

City Council Special Meeting Minutes  
January 26, 2018

Present: Kersten Conley, Jim Godfrey, Lisa Iverson, Joe Morin, and Marlys Palmer.

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Caroline Moe and Lynda Woulfe

**Call to Order**

Palmer called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm. Palmer stated the purpose of the special meeting is to conduct strategic planning and review City Council goals and action steps.

**Review of Council Goals Adopted in 2017**

Woulfe conducted a review of the Council's previously adopted goals and noted the following Year 1 goals were accomplished:

**Ice Sheet Project**

- 👍 Finished up ice sheet project
- 👍 Finalized grade around rinks
- 👍 Sew grass seed, landscape around rinks
- 👍 Move garage to site
- 👍 Install hockey lines (vinyl lines were put on instead)
- 👍 Pour pads for bleachers and move on a seasonal basis to site
- 👍 Add railings to bleachers
- 👍 Create the opportunity for broomball and hockey leagues.
- 👍 Hire a seasonal worker for ice maintenance after hours and on weekends

**City Park**

- 👍 Fix areas of ongoing erosion throughout the Park
- 👍 Install a sprinkler system in high traffic areas
- 👍 Replace existing light poles with poles leftover from street project
- 👍 Develop user fee policy for all city fields and the refrigerated rinks
- 👍 Formulate a plan for scheduling fields and refrigerated ice rink time.

**Improved Communications / Communications Plan**

- 👍 Contract with Balancing Act
- 👍 Promote daily Facebook communication
- 👍 Video that showcases Cambridge parks, downtown, etc.
- 👍 Video on each department
- 👍 Information out on Emergency Management Notifications
- 👍 Live stream concerts in the park and maybe the Snowflake Parade
- 👍 City Council adopted a Communications Plan to guide future efforts

## **Downtown Revitalization**

- ☞ Grant program for improvements to:
  - Exterior
  - Lighting
  - Signage
  - Tuck-pointing
  - Windows, etc.
- ☞ Support Discover Downtown Committee efforts with staff time and potential funding (**on-going**)

## **Sell MnDOT Building –explore new police garage facility**

- ☞ Seek appraisal of MnDOT Building
- ☞ Determine whether to sell to Isanti County or on open market
- ☞ Use build by design to determine if building a new police garage is feasible. All these tasks were done, but it was decided not to build a new structure.

Councilmembers were pleased with the goals accomplished and discussed items to update work goals.

Moe provided an update on 2017 financial results. Moe stated after receiving the final tax settlement for 2017 and posting the majority of expenditures for 2017, the general fund ended the year with an increase of approximately \$490,000. Moe indicated the positive results are due to revenues exceeding the most recent amended budget by \$280,000 (revenue increase were \$100,000 more in tax collections than budgeted and \$120,000 more in license/permits fees)and expenditures being under budget by \$260,000.

Moe cautioned Council this creates a “one-time” excess that Council may determine how to use. Recommended one-time uses were prefunding debt payments and capital projects to reduce levy requirements in the future.

After considerable discussion Councilmember agreed by consensus to direct staff to prepare a budget amendment utilizing \$450,000 for future City Hall debt reduction over the period of the next three years (\$150,000 per year).

Moe also indicated that the final bottom line at Northbound Liquor is estimated to be \$75,000 more net income. Councilmembers discussed projects and potential investments that could be made in the community with these funds. After considerable discussion, the Council by consensus agreed to the following:

- Completing Parks Commission recommendations of Items 1, 2, and 4 which are:
  - Installing a Bankshot court at Brown Park (\$30,000)
  - 3 hole disc golf at Pioneer Park (\$1,000)
  - Swing Set at Central Green (\$3,000)

- Flower basket program for the downtown area (\$17,000)
- Creation of and advertising support for a One Day Arts Festival for downtown (\$3,500)
- Installation of directional signage throughout the community to point out parks, library, stores, public parking, etc. (estimate \$10,000)
- Replace worn banners (estimate \$4,500)

Councilmembers then discussed options for an additional staff position to assist the City Administrator with projects and a transition plan to provide continuity when Woulfe retires. Council reviewed the option of an Assistant City Administrator versus an Administrative Assistant. Duties that could be assigned to the position are:

- Licensing – liquor, tobacco, pawnbrokers, fireworks, peddlers/solicitors, etc.
- Social Media and Communications – this person would be responsible for the City’s website, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. Currently, Carri Levitski is doing this but this limits her ability to focus on Code Enforcement, sign permits, and zoning code questions. Last year, I asked Marcia for a written plan on focusing Carri’s work to effectively deal with code enforcement because I felt it was falling through the cracks with the parks programming work that Carri was doing. Attached is a memorandum prepared by Marcia on this subject and her suggestion to create a different position to handle these items.
- There is so much more we can do in this area if we just have a dedicated person doing it. Lavell was an amazing person that worked for us over the summer, but without his availability we would never have been able to put together the videos we did. There is no money budgeted for a summer intern.
- Assist with Elections – right now I have no backup for election activity. With 2018 being an election year, it would be an ideal time to train an Assistant City Administrator on the election schedule and duties.
- Labor negotiations – conduct background research on contract language and assisting the Administrator negotiations. This requires a confidential person.
- Assist with property acquisitions for Highway 95 right of way and potential Library project. If the City is successful in getting state or federal dollars for the Highway 95 project, it will increase the time demands on the City Administrator to finish off right of way acquisitions and the final acquisitions will be much more intense than the few houses and properties we have purchased to date. We will most likely end up in eminent domain with Casey’s and Becklin property.

