

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION
Monday, April 16, 2018

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Worksession of the City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska was conducted in the Second Floor Conference Room of City Hall, 220 N. Hastings Avenue, on April 16, 2018.

The Worksession was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Council President John Harrington with the following members present: Paul Hamelink, Phil Odom, Scott Snell, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Absent: Sarah Hoops.

Others present: Mayor Corey Stutte, Joe Patterson, Kent Gilbert, Dave Ptak, Dave Wacker, Troy Vorderstrasse, Jeff Hassenstab, Brian Hessler, Kevin Johnson, Don Threewitt, Curt Smith.

PUBLIC NOTICE - Official Notice of the Worksession was published in the Hastings Tribune on Friday, April 13, 2018. Pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statute Section 84-1412, the public is advised that a copy of today's agenda and all reproducible written material which will be discussed at today's meeting is available. Also, a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted and accessible to members of the public.

Discussion of fireworks selling and discharge times.

Councilmember Beahm reviewed with Council their previous discussion of fireworks sales and discharge. She stated that they had talked about taking a day off the sale and discharge of fireworks and beginning sale and discharge at 10:00 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m. prior to July 3rd and 4th.

Dave Ptak, City Attorney, made the suggestion to only extended hours on July 4th and not have two days with extended hours.

Councilmember Eley indicated he wouldn't mind seeing the 9:00 a.m. start time moved up to 10:00 a.m. or even 11:00 a.m.

Councilmember Hamelink stated he had no strong feelings either way and had no objections to moving the time up to 11:00 a.m. He did express a concern regarding enforcement.

Mayor Stutte questioned how the fireworks code is enforced.

Kent Gilbert, Fire Chief, stated it is complaint driven with a call to the Police Department.

Mr. Ptak indicated that an officer has to witness the code infraction in order to take someone to court and often times, neighbors don't want to press charges.

Councilmember Odom stated that every year since we instituted the sale of fireworks we've had these discussions. He indicated he didn't disagree with any of the comments but he didn't want to waste police time trying to enforce too strict of codes. He said he felt it was just one of those things you are always going to have complaints about.

Chief Gilbert explained to Council that in the past they added a day to insure that the sales time included two weekends.

It was the consensus of the Council to change the permissible times fireworks may be sold

and/or ignited to June 28th to July 2nd: 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and July 3rd and 4th: 10:00 a.m. to midnight.

Chief Gilbert brought up the issue of special fireworks requests and those being a little more defined for staff and that he wanted to get the Council's feel on the issuing of the special permit for fireworks. He stated that with the permit approved by the Fire Chief, fireworks can be shot off throughout the year. He stated that the Fire Department felt the fewer special fireworks permits issued the better.

Discussion was had by Council regarding the special fireworks permits, organizations that were looking to perhaps ask for a permit and complaints in the areas where special fireworks permits are allowed.

Councilmember Skutnik suggested reviewing fireworks fees at budget time.

Mr. Ptak suggested having a fee for special fireworks permits and that it may make the decision to acquire one a harder choice if there is a cost.

Discussion of 42nd Street Project.

Joe Patterson, City Administrator, told Council it is time to come to some kind of closure regarding if they want to move forward with the 42nd Street project. He indicated he has discussed with Don Threewitt, Development Services Director, looking at future planning elements for the area. He said the staff needs direction on how the Council wishes them to proceed. Mr. Patterson also commented on the paving district and whether it would pass, about other possible funding sources (state) and the fact that the property is not in the City limits yet and would have to be annexed.

Mayor Stutte stated that they need to be smart about the way they go about doing this when it comes to use of taxpayer money. He commented they need to figure out what they want the area to be. He indicated that this is what he wants Mr. Threewitt to focus on with the help of the City Engineer. He said he wanted them to look at the needs and costs involved.

Mr. Patterson asked about a traffic study or studies done in the past.

Dave Wacker, City Engineer, stated that a traffic count had been done but counters could be set up again.

Councilmember Harrington asked if annexation needed to happen first.

Mr. Patterson stated he felt it was practical to look at annexation but it doesn't have to be done to create a paving district.

Mr. Ptak brought up the agriculture greenbelt deferment of paving payments and the fact that if a paving district was defeated, it would be two years before you could go back and try to create a paving district again unless you pay for it through general obligation.

Councilmember Odom agreed that they shouldn't rush into anything and make sure they get it right. He stated he wasn't really in favor of anything less than three lanes and street lights.

Mayor Stutte expressed that they need to look at what makes good planning sense and it needs to align with property owners' plans.

Councilmember Hamelink indicated that north Hastings is growing and we need to keep working forward.

Councilmember Odom commented that 42nd Street to the east will develop in the future and that the whole area needs to be looked at from a planning perspective.

Moved by Ginny Skutnik seconded by Butch Eley to go into closed session at 6:08 p.m. for the discussion of personnel and litigation. Roll Call: Ayes: John Harrington, Paul Hamelink, Phil Odom, Scott Snell, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Sarah Hoops. The motion carried.

Moved by Ginny Skutnik seconded by Jeniffer Beahm to resume open session at 6:30 p.m. Roll Call: Ayes: John Harrington, Paul Hamelink, Phil Odom, Scott Snell, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Sarah Hoops. The motion carried.

Moved by Ginny Skutnik seconded by Butch Eley there being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting be adjourned at 6:30 p.m. Roll Call: Ayes: John Harrington, Paul Hamelink, Phil Odom, Scott Snell, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Sarah Hoops. The motion carried.