effort should be made during a Council meeting not to micromanage issues.	The Council should focus on the larger policy issues as opposed to the smaller items, which again should be delegated down to the staff. <i>Consultant suggestion</i>	N/A – suggestion, no action required
Council Priorities and Vision – Suggestions 7 and 8, Page 5		
The Council and staff should take extensive time to clearly define and agree on the top 3 to 5 priorities as part of this pivot. The priorities in the workplan need to be clearly measurable, with timelines and the respective staff who is responsible to meet these concerns.	The Council typically conducts an annual goal setting session at the beginning of the year using the following process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A list of goals is generated at the goal setting session 2. The goals are emailed to the Council to be ranked individually 3. The City Manager generates a prioritized list based on rankings 4. The Council adopts the prioritized list of goals To enhance the goal setting process, the Council should collectively agree on their top 3 to 5 priorities either at the goal setting or at a subsequent meeting to ensure that everyone is in agreement on what the City will be focused on during the year.	Schedule goal setting session during the first quarter of 2021

Consultant Suggestions	Suggested Follow-Up	Timeline
<p>The Manager and Council should discuss the progress towards these top priorities on a quarterly basis. The Manager could also make a discussion of the progress and the work effort to meet Council's priorities part of every staff meeting.</p>	<p>Almost all staff members (except for the City Clerk and Finance Officer) meet quarterly in what is called a 'team meeting' to discuss progress on the Council's priorities and other pertinent items. The 'team meeting' report is then emailed to the Council to provide an update on various items. Staff has recently discussed revamping this report to make it easier to get a quick progress report on how the City is doing overall on its priorities.</p>	<p>Unsure, the Council should discuss how they want to review the progress made on their top priorities</p>
<p>The Council's understanding, perspective, and definition of the staff effort to become more creative and innovative needs to be clearly understood, defined, and supported by all salient actors, and thus becomes integrated as part of the ongoing work plan.</p>	<p>Staff wholeheartedly agrees that it is critical for the Council to define their expectations. If staff has a clear understanding of what the Council wants, we can work together on developing a clear plan on action.</p>	<p>N/A – suggestion, no action required</p>
<p>Future Staff Enhancements – Suggestion 9, Page 6</p>		
<p>Use of consultants – the Manager is provided a reasonable amount of consulting funds and then uses the consultants in the context of the various Council priorities.</p>	<p>This suggestion has been utilized in the past on a limited basis but could be utilized more if the Council defines their priorities, so staff knows the type(s) of consultant(s) needed to complete the work.</p>	<p>2021 Budget, if the Council is interested in exploring</p>
<p>Use of interns – the City can secure masters levels students to work on various priority projects.</p>	<p>This suggestion has been utilized in the past when the City had defined projects and could obtain unpaid interns. If there are defined projects and money budgeted for interns, this suggestion could help the City accomplish more projects; there just needs to be available space on the Council agendas.</p>	<p>2021 Budget, if the Council is interested in exploring</p>

Consultant Suggestions	Suggested Follow-Up	Timeline
Use of volunteers – over time, volunteers can work on special projects or fill various capacities.	This suggestion has been utilized in the past on a limited basis. Staff would agree that over time, the City may be able to utilize more volunteers.	N/A – no funding required, something to keep in mind
Turnover – Suggestion 10, Pages 6-8 (only listed the suggestions that were not previously mentioned)		
Continue the four-day work week in that it creates a very significant competitive edge for the City.	Staff agrees with this statement.	N/A – suggestion, no action required
Work to grow the trust between Council and staff.	By keeping communication open between the Council and staff, eliminating ‘gotcha’ moments, and staff receiving more public support, trust should build between the Council and staff.	N/A – suggestion, no action required
Provide education and growth opportunities.	The City currently does not have a tuition reimbursement program, but the program could be explored as a technique for retaining staff.	2021 Budget, if the Council is interested in exploring
Continue on-boarding processes as well as thoughtful exit interviews which can be used as a helpful learning tool.	Staff is already implementing this suggestion.	N/A – complete
Recognize and reward sound performance when it occurs.	Other than verbal recognition, the City currently doesn’t do anything to recognize and reward sound performance. This is an area that staff should spend some time researching best practices.	N/A – suggestion, no action required
Develop succession manuals. When a key staff member is leaving, have them prepare a manual that discusses what they really do versus the job description, what the most critical tasks are that they perform and how to do them, and who to connect with.	Under the current working conditions, staff is unable to develop succession manuals when they are leaving. There is so much day-to-day work, it is nearly impossible to work on other projects, especially when a staff member is preparing to leave. At a minimum, staff could review their position description to ensure it accurately depicts their job. The hope is that this suggestion can be implemented with the addition of more staff members.	N/A – suggestion, no action required