- Create additional events programming which will build social capital with our citizens. We could tackle a summer arts festival, work on grants for downtown art walk, work on grants for building murals, etc.

Woulfe stated the pros and cons of creating an Assistant City Administrator position were:

Pros	Cons
<p>Allows for successful transition planning and continuity of mission/vision. This position can assume the City Administrator position upon the incumbent's retirement.</p> <p>This is similar to how the City planned for Steve Wegwerth's retirement. Prior to Steve's retirement, Lucas was promoted to Assistant Public Works Director and learned "the ropes" of Steve's public works tasks.</p>	<p>Cost. This is an increase in tax levy. However, if the sales tax question passes there will be some relief on the property tax levy with the removal of some of the street debt service.</p>
<p>Allows code enforcement work to be done as planned by City Council and provides time for them to work on parks programming which was one of Council's long-term goals.</p>	
<p>Provides assurances that our communication efforts will continue on a proactive basis. Improved communication ensures the City's message is out to our residents and there is not a void left for other pages to attempt to fill with misinformation.</p>	
<p>If the sales tax question does pass, the Administrator will need to spend a significant amount of time overseeing the Library's design and construction. Having the Assistant position makes it substantially easier to have them do the day to day administrative tasks so the Administrator can focus on the larger projects. This would go for Highway 95 reconstruction as well.</p>	

Costs (salaries and benefits) were shared for both positions. After considerable discussion, Councilmembers asked staff to prepare a job description for an Assistant City Administrator position and a present a plan on how to fund the position.

Councilmembers then expressed a desire to meet with the Library Task Force to discuss the library project and whether the downtown location was still desired by the Task Force.

Councilmembers felt it would be more prudent to build on the Heritage Greens site because it would be less costly. Councilmembers agreed to meet with the Library Task Force on Monday, February 26 at 4:00 pm.

Councilmembers then discussed the local options sales tax referendum and how to divide the proceeds among the three projects put on the ballot question. Woulfe stated the ballot question is ““Do you approve a one-half (.005) percent local option sales tax to fund the construction of a new Cambridge Public Library and East Central Regional Library Headquarters, the City’s street improvement program, and outdoor park development through calendar year 2043?”

Woulfe presented the following options on the division of sales tax proceeds:

<b>Sales Tax Generated and Projected Division of Proceeds</b>	
<b>20 year debt repayment cycle</b>	
\$210,130,063 x .005 = 1,050,650.00	1,050,650
Debt Service Payment for Library 20 years	-572,000
Street Levy Debt	-400,000
Amount left for Park Improvements	78,650

### **25 year debt repayment cycle**

<b>Sales Tax Generated</b>	
\$210,130,063 x .005 = 1,050,650.00	1,050,650
Debt Service Payment for Library 25 years	-505,000
Street Levy Debt	-400,000
Amount left for Park Improvements	145,650

<b>Sales Tax Generated</b>	
\$210,130,063 x .005 = 1,050,650.00	1,050,650
Debt Service Payment for Library 25 years	-505,000
Street Levy Debt	-500,000
Amount left for Park Improvements	45,650

Woulfe stated the most important item to fund is the debt service payment for the library construction bond that will be issued. After the debt service payment, the Council has discretion on how to divide the proceeds. All councilmembers felt it was important to dedicate funds towards street improvement debt service to reduce pressure on the levy.

Councilmembers also felt a large commitment to parks improvement and accomplishing the goals identified by the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Commission.

After considerable discussion on dividing the sales tax proceeds for the three items Councilmembers agreed by unanimous consent to issue a 20 year bond for the library and divide the sales tax proceeds as follows:

<b>20 year debt repayment cycle</b>	
$\$210,130,063 \times .005 = 1,050,650.00$	1,050,650
Debt Service Payment for Library 20 years	-572,000
Street Levy Debt	-375,000
Amount left for Park Improvements	103,650

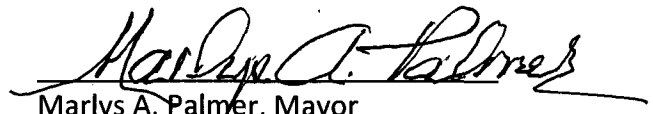
if the sales tax referendum passes in November 2018.

**Next Goal Setting Meeting**

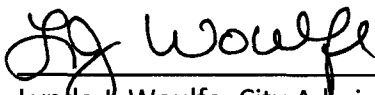
March 27 at 3:30 pm

**Adjournment**

Being no further business before the City Council, Godfrey moved, seconded by Conley, to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:47 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

  
Marlys A. Palmer, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Lynda J. Woulfe, City Administrator