

CITY OF EXCELSIOR
Hennepin County, Minnesota

MINUTES
City Council Work Session

Monday, September 30, 2013

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Mayor Gaylord called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Beattie, Fulkerson, Miller (arrived at 6:48pm) and Mayor Gaylord

Absent: Councilmember Caron

Also Present: Interim City Manager Johnson, Finance Director Tumberg, and City Clerk Murphy

2. Agenda Approval

Fulkerson moved, Beattie seconded, to approve the agenda. Motion carried 4/0.

3. 2013 Fee Study/Review City License and Permit Fees

Johnson presented the 2013 Fee Study, as completed by Abdo, Eick & Meyers. Johnson stated that staff wants to ensure the City's direct and indirect costs are covered by the fees charged for various licenses and permits. According to Minnesota State Statute, cities are allowed to cover costs through licensing fees but not profit from them. Because of this, some fees were reduced and others were removed from the list, as they no longer apply (i.e., City maps that are now produced in-house by copy machine and charged per page). Fulkerson questioned if the direct and indirect costs factored in costs for police and fire. Johnson confirmed that police and fire costs were factored into the study.

Johnson stated that one fee that will increase is cemetery charges. Right now, cemetery fees are not even covering direct costs. Staff is waiting for information from other cities on what they charge. Another area that is not covering costs is Excursion Boat Refueling Permits. Costs associated with Excursion Boat Refueling Permits have risen because more training and inspections are required.

Johnson stated that parking permits are only covering direct costs. If the Council decides to move ahead with parking permits that will allow residents to park for over 72 hours, administration and police enforcement costs will rise and the fee structure for parking permits will need to be changed.

Mayor Gaylord stated that the City needs to look at the bigger picture, and that can't be accomplished in the short term. If staff can bring back numbers that include the shortfall, will the City break even?

3. 2013 Fee Study/Review City License and Permit Fees - (continued)

Johnson stated that, overall, the City will still be in the negative. Tumberg said the goal is to try and get these fees in line with the actual costs. Beattie questioned if the recommended adjustments are enough to cover the costs the City should be covering. Miller stated that the City has to be careful to only cover its costs and not make money.

In regards to liquor licenses, Johnson stated that the City of Excelsior has some of the highest liquor license fees. Council stated that it would like to see how the City's fees compared to other cities. Council discussed the various types of liquor licenses and agreed with the recommendations from staff.

Mayor Gaylord and Beattie questioned the shortfall on some of the fees. The Council stated that it would like to see more definitive numbers so the City can try to balance out the revenues and costs as close as possible. Miller questioned when the fee structure needs to be established. Johnson stated that some fees need to be approved now (i.e., liquor licenses - renewals need to be sent out soon), while others may wait and be raised next year.

Council directed staff to bring back numbers that include the shortfall, a list of all of the direct and indirect costs, how the changes in fees will effect these costs, a comparison of liquor license fees from other cities, and a resolution for adoption at the October 7, 2013 Council meeting.

4. Administrative Extensions

Beattie requested this item be added to the agenda to discuss the practice of staff approving administrative extensions of up to one year on zoning approvals. Beattie would prefer that staff work with the Council on these requests for both commercial and residential properties.

Miller stated that the purpose of the ordinance is to allow staff the authority to grant extensions and keep routine items from coming back to the Council for approval, but maybe staff should be working with the Council on these requests.

Beattie also suggested the term "good faith" be removed from the ordinance, unless there are legal standards that define it.

The Council directed that this item be presented to the Planning Commission to consider an ordinance amendment at their November 2013 meeting. The Council directed staff to work with City Attorney Staunton on the language for the ordinance amendment. The Council suggested the amendments to the ordinance to include: any request for an extension come before the Council for approval/denial versus the Zoning Administrator; removing the term "good faith" from the ordinance; and that extension requests include facts as to why the extension should be granted.

Until the ordinance is amended, the Council directed staff to bring all extension requests to the Council for approval.

5. Enhance The Commons - Council Goal

Johnson suggested that the City establish a food and beverage tax, which could provide funds for improvements to The Commons. Miller agreed with the idea but said there may be some resistance from the restaurants. Mayor Gaylord was also receptive to the idea.

Johnson stated that the advisory commissions have not been directed to do anything with the Sandall Marketing Study to date. She asked if the Council wanted to establish a small group to work on this.

The Council discussed the possibility of placing a skating rink on the lake. Johnson stated that the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust will not provide insurance for any equipment that is used for the skating rink if the rink is on the lake.

Paul Mullenbach, Park and Recreation Commission, addressed the Council. Mullenbach brought up issues of parking, a warming house, and lighting that would be needed for a skating rink.

Miller suggested that the City look at options to outsource the rink and pull in a warming house and put up lights, similar to what is at the Lake of the Isles. Mayor Gaylord suggested that the Park and Recreation Commission work on this.

Beattie said that the Council needs to support some of the direct initiatives from the Park and Recreation Commission and start getting things done. Beattie would like to see an irrigation system be put back on the list. He suggested utilizing water from the lake. Johnson said if the City does the \$50,000-60,000 irrigation system now, the City would not be able to use funding from the stormwater system that is proposed to be installed in conjunction with the hotel project. The system will need to be paid from the Park Capital Improvement Fund. Miller stated that the ultimate solution will be water for the irrigation system coming from a tank, not a temporary pump coming from the lake. Beattie suggested that the Park and Recreation Commission look into this and bring back a recommendation to the Council.

Mayor Gaylord agreed that the City should implement some items, even if changes need to be made later on.

Fulkerson suggested getting the concession stand started.

Beattie questioned Mullenbach for ideas. Mullenbach suggested putting together a plan to work on a smaller area that goes from Lake Street to the lake. Mullenbach said that the concession stand would be a great space for the Minnetonka Little League to use. The Park and Recreation Commission can discuss what revenues could be expected from concession sales.

Mullenbach said the Park and Recreation Commission did a walkthrough of The Commons and commented on the erosion and other problems in The Commons. Miller suggested that the Council also do a walkthrough with the Commission.

5. Enhance The Commons - Council Goal - (continued)

The Council directed staff to explore the idea of a local food and beverage tax, have the Park and Recreation Commission bring some concrete projects back to the Council for consideration, keeping the big picture in mind from the Master Park Plan, bring back information for the irrigation system, and explore a possible partnership for a skating rink.

6. Adjournment

Beattie moved, Fulkerson seconded, to adjourn at 7:51p.m. Motion carried 4/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Murphy
City Clerk