

City of Excelsior  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

MINUTES  
EXCELSIOR CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Monday, March 17, 2014

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Mayor Gaylord called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Beattie, Caron, Fulkerson, Miller (arrived at 6:11 p.m.), and Mayor Gaylord

Absent: None

Also Present: Park and Recreation Commissioners Mullenbach, Norman, and Chair Wolfe

City Manager Luger, Finance Director Tumberg, Public Works Superintendent Wisdorf and City Clerk Johnson

**2. Agenda Approval**

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

**3. Joint Work Session with the Park and Recreation Commission**

Mayor Gaylord said that the Council met with the Park and Recreation Commission in 2013 regarding the Commission's goals for 2014. Commissioner Wolfe said the priorities of the Council differ from those of the Commission.

Mayor Gaylord said residential docks are a concern, and irrigation is a high priority. Wisdorf said that bid specifications for the irrigation system will be sent out, and the City anticipates to receive between four and five bids. Fulkerson asked if the plan is to draw water from the lake. Wisdorf said the plan is to have a combination of drawing from the lake and also a larger water line. Beattie asked how big of an area will the City be bidding. Wisdorf said the area to be bid will be from the ballfield to the sculpture, but not including the picnic area. Wisdorf also said there is not a large source of water unless we tap a water main. Wisdorf also stated that the bids should have an overall plan for irrigation and in three parts. Mayor Gaylord said the plan will change over time; Caron questioned what that means. Mayor Gaylord said the City will be able to move sprinkler heads as needs change and adapt.

Caron asked about the zebra mussel issue in water coming from the lake. Wisdorf said there is new technology that can be used to minimize disruption to the irrigation when it is running, along with end of season cleanup when it's removed and then reinstalled in the Spring.

Fulkerson asked if the City needs a permit from Lake Minnetonka Conservation District. Wisdorf doesn't believe so, but that the City may need a water permit from the Department of Natural Resources.

**3. Joint Work Session with the Park and Recreation Commission - *Continued***

Caron asked Tumberg to walk through the numbers provided, in regards to the Park and Recreation funds. Tumberg said the funds designated for charitable gambling projects come from youth hockey pull-tabs and go toward a designated project. Tumberg also stated that undesignated funds may also be used for any park improvements. Beattie asked if the Council has the discretion to change the designated project. Wisdorf believes the Council is able to change the designated project but said it cannot go into the general fund.

Caron asked if work is being done on cemetery improvements. Mayor Gaylord asked if the cemetery is what the City intends to work on right now. Wisdorf said he has ideas, but the cemetery is not currently being worked on and suggested to wait until the warranty period is through, once Metro Sewer is finished. Wisdorf said the warranty period is a minimum of two years away. Mayor Gaylord and Beattie agreed that cemetery improvements do not need to be done now. Caron said she would like to know what the history is behind it before the City shifts pull-tab funds. Wisdorf said staff gave a list to the Council in 2012 and that one of the items was the cemetery. Caron said if any money were to come from the State, it could make a difference. Beattie said State funding is a long-term process, possibly two to three years.

Mayor Gaylord said explore funding from the Three Rivers Park District should be removed from the goal list. Mayor Gaylord discussed the pyramid model that Three Rivers charges for park use and that the goal is to offset as much as they can. Mayor Gaylord suggested that Excelsior follow the same financial model for The Commons. Caron said this model reminds her of how Minneapolis views their park users and the way they charge vendors and others to use their parks. Caron asked Luger to contact the City of Minneapolis and learn about their model and how they finance it. Caron said that Minneapolis treats it like a business and that all of the revenue isn't generated from taxes alone. Caron said that food trucks are another thing worth asking the City of Minneapolis about. Mayor Gaylord will send out the Three Rivers pyramid to everyone.

Mayor Gaylord asked about the special event policy. Luger said she is working on the policy and that the Park and Recreation Commission will see something on this soon.

Mayor Gaylord asked about the skating rink. Norman said the Park and Recreation Commission does not have enough manpower and would like to find someone to manage projects that the Commission wants to take on. Wolfe said the big issue was the debate about where to put the skating rink and every idea they had was met with opposition. Mullenbach said a rink on the lake takes more maintenance than putting it on the ballfield, but it's too far away from the business district. Wolfe said the Chamber was pushing for it to draw more people into town. Wolfe said they used that as the criteria for where it would be located. Mayor Gaylord said the Council discussed sponsorship and whether or not Maynard's would be interested. Mullenbach said the condo association wouldn't allow lights, so the rink would only be open in that area until 4:30 p.m.

### 3. Joint Work Session with the Park and Recreation Commission - *Continued*

Miller said the difficulty is that we need the demand to justify a rink and the best solution is to have someone to partner with. Mullenbach said it's not a park issue if it's on the lake or in front of Maynard's. Caron said that if the rink is a difficult project, then we shouldn't put our effort into it. Wolfe questioned the motivation for having a rink and whether it is to attract people into town or just something for the residents to enjoy? Mayor Gaylord said the businesses would like a year-round destination, which would make sense to have it down by the Port. Wolfe said safety is an issue in that area. Beattie agreed that putting it on the lake would be difficult to maintain. Miller said it would need to be a third party. If it were on the ballfield, Miller asked if it would be for hockey or for pleasure. Mullenbach said a liner could be put on the infield and the City could purchase water.

