

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION
Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Worksession of the City Council of the City of Hastings, Nebraska was conducted at the Hastings Municipal Airport, 3300 W. 12th Street, on January 21, 2025.

The Worksession Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Council President Steve Huntley with the following members present: Michael Anderson, Brad Consbruck, Larry Consbruck, Maggie Esch, Marc Rowan, Brian Hoffman, Matt Fong.

City Officials Present: Mayor Jay Beckby, Mark Funkey, Jesse Oswald, Lori Vorderstrasse, Adam Story, Troy Vorderstrasse, Erik Nielsen, Roger Nash, Jeff Hassenstab, Lee Vrooman, Marty Stange, Tony Herrman, Chad Bunger, Tyler Ficken, Derek Zeisler, Kirk Layton, Trent Clark.

Others Present: Brian Lammers, NewCarbon, Mason Herrman, Marvin Planning Consultants.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Moved by Brad Consbruck seconded by Matt Fong to adopt the current agenda for the January 21, 2025 City Council Worksession. The motion carried.

Official Notice of the Worksession was published in the Hastings Tribune on Friday, January 17, 2025. 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 for public review and a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted and accessible to members of the public.

Citizen Communications.

None.

NewCarbon Renewable Natural Gas project update.

Marty Stange, Director of Environmental, introduced Brian Lammers with NewCarbon and stated he will be giving an update on where they are at with the Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) Project. Mr. Lammers indicated they are a mid-west based company who's focus is to reduce the life cycle carbon intensity of customers operations with those customers being ag and industrial producers throughout the mid-west. He stated that NewCarbon is proposing to develop, own, and operate a landfill gas collection and treatment system at the City of Hastings Landfill to convert landfill gas to renewable natural gas (methane), collect it and sell it. He indicated they would be collecting the gas, treating it and convert it into pipeline quality natural gas and then injecting it into the interstate pipeline system and selling that gas in the market. He said they will be continuing their preliminary engineering design efforts over the next year, working on a site use agreement with the hope of completing the engineering design in 2026, starting construction in 2027 and starting commercial operation in 2029. Mr. Lammers reviewed the project site with Council.

Mr. Stange stated they are looking to reuse the existing landfill cell and have moved the project site closer to the road which was a positive thing for both the City and NewCarbon. Councilmember Larry Consbruck asked if as the landfill fills up, will you get more gas. Mr.

Lammers indicated they would. Councilmember Fong asked what other communities NewCarbon was working in. Mr. Lammers stated they are very active in Illinois, North Dakota, Minnesota, and the mid-west and upper mid-west. Councilmember Rowan asked how the gas is collected. Mr. Lammers stated there are multiple points of injection with coverage over the entire landfill. Councilmember Rowan questioned if this would help with the smell of the landfill. Mr. Lammers indicated there would be odor mitigation benefits. Councilmember Huntley asked if there have been conversations with Hastings Utilities for use of the gas. Derek Zeisler, Utility Director, stated for the economics it is important for NewCarbon to get it back into the interstate pipeline. Councilmember Brad Consbruck questioned any risk factors or safety in general as far as leaks. Mr. Lammers told Council they follow all safety regulations and permit the project through the state. Councilmember Rowan asked why they picked Hastings. Mr. Lammers stated the main reasons were ag processing in the area, the need was there, it is a good fit geographically and the Tallgrass Interstate Pipeline proximity. Councilmember Huntley asked about the cost to the City. Mr. Lammers stated there was no cost to the City and there would be the opportunity for the City to share some royalties. Councilmember Hoffman questioned the life of the project. Mr. Lammers indicated a 20-25 year useful life for the project.

Discussion of Comprehensive Development Plan.

Chad Bunger, Development Services Director, indicated this project started before he was with the City, they have had a number of meetings and an open house and then paused and waited until after the election to provide an overview of the plan that is before Council. He indicated he would like to move forward with adoption.

Mason Herrman, Marvin Planning Consultants, indicated they have been working on this plan for around three years, the plan provides a picture in time and a base to return to. He stated they analyzed demographics and existing land use. He told Council that if you want to get funded by the state you need a recent comprehensive plan. Councilmember Huntley asked how often the plan needs to be updated. Mr. Bunger indicated there would be an annual update in house and a five year review. Mr. Herrman indicated that the plan gives a reasonable baseline to make decisions. He indicated the plan works in conjunction with other City policies such as housing policies, annexation policies and zoning policies. Mr. Herrman told Council the plan allows for more density in residential areas, more access for people to housing and is different from previous plans in that it projects expansive growth. He said there are five different levels of housing density to work with throughout the City, three commercial land use districts to work with and public use (parks and recreation).

Mr. Bunger told Council that the annexation policy is guided by state statutes and every two years areas are reviewed for annexation. He indicated they don't currently have a good annexation policy. He told Council there are exceptions and that the land must be adjacent to City limits, ag land that is rural in character can't be annexed and county-designated industrial areas are prohibited from annexation. Mr. Bunger reviewed the proposed policy stating the following guidelines for annexing: equity for taxpayers, clarity of service areas, City growth in an efficient and orderly manner, annex when adjacent to city limits and receiving services and property develops to an urban scale.

Councilmember Brad Consbruck asked about annexation within the 2-mile area around the City and adjacent areas. Mr. Bunger indicated it would just be land adjacent to City limits that Council would make the decision on bringing into the City limits. Mr. Bunger mentioned that the biggest chapter in the comprehensive plan is the land use section and he indicated that they are currently working on zoning code updates that should be coming before Council by the end of summer. Councilmember Fong asked about the plan going forward. Mr. Bunger stated he would like Council direction on proceeding with approval of the plan and if they are ready to

proceed, he would take the plan to the February Planning Commission meeting for adoption and then on to the City Council in March for approval. Councilmember Huntley questioned letting the Business Improvement District, HEDC and other groups review the plan. Mr. Bunger stated he was open to that. Councilmember Hoffman advised that many meetings have been had over the last two plus years regarding the comprehensive plan and they have done a thorough job with review of the plan. Council had discussion on the median income in Hastings. Mr. Herrman stated again that the plan provides a basis for making things easier but is only part of the puzzle. Councilmember Anderson asked about who is actively trying to bring businesses into Hastings. Councilmember Esch explained there are many entities in the Hastings area helping with the starting and financing of small businesses. Council had a brief discussion of parking in the downtown area. Mr. Bunger stated he will send the plan to the organizations mentioned and schedule a public hearing with the Planning Commission in February and a public hearing with City Council in March. Mayor Beckby stated the plan is an outline and a working document full of information. He said he would like to move forward with the plan. It was the consensus of Council to move forward with approval of the Comprehensive Development Plan.

Moved by Matt Fong seconded by Maggie Esch there being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m. The motion carried.