

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA  
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION  
Monday, November 16, 2020

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Worksession of the City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska was conducted in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 220 N. Hastings Avenue, on November 16, 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Council President Paul Hamelink with the following members present: Matt Fong, Paul Hamelink, Chuck Rosenberg, Scott Snell, Ted Schroeder, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Butch Eley.

City Officials Present: Mayor Corey Stutte, David Ptak, Clint Schukei, Amy Hafer, Becky Matticks, Troy Vorderstrasse, Erik Nielsen, Adam Story, Jeff Hassenstab, Kevin Johnson

Others Present: Jennie Theesen

Moved by Ginny Skutnik seconded by Chuck Rosenberg to adopt the current agenda for the November 16, 2020 Worksession. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Paul Hamelink, Chuck Rosenberg, Scott Snell, Ted Schroeder, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Butch Eley. The motion carried.

Official Notice of the Worksession was published in the Hastings Tribune on Friday, November 13, 2020. 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.

**Presentation of Heartland Pet Connection Annual Report.**

Jennie Theesen, Shelter Manager at Heartland Pet Connection, presented their annual report *(Attached and made part of original minutes.)* to Councilmembers. She stated that the Heartland Pet Connection has completed its 16th year serving Hastings and the surrounding areas and providing healthy animals to the community is very important to them. Ms. Theesen spoke to Council about upgrades that have been completed including mobile cat condos, purchase of a power washer for the dog kennel area and adding a no-slip sealer to the dog kennel floor. She also told Council about working with NBC Television Network, VIP Pet and Petco to participate in the "Clear the Shelter Event" in which it was their 4th year of participation in the nationwide event. She reviewed shelter statistics with the Council. Council President Hamelink thanked Heartland Pet Connection for all they do. Councilmember Beahm asked how COVID has affected what they do. Ms. Theesen indicated in the beginning they closed to public and pets could be seen by appointment only but now they are back open to the public. Councilmember Fong asked about the number of staff. Ms. Theesen stated they have 25 volunteers and nine staff members.

**Presentation of Hastings Public Library Annual Report.**

Amy Hafer, Library Director, reviewed with Council the Library Annual Report *(Attached and made part of original minutes.)* and stated it has been a challenging year. She indicated that staff's focus was shifted to online services. She indicated they had a great online summer reading program and thanked Council for their support of Library staff. She told Council staff had to become very creative. Ms. Hafer talked about some of the virtual programs for teens, little

ones, adult cooking and building projects that people were watching virtually. She indicated they are in this for the long haul and are continually looking at what other libraries are doing and seeing what is out there and what is possible. She told Council the lockers for book checkout are working out well but they may have to look at acquiring additional lockers. Ms. Hafer stated in the future they may look into how they can allow appointments for computer use as they are looking at how they can fill that need right now. Councilmember Hamelink stated he appreciated their ongoing efforts.

### **Presentation of Hastings Museum Annual Report.**

Becky Matticks, Hastings Museum Director, highlighted numbers from the Hastings Museum Annual Report (*Attached and made part of original minutes.*) She spoke about the 9,500 artifact records that were updated which was nearly double from the prior year. She explained that many of the shows and programs numbers are down and that is due to most of what they do is in the building. She indicated they did, however, put together some outdoor programs like scavenger hunts and indicated they had 3,246 YouTube video views whereas they had none last year and hours of online programing increased as well. Ms. Matticks stated they are currently in fundraising mode. Councilmember Snell thanked the Museum staff for all they do. Councilmember Skutnik talked about the increase in grant dollars and commended the Museum for their efforts. Councilmember Rosenberg asked about the Naval Ammunition Depot display. Ms. Matticks stated they are in the process of figuring out where to located it and the cost and indicated it is three or four years down the road before they will be able to get started. Councilmember Beahm stated she understood how tough the online programing can be. Ms. Matticks indicated that memberships are down yet the community has still been very supportive of the Museum.

### **COVID-19 discussion.**

Mayor Corey Stutte reviewed with Council the South Heartland District Health Department data sheet and indicated the numbers are not good and mentioned the 76% of inpatients that are COVID positive. He stated they have asked that people wear masks, wash their hands, social distance and some people are not necessarily complying on their own. He indicated he has talked to Kearney and Grand Island and they are looking at moving forward with a mask policy and feel we should be consistent across the tri-cities. Grand Island will consider a policy on November 24th and Kearney will consider a policy on November 17th. Mayor Stutte stated he would like to put a mask policy on the agenda for Monday night. This is about keeping the hospital capacity where it needs to be and keeping first responders safe. He said they are not shutting anything down and he felt this is a more positive step to create a mask policy. He reminded everyone to wear your masks.

Dave Ptak, City Administrator, told Council that currently 30 employees are either quarantined or have tested positive for COVID 19 and the uptick is real. He stated this is an important thing to consider and it is a small price to pay to protect everyone. Mr. Ptak reviewed with Council the ordinance on a mask policy. He indicated this is an attempt to help flatten the curve and it will be consistent with Kearney and Grand Island. He told Council it will be on the agenda on Monday and under State Statute 16-405 doesn't have to wait the 15 days to take effect, it will take effect three days after it is adopted and the first publication would occur. Councilmember Rosenberg questioned the sunset date. Mr. Ptak indicated they were staying consistent with Grand Island and Kearney. Councilmember Hamelink indicated he supported the ordinance but it will be controversial and may be difficult to enforce. He went on to say we have to be smart, wash hands, do what is sensible and what is right and this is. Mr. Ptak asked that the word policy be used instead of mandate and stated it is not so much about enforcement and writing tickets as it is about education and seeking voluntary compliance and our concern for our fellow

man. Councilmember Hamelink spoke about the sunset date and indicated he was more comfortable with 60 days instead of 90 days. Councilmember Skutnik stated as long as it can be revisited, she'd like to leave the sunset clause as it is. Councilmember Fong agreed also with leaving it the way it was currently written.

Moved by Ginny Skutnik seconded by Scott Snell to go into closed session at 6:15 p.m. for the discussion of litigation. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Paul Hamelink, Chuck Rosenberg, Scott Snell, Ted Schroeder, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Butch Eley. The motion carried.

Moved by Matt Fong seconded by Ginny Skutnik to resume open session at 6:36 p.m. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Paul Hamelink, Chuck Rosenberg, Scott Snell, Ted Schroeder, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Butch Eley. The motion carried.

Moved by Ginny Skutnik seconded by Jeniffer Beahm there being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting be adjourned at 6:36 p.m. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Paul Hamelink, Chuck Rosenberg, Scott Snell, Ted Schroeder, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Butch Eley. The motion carried.