Miller suggested that the Commission work on the details for it in 2014. Miller also said it's an amenity that people are asking for. Miller suggested the Commission work up a proposal for a recreational rink with a budget for staffing and a warming house. Mullenbach said a gas heater would be approximately \$1500 and that initial costs would be in the range of \$3500 to \$6500.

Mayor Gaylord asked if the rink would be supervised. Mullenbach said Shorewood doesn't supervise their rink but, if there were problems, it could be supervised by high school workers.

Norman said that the Commission really wants to support kids skating in the winter, but the Commission doesn't have the time to put into it. Miller recommends that the Commission set a direction to fine tune the estimate including staffing requirements, liner cost, lighting, hours of operation, months to be open, etc., and make a decision early enough this year.

Wolfe would like to see the rink on Water Street. Miller said it would be difficult to shut down the street for an extended period of time. Mayor Gaylord said there is some charm to the idea of a rink on Water Street. Miller said the reality is that we have traffic and need to route it around, though it would be a unique novelty. Beattie asked what period of time it would be, and Wolfe said it would be during the holiday period to draw people into town. Mayor Gaylord asked Wolfe if he talked to Laura Hotvet about it, but he said no. Wolfe said Commissioner Filippi talked to people who either loved it or hated it. Filippi told him that businesses want people to park in front of their store, which was the main concern. Luger said she received calls in November from businesses that were in support of it. Mayor Gaylord said the skating rink is the high priority.

Wolfe said of their concerns, the first is irrigation and the second is Concerts in the Park. Wolfe said the concerts need better promotion, as they only had a flyer in the Sun Sailor last Spring. Wolfe suggested a banner, social media, and articles in the paper this year which would get more people. Wolfe's main concern is that there needs to be an organization to continue this program into the future. Wolfe said if Filippi doesn't continue working on the concerts program next year, there is no organization to keep it going. Wolfe feels it is a burden on a Commission to run an event like this. Wolfe said there needs to be something similar to how Art on the

### **3. Joint Work Session with the Park and Recreation Commission - *Continued***

Lake is run every year. Mullenbach said it needs some part-time event coordination. Wolfe said one idea is to see if the Chamber is willing to take it on. Beattie said it was a good new format last year and asked if we have any ability to help at the staff level. Luger said there was a Special Event Coordinator position in the 2014 budget, but it was pulled. Luger said we are realizing we need this position, and it will be in the 2015 budget proposal. Luger said she has had dialogue with Shorewood and that we may be able to coordinate and share a position with the Shoreshore Center. Luger said she is also in contact with another city that put out an RFP for a similar position and will contact them to find out what type of proposals they received and, at the end of the season, how the position worked out for them. Luger said the RFP was exactly what Excelsior is dealing with. Miller said there are companies that provide services like this. Caron said there was a recommendation in the Sandal Marketing Study and the person would be paid on commission. Caron said we are better off with someone who is reporting only to Excelsior, with the City managing the position, versus if we share a person with Shorewood. Mullenbach asked about having an intern come in. Luger said we would need them from January through March to get special events going, which is a difficult time of year to recruit an intern.

Wolfe asked if this program could be absorbed into the Chamber's events with community volunteers involved. Miller said we would need to find a third party to get involved. Caron wants the revenue kept within the City, rather than the revenue going to another organization organizing it. Miller said we struggle to break even and we could get a percentage from having someone else handling it. Tumberg said we had an \$1,800.00 loss in 2013. Mayor Gaylord said he will be meeting with Laura Hotvet tomorrow and will discuss it with her.

Beattie asked about baseball for 2014. Mullenbach said Minnetonka Baseball wants to open up the concession stand and that Tommy's Trolley would staff it for Friday night games. Mullenbach said it will be in the minutes for Council review at their next meeting.

Wolfe said the main focus of the Nitpickers List is to try to take care of what the City has and increase the budget to help Wisdorf with more manpower. Wolfe said the City needs the ability to take care of what it has. Mayor Gaylord asked how much the Commission recommends the budget be increased. Wolfe asked if there is a maintenance schedule for The Commons. Wolfe said Wisdorf has finished some of the items on the Nitpickers List and we need to continue working on them.

Miller said that our Public Works Director has worked hard to get items done every year. Mullenbach agreed a lot of items got done this summer. Caron said that five or six years ago, a Public Works person was added for eight to nine months. Caron asked about how well that worked and how long ago it was. Wisdorf said this is the third or fourth year and that, in previous years, they were able to concentrate on these items. Wisdorf said that this year the main focus will be to get things started in The Commons and to maintain them. Tumberg said the last couple years it has been a seasonal position so that the position will not be subject to PERA. Tumberg

**3. Joint Work Session with the Park and Recreation Commission - *Continued***

said the position can only work up to six months, or no more than 180 days. Mayor Gaylord suggested an idea for part-time student volunteers and whether there is a way to put together a group of people to work. Wisdorf said that volunteer groups come and go. Miller said this is a good time for staff to look at whether additional staff needs to be added for maintenance of The Commons. Caron agrees that we don't have enough staff to get to everything and would support taking a look at that. Mayor Gaylord said that is the direction. Fulkerson thanked the Park and Recreation Commissioners for their hard work.

**4. Adjournment**

Caron moved, Beattie seconded, to adjourn at 7:04 p.m. Motion carried 5/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Johnson  
City Clerk