

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION
Monday, February 21, 2022

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Worksession Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska was conducted in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 220 N. Hastings Avenue, on February 21, 2022.

The Worksession Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Council President Ginny Skutnik with the following members present: Butch Eley, Chuck Rosenberg, Shawn Hartmann, Matt Fong, Joy Huffaker, Jeniffer Beahm. Absent: Ted Schroeder.

City Officials Present: Mayor Corey Stutte, David Ptak, Clint Schukei, Adam Story, Brad Starling, Erik Nielsen, Kevin Johnson, Roger Nash, Jeff Hassenstab, Lee Vrooman, Teresa Kreutzer-Hodson, Lisa Parnell-Rowe, Brian Hurskainen.

Others Present: Michael Krings, HEDC Director.

Moved by Butch Eley seconded by Shawn Hartmann to adopt the current agenda for the February 21, 2022 City Council Worksession. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Chuck Rosenberg, Joy Huffaker, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Ted Schroeder. The motion carried.

Official notice of the Worksession was published in the Hastings Tribune on Friday, February 18, 2022. 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.

HEDC update on economic development projects.

Michael Krings, Hastings Economic Development Corporation (HEDC) Director, felt this was a good opportunity to refresh the Council on who HEDC is and what they do. He indicated their main goal is to recruit and retain businesses. He told Council they have three main objectives: Property Development - buy properties and put in the infrastructure and ready them for purchase by a developer, match properties to the needs of companies looking to come into the community, allow response to new companies' Requests For Proposals (RFP) and offer incentives, and besides owning property, connecting with private owners also. Current projects are North Park Commons and the Industrial Park North. Mr. Krings indicated that as far as available property goes, they are understocked as a community and are at the point where they need to think about what the next phase is. Workforce Development - ever changing in the sense that it is becoming more and more dire, there are 800 open positions in our community, HEDC focuses on Career Pathways programs, entrepreneurship, student engagement and keeping students here after graduation, and having available housing stock. Current projects are developing an entrepreneurship center, continuing student engagement, and a community marketing campaign to be one collective voice. Serving as Liaison - connecting people, state funding programs, utilities, revolving loan program, and connecting with private investors. Current projects are Heartwell Renewable and four expansion projects.

Councilmember Rosenberg asked about the closing of Eaton. Mr. Krings stated that the workforce is not an issue as other companies are needing staff and as far as the building, they have people interested. Councilmember Rosenberg asked if they were trying to recruit industry. Mr. Krings stated they were.

Councilmember Fong asked about the street lights at North Park Commons. Mr. Krings stated there are a few and more will be going up.

Discussion of possible two-way streets in downtown Hastings.

Dave Ptak, City Administrator, stated he received an email from Chuck Shoemaker asking if now was the time to look at one-way streets and traffic movement. He stated it has also been discussed in relation to quiet crossings and the parking and transportation study. A copy of the 2005 Central Business District One-Way/Two-Way Street Conversion Traffic Study was passed out and Mr. Ptak indicated it would have to be updated if the Council wished to move forward.

Lee Vrooman, City Engineering, indicated that some of the stuff downtown has changed and number counts of vehicles would need to be revisited. He told Council there were two options, with just changing the north/south streets to two-way at a cost of around \$400,000 or changing everything to two-way at a cost of around \$900,000. He stated he felt they need to marry conversion of streets up with the transportation and parking study. Councilmember Rosenberg asked if they had reached out to downtown merchants.

Mr. Ptak indicated they will have to reach out to the Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA) as well as the Business Improvement District (BID) if this is something the Council wishes to move forward on. He stated that quiet crossings were not considered in the 2005 study. He told the Council there is no money in the budget now to update the 2005 study but they can make it a budget item for next year.

Councilmember Skutnik asked if parking lots will be addressed in the study. Lisa Parnell-Rowe, Development Services Director, indicated the study will look at the multi-purposing of the parking lot north of city hall.

Councilmember Fong asked about a timeline of when the transportation and parking study would come before Council. Ms. Parnell-Rowe indicated it would come to a worksession eventually, hopefully within the next couple of months. Mayor Stutte added that in regard to the quiet crossings, they want to get as much completed this budget year as possible, but it is always subject to BNSF and contractor availability. Mr. Vrooman also mentioned that it won't be a quiet zone until all the crossings are complete.

Discussion of having "Town Hall" discussions to get public input on risks, hazards and level of service that the City of Hastings Fire and Rescue provides.

Brad Starling, Fire Chief, stated that this came about because we don't have a Standards of Cover document for Hastings Fire and Rescue. The Novak Group did a study and recommended the establishment of service level standards for services provided within the city limits. He indicated that in 2021-22, Hastings Fire and Rescue established a goal to provide exceptional all-hazards service delivery commensurate with national standards and community expectations. Mr. Starling told Council that part of the process is having these meetings with the community to educate, inform and get their feedback on what they would like to see Hastings Fire and Rescue be. He stated that the main two objectives are to engage the community and get the information and establish a Standards of Cover document and then start comparing annual performance based on standards. In the meetings with the public, he indicated they wanted to educate the public on current services as well as the nationally recognized standards and gather feedback from the community and their service priorities and areas of concern. He said the timeline was to start having meetings in late April or early May with all the meetings being completed by July 1st and having at least one meeting in each ward.

He asked Council for their feedback and approval to move forward. Council was in favor of proceeding with the meetings.

Moved by Shawn Hartmann seconded by Chuck Rosenberg to go into closed session at 6:07 p.m. for discussion of negotiations, litigation and personnel. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Chuck Rosenberg, Joy Huffaker, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Ted Schroeder. The motion carried.

Moved by Shawn Hartmann seconded by Joy Huffaker to resume open session at 7:20 p.m. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Chuck Rosenberg, Joy Huffaker, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Ted Schroeder. The motion carried.

Moved by Matt Fong seconded by Chuck Rosenberg there being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting be adjourned at 7:21 p.m. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Chuck Rosenberg, Joy Huffaker, Butch Eley, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Ted Schroeder. The motion carried.