

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION
Monday, October 16, 2023

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Worksession Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska was conducted at the Hastings Public Library, 314 N. Denver Avenue, on October 16, 2023.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. in Worksession by Council President Fong with the following members present: Shawn Hartmann, Marc Rowan, Steve Huntley, Jeniffer Beahm, Brad Consbruck. Absent: Joy Huffaker, Butch Eley, Corey Stutte.

The following City Officials were present: City Administrator, Shawn Metcalf; City Attorney, Jesse Oswald; Director of Energy Production & Supply, Derek Zeisler; City Clerk, Kimberly Jacobitz; Assistant Fire Chief, Troy Vorderstrasse; Parks & Recreation Director, Jeff Hassenstab; Finance Director, Roger Nash; Information Technology Director, Erik Nielsen; Director of Engineering, Lee Vrooman; Director of Development Services, Chad Bunger; Director of Human Resources, Lori Hartman; Museum Director, Teresa Kreutzer-Hodson; Public Information Manager, Tony Herrman; Director of Environmental, Marty Stange; Safety Director, Trent Clark.

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

Moved by Shawn Hartmann seconded by Jeniffer Beahm to adopt current agenda for October 16, 2023 Worksession Agenda. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Marc Rowan, Brad Consbruck, Steve Huntley, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Joy Huffaker, Butch Eley. The motion carried.

PUBLIC NOTICE - Official Notice of the Worksession was published in the Hastings Tribune on Friday, October 13, 2023. 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 on annexation.

Chad Bunger, Director of Development Services, presented on this item. A portion of City Code Chapter 2 requires the Planning Commission to review areas eligible for annexation every three years, making 2023 that year of review. Planning Commission held a worksession in May to discuss various areas adjacent to the City that could be potential candidates to annex. From that worksession, staff brought it down to four areas, totaling 42 properties. He presented on those four areas: East 26th Street & North 2nd Avenue (residential), Industrial Park West, Industrial Park North, and East Industrial Area (U.S. Highway 6 & Showboat Boulevard). Development Services reached out to property owners that were part of the review and have met with them through a series of neighborhood meetings. We held worksessions for each of these four areas with the Planning Commission. If we proceed with these annexations, we would be required to follow State Statutes and hold public hearings. Some of the properties would require that we go before the Adams County Board of Commissioners. Most of the

properties we are planning to annex already have city utility services. He provided a large packet of information with details on the extension of service and taxes, to show the implications.

East 26th Street & North 2nd Avenue:

Residential is mostly single-family homes and some have row crop or pasture land. The zoning is largely agricultural. Majority have city services located close to their properties. The only portion of these properties that is being recommended to annex is the city's cemetery.

Industrial Park West:

These properties were designated as a County Industrial Area in the 1980's. Before the industrial area was created, the property owners, City of Hastings, Hastings Economic Development Corporation, and Adams County created an agreement that outlined when those properties could be annexed. We could not annex these areas, unless there was an agreement in place. The process of incremental annexation started years ago for this area, but in 2015 it stopped. Adams County stated it was not appropriate to annex incrementally, leaving portions of properties in the county, and part in the city. All areas are serviced by city utilities except for Municipal Supplies. Because of the previous agreement, staff is recommending these areas be annexed.

Industrial Park North:

These properties are in a similar situation as Industrial Park West, designated as a County Industrial Area in the 1990's. There was a similar agreement with Adams County to annex at a later date. In 2015 Adams County said we cannot annex portions of properties any longer. Properties are either all in or all out. Jesse Oswald said that Adams County stated incremental annexation is not the proper way to handle annexation. Chad Bunger stated that the agreement was made in 2006. There was a clause in the agreement to either develop or get annexed 17 years after the agreement was signed. Staff is recommending annexation of this area.

East Industrial Area (U.S. Highway 6 & Showboat Boulevard):

This is a County Industrial Area, designated in the 1970's. We have no agreement with Adams County, so at this point in time we cannot annex this area. State Statutes do not allow the City to annex the area, unless Adams County undesignates the County Industrial Area, or the property owners ask to be annexed. Adams County has not done anything with the designation and the property owners have not requested to be annexed. We will not pursue annexing this area for those reasons.

Chad stated this was an informational presentation only. Late November or early December there will be a public hearing with the Planning Commission. It will then go to the County Commissioners for the two industrial parks, then be brought back to the City Council in January 2024.

Chad stated that the neighborhood meetings had appropriate attendance, with not everyone showing up. The ones who had agreements did not show up, probably because of the agreement in place. East Industrial Park brought the non-agreement to the attention of Development Services. There have not been any concerns voiced by the Planning Commission. They believe if the properties are developed and are being served by city utilities, they should be within the City. Until properties are annexed, Hastings Fire Department will only respond if the rural fire department requests assistance. Hastings Police cannot serve those areas. Citizen concerns usually focus on property taxes and connecting with city services. Our City Code would require them to connect to our services if and when their services fail.

Chad explained that Development Services mailed every property owner an invitation to neighborhood meetings and collected their contact information. When we get to the point of a formal meeting, we will mail an official notice to the property owners. We will do our best to inform them of the Adams County meeting for those properties. We will come back to City Council for three readings of the ordinance to annex whatever properties the Planning Commission recommends to City Council. That will take place after the first of the year. For the areas being recommended for annexation, the school districts will not be affected, since they are industrial in nature. It changes marginally on the taxes.

We need to have a conversation in regard to future annexations, as to whether to unilaterally annex property or wait to have a developer ask to annex it. Chad mentioned that he is accustomed to the developer requesting to be brought into the city.

2. Discussion on City Council mission, vision and norms.

Council President Fong and Councilmember Rowan attended the recent League of Municipalities Conference. Conference conversations focused on how to run meetings and keep focused on our mission and visions as a council. It might be helpful to add our Mission & Goals statement as an item to regular agendas as a reminder of focus areas. Councilmembers Beahm and Fong spent time cleaning up language on the Mission & Goals statement of the City of Hastings approximately one year ago. He also suggested that the topic get reviewed for any needed revisions annually. City Council orientation was discussed. We need continuity of standards and direction. Shawn Metcalf mentioned that with the survey going out and the Strategic Planning Committee, we should have a large amount of information in time for the next Council Retreat.

The City Council Character Standards and Norms is a document from another city, using resources in Nebraska. It gives us the opportunity to be on the same page in our focus. This is a draft document to discuss tonight and give feedback. Mr. Fong stated that it could be brought to another worksession for discussion, prior to being added to a council meeting. He asked for feedback after council review of the document. Shawn Metcalf stated that he has seen it be positive in helping a council work as a team. Shawn Hartmann stated it is important to educate council and people attending the meetings to understand why things happen the way they do.

Moved by Shawn Hartmann seconded by Steve Huntley there being no further business to come before the council to adjourn at 6:18 P.M. Roll Call: Ayes: Matt Fong, Shawn Hartmann, Marc Rowan, Brad Consbruck, Steve Huntley, Jeniffer Beahm. Nays: None. Absent: Joy Huffaker, Butch Eley. The motion carried.