Consultant Suggestions	Suggested Follow-Up	Timeline
<p>Become an outstanding training center. Seek high-performing entry level or mid-level employees and develop their skills knowing full well that they will eventually leave the organization.</p>	<p>Staff is already implementing this suggestion (without even trying!).</p>	<p>N/A – complete</p>



MEMORANDUM

Work Session Item 4 – Delegation

Re: Parameters and Making Meetings Efficient

Date: October 19, 2020

To: City Council

From: Kristi Luger, City Manager

NOTE – Since the Council didn't have time to discuss this memo much at the last work session, this is the same memo that was in the last work session packet.

Summary

Councilmembers Dierking and Kurschner volunteered to work with City Manager Luger on setting some delegation parameters and are recommending the following actions:

- Staff will make decisions on items that they believe are suitable for them to do so with an email to the Council summarizing those actions.
- The Park and Recreation Commission will handle any minor decisions regarding The Commons and Excelsior-Studer Park that do not have major budget implications.
- The Planning Commission will make final decisions on variance applications and the City Council will serve as the appeal board.
- Allow public comment to only occur during Open Forum or during a public hearing.
- Conduct the public hearing process and any items that will elicit strong community interest over the course of two meetings.

Full Description

At the June 29th work session, the Council discussed various protocols to make our City Council meetings more efficient; one of the suggestions was to delegate more work to staff.

Councilmembers Dierking and Kurschner volunteered to work with City Manager Luger (the Committee) on setting some delegation parameters.

Delegating More Items to Staff and the Commissions

Instead of coming up with specific items that should be delegated to staff and the Commissions, the Committee came up with general parameters:

- When staff believes it is suitable for them to make a decision without formal Commission and/or Council input, an email will be sent to the Council summarizing those actions.

- The Park and Recreation Commission will handle any minor decisions regarding The Commons and Excelsior-Studer Park that do not have major budget implications. For example, the request to post senior class pictures in The Commons would be reviewed and decided on by the Park and Recreation Commission. The Council will be notified of any meaningful actions.
- The Planning Commission will make final decisions on variance applications and the City Council will serve as the appeal board if an applicant wants to appeal a decision made by the Planning Commission.

These recommendations have not been presented to any of the Commissions. If the Council is interested in delegating more items to the Commissions, staff would run these recommendations by the Commissions for their input.

Making the City Council Meetings More Efficient

The Committee also spent some time discussing additional methods for making the City Council meetings more efficient and asked staff to brainstorm some ideas that they have seen work in other communities. The Committee found the following ideas intriguing:

- Allow the public to comment on any item during Open Forum and only allow comments during Open Forum. The public would not be allowed to comment on items throughout the remainder of the agenda unless the item is a public hearing. The City Council meetings are for conducting business, which can be difficult to accomplish if there is too much interaction with the public throughout the meeting.
- Conduct the public hearing process and any items that will elicit strong community interest over the course of two meetings. See 'Determining Levels of Community Engagement Table'.
 - Meeting #1 – Council takes public comment but is not expected to make a decision (unless there is no interest from the public).
 - Meeting #2 – Council does not take any additional public comment and is expected to make a decision.

This format allows Councilmembers to think about the comments made from the public and follow-up with any members of the public and/or staff before a decision is made. The City of Edina has recently moved to this format and has found it to help their public hearing process.

- Staff memos should focus on the decision at hand and not belabor past meetings. If there is relevant information in past packets, staff should indicate the dates of packets for reference information.

General Suggestions

The Committee also heard the following suggestions from staff, which may be beneficial for the full Council to hear:

- Adopt more of a trial-and-error mentality instead of spending months trying to make an ordinance or a policy perfect. The best way to know whether an ordinance or policy will work is to try it out. For example, the Council was incredibly nimble with items related to COVID-19.
- Provide staff with specific questions/suggestions/feedback on their recommendations instead of asking for more options to streamline future discussions and staff's time related to following up on an item.

Council Action

The Council should discuss the Committee's recommendation and provide any feedback.