

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION
Monday, June 20, 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 June 20, 2022.

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

The following City Officials were present: Interim City Administrator, Kevin Johnson; City Attorney, Clint Schukei; City Clerk, Kimberly Jacobitz; Fire Chief, Brad Starling; Fire Marshal, Anthony Murphy; Parks & Recreation Director, Jeff Hassenstab; Finance Director, Roger Nash; Information Technology Director, Erik Nielsen; IT, Nathan Fritzler; Development Services Director, Lisa Parnell-Rowe; Director of Engineering, Lee Vrooman; Director of Human Resources, Lori Hartman; Engineering, Tara Ogren; Museum Director, Teresa Kreutzer-Hodson.

Council President Ginny Skutnik led the group in recital of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

Moved by Ted Schroeder seconded by Matt Fong to adopt current agenda for Council Worksession June 20, 2022. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Chuck Rosenberg, Joy Huffaker, Ted Schroeder, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Butch Eley. The motion carried.

PUBLIC NOTICE - Official Notice of the Worksession was published in the Hastings Tribune on Friday, June 17, 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.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Discussion of Coworking and Incubator Space Project. (Maggie Esch)

Maggie Esch, Central Community College, talked specifically about a project that has been in the works for approximately five years. The project is "Coworking & Incubator Space". Partners on the project are: Central Community College Entrepreneurship Center, Central Community College Foundation, Hastings Economic Development Corporation, Community Redevelopment Authority, and Hastings College. This is a hub for entrepreneurs, innovators, and creators located in Downtown Hastings.

Coworking is a space where several workers from different companies share an office space and basic amenities. Incubator provides a space that helps new and startup companies develop by providing services like business coaching or office space. This makes sense to have these under one roof. We are moving forward with space in the community and are in the funding phase. This will be a non-profit entity, and will provide services to the community. The location will be in the Stein Building, 620 West 2nd Street. They offer a few different membership levels: Coworking, Micro-office, and Production Studio Pass. She reviewed amenities to be offered in the space. We do not want this space to compete with other spaces in our community. Memberships are very affordable rates. The minimum office space rental is six months, maximum is three years. We want to have them grow out of the space and move into other spaces in the community.

Maggie presented projected income levels and startup costs. This is a large project in our community and we need to do it right the first time. Startup costs are for the first level, totaling \$1 million. She reviewed operational expenses, which are estimated at \$43, 296.

They are asking for \$300,000 from the City of Hastings to go towards the construction of the Builder District. She stated this will be a space designed to build people, build businesses, and build our community.

Mayor Stutte stated the council will discuss proposals for ARPA money on Sunday, June 26th, at the City Council Retreat.

2. Update on City Administrator search.

Corey stated over the past few weeks, we have seen a lot of information that shows that we have a culture problem at the City of Hastings. We want to focus on working together to change the issues we have and move the city forward. We have an opportunity to move the culture forward, not only for our community, but for our employees. We look forward to working on this over the next few months. Baker-Tilly has been contracted to find the new City Administrator. We hope to come together to find the best City Administrator for the community.

Lori Hartman reported that Baker-Tilly is a public sector recruitment firm. They have been doing public sector executive recruitment for 30 years, and are highly experienced in this area. They use data and analytics, and assessment tools to focus on the best fit for leadership. They have started reaching out to members of City Council to see what they consider important to the city. They will create a brochure specialized for the city. They will embark on a nation-wide, state-wide, and local level campaign for this position. The advertisement will be posted for one month. They will then do candidate questionnaires. All applicants will complete a video interview, then they will narrow down the group. They will then give a management assessment. They conduct background checks, academic verification, and reference checks at the appropriate time. Top candidates will be interviewed.

The timeline for filling the position is expected to be four months. They have recruited in multiple states, communities varying in sizes from 8,000 up to 488,000. Staff leadership will be involved in the process and what is needed in this position. There is also a possible community survey on leadership traits that are valuable.

3. Update on Delegated Authority and changes to City Code Chapter 13, Fire Protection.

Kevin Johnson stated the intent of the next two items is to inform council about the collaborative efforts being made by Fire, Development Services, and Engineering staff.

Anthony Murphy stated that several of the council have attended various public education events held by staff. Anthony explained some of the differences between the current commercial development process compared to if we were to have delegated authority. Based on feedback from the last meeting, the primary change that was made was fees for a scalable approach, to more adequately address repeat offenders.

We had opportunities to discuss some of the changes. We met with a group from the chamber and discussed some of the changes with delegated authority. It mostly affects commercial developers. We had a lengthy meeting at the library with our public stakeholders. Some of the feedback was concerned about the amount of fees, some said we need to align with other cities and charge more. We have not had additional feedback outside of stakeholder meetings. We have had great opportunities and nothing has been addressed to change anything, outside of the fees for offenses.

Anthony told of multiple cities in Nebraska who have delegated authority. He is concerned about businesses opening up without inspections. We want to become more developer friendly, utilizing delegated authority. The question was asked if opening up businesses that don't have occupancy permits is our fault or the businesses? Enforcement falls to Development Services and Fire. Those departments try to work with those businesses. It is about safety.

Mayor Stutte stated that we need to have conversations with developers and contractors and make a more concerted effort to talk to them. Kevin Johnson stated that all feedback from meetings needs to be brought back to staff. If we have conversations, we owe it to departments to get that information back to them. We don't need generalities, staff need specifics on issues. If messages are too general, they cannot do anything about it. We prefer small sessions to get something accomplished. We talked about taking time to phase in changes. We will work on this.

Brad Starling stated that Delegated Authority allows for a single point of contact and less confusion. The conversation about delegated authority came from records in 2019 when issues with developers on delays from the state and confusion with city and state codes were brought up to staff. This authority does not add new codes, it only gives local authority the delegation from the state to enforce the state code already in place and the city code that is already in place. We were asked if this could be a revenue neutral for the city, so that is what we put together. We can always look at the fee structure. Our current employee count cannot support additional work for a Delegated Authority. There is a lot that goes on in Fire Prevention. If we choose not to do delegated authority, we still have state minimum fees that go with that fee structure. Some of the code changes would streamline the process, but the code is still there and enforceable as it sits currently.

4. Update on changes to City Code Chapters 42, Stormwater Management and 38, Subdivisions.

Lisa Parnell-Rowe reported this contains two different issues, but they tend to get blurred together because they are related to development. Developers were invited to a meeting, and also engineers. We have renewal of an M4 permit that needs to be done every July. We can present changes tonight, or come back at another worksession. Lisa would like to go over the redlined version and explain why those changes are requested. This item will be brought back to the July 18th Worksession for presentation and discussion.

Moved by Matt Fong seconded by Chuck Rosenberg there being no further business to adjourn at 6:47 P.M. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Chuck Rosenberg, Joy Huffaker, Ted Schroeder, Ginny Skutnik, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Butch Eley. The motion carried.