

North Branch City Council

Work Session

Date of Meeting: January 15, 2015

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

Also Present: City Administrator Konrad and Police Chief Meyer

I. Call To Order

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

II. Planning Staffing

Konrad explained that Roberts is at the County 20 hours a week and in the City of North Branch 20 hours per week. During the budget process the Council budgeted to continue with the process but Council asked to look at planning staffing in November and, at that time, it was realized the Contract had a hard end date of December 31, 2014. The Council and the County has extended the Contract for 90 days to allow time to review planning staffing. Konrad outlined various options for planning staffing for discussion. Konrad expressed concern with using a consultant as the timing of someone needing assistance usually doesn't coincide with when the consultant is available. Furman asked if it is possible to do a combined EDA/Community Development Director. Konrad said that she would love to see a full time planner/EDA person but the budget does not exist to accommodate that unless other cuts are made. Furman asked if there is any money in the contingency fund. Konrad indicated that if there is any left that covers overs and unders in other funds. Konrad indicated she and Finance Director Hill could sit down and discuss options to fund a planner/EDA person. Furman said that the debt for ESSBY is finally leveling off and it's more manageable by the end of this year some property can be sold and she would like to get someone that can cover both jobs. Blomquist would love to work something out with an EDA/planner. She is concerned about the fact that the contract was only extended through the end of March and would like to consider extending this contract through the end of December, 2015. Hagen-Kennedy would like to extend the contract through the end of December 2015 and allow time to look into this further and she is concerned about a new person when development is just beginning to restart. Borchardt would prefer option 2 because housing starts are continuing to increase and there are plats coming in. She likes the idea of looking at a planner/EDA person for 2016. Konrad suggested getting the new person on board and have them work with Roberts for a short time to transition the new person. Furman said she would be willing to go with a new person coming on in September to allow enough time to get the new person up to speed. Blomquist would be willing to see how the process goes along. Staff will look at the financial impact and bring information back at the next work session to explore bringing on a Community Development Director in late 2015.

III. Rush Line Survey

Blomquist provided an overview of the Rush Line Survey. Council discussed the proposed bus routes.

IV. Driver Awareness Program

Chief Meyer outlined the Driver Awareness Program which allows folks issued tickets to go through the course and have their citation voided. The program was suspended because of litigation going on throughout the state on the program. Chief Meyer suggested continued suspension until the legalities are settled.

V. Administrative Citation Program

Chief Meyer indicated that Council asked this to be brought back for discussion. This program is written in law and is a cost effective alternative for fines. Standard fine amount is \$120 plus surcharges and it goes on your record where the administrative fine is \$60. These citations would be for equipment and minor speed infractions. Council was interested in proceeding with the program. Konrad noted that this requires formal Council approval.

VI. Awards Program

Chief Meyer asked in 2014 to approve an awards program but there was concern about who should make up the Awards Committee. He then explained that the purpose is to recognize outstanding performance for department members and citizens. Hagen-Kennedy would like to make sure that Councilmember Canada is part of that committee as he has a lot of experience in that. Furman suggested the Mayor and Canada participate on the Committee.

Konrad indicated that quotes are being gathered for the squad car purchases and plan to have that to look at by the Council meeting. Hagen-Kennedy said she would like to purchase from the local dealer if the price is comparable.

Motion by Furman, seconded by Canada to adjourn.

Adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bridgitte Konrad, City Administrator

jrl/TOSS