

May 10, 2011

A work session meeting of the City Council was held on the above date. Mayor Simonson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The following were present: Council members Connie Amos, Chris Ness, Jim Schneider and Mayor Randall Simonson. Council member Sally Swanson joined the meeting at 6:33. Staff present: City Administrator Anne Hurlburt, City Attorney Dave Hebert, Building Official/Maintenance Supervisor Steve Thorp and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Council member Schneider added a discussion of the Building Official position to the agenda. **Ness, second by Schneider, moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 4-0.**

#### **JOHN LINDELL – SNOW AND ICE CONTROL POLICY, MAILBOX IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY**

John Lindell, 11240 218<sup>th</sup> Street, has requested that the council discuss the replacement of his mailbox post as it relates to the Snow and Ice Control Policy. Mr. Lindell alleges that his mailbox post was struck by snowplow blade this winter and is requesting that the city replace the post. Several staff and Mayor Simonson have visited the site and found that there is no evidence that the mailbox or post were damaged by physical contact with the city's equipment. Photos of the mailbox and post were provided to the council. Council member Schneider stated that he also inspected Mr. Lindell's mailbox. Schneider saw no signs of damage and stated that it appears that the post has rotted off from the bottom.

**Ness, seconded by Swanson, moved to deny Mr. Lindell's request to replace his mailbox post and to send Mr. Lindell a letter stating that the council determined that the policy has been correctly applied based on an inspection by staff and council members. The motion carried 5-0.**

#### **JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR COMMUNITY CENTER**

Staff was requested to evaluate the cleaning services for the city's facilities, which include the city offices, community center meeting rooms and kitchen, warming house and fire hall. The city has been using the services of Ken Milbrandt (Milbrandt Enterprises) as an outside contractor for more than 20 years. There has been no written contract regarding his duties or how he is to be paid. Mr. Milbrandt generally bills the same amount each month for cleaning the community center/city office and fire hall. The city provides the cleaning supplies and equipment, except for the floor cleaning machine which is provided by Milbrandt.

Council reviewed a list of tasks and duties currently being handled by Milbrandt. Fire Chief Finnegan has recommended that the cleaning duties at the fire hall be taken over by the volunteer firefighters.

Due to OSHA standards, certain cleaning chemicals cannot be handled by employees without required safety equipment, such as an eye-wash station. This requires that certain tasks be

performed contractually. The fire hall has the required equipment so safety is not a concern at this facility, as it is within the community center and warming house.

Mayor Simonson agreed with the recommendation that there needs to be a contract in place for janitorial services. The Mayor said that the City should take up the Fire Chief's offer to discontinue cleaning services at the fire hall. The City will notify Mr. Milbrandt that services are no longer required at the fire hall, effective at the end of May.

Council asked staff to investigate the costs of installing approved safety equipment such as eye-wash stations in the Community Center and Warming House, and to evaluate if "green" cleaning products can be used without the need for required safety measures.

**Ness, seconded by Swanson, moved to request that the city seek proposals for cleaning services for the Community Center and Warming House. The motion carried 5-0.**

Proposals will be discussed at a future council meeting.

### **COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECTS IN 2011 BUDGET**

Administrator Hurlburt presented several projects relating to the Community Center which were included in the adopted 2011 budget. Staff asked for direction in pursuing the projects as input for the Capital Improvement Committee's upcoming meeting.

#### *Community Center Landscaping Improvements*

The 2011 budget includes \$5,000 in the general fund to update the shrubs and landscaping materials in the front of the building. Many of the current plants and shrubs are dying off.

Council member Ness stated that this is not a priority project. It was suggested that a landscape plan be purchased first and then determine the costs for the improvements based on the plan. A decision to proceed with this project will be made at a future meeting.

#### *Community Center Floor Replacement*

The 2011 Community Center budget includes a Capital Improvement Project to replace the flooring in the public areas at a cost of \$10,000. The building, constructed in 1985, has the original flooring and is showing signs of age.

Council requested that refinishing the floor and replacing worn tiles be looked into. Staff was directed to contact a professional service for an estimate to refurbish the flooring.

#### *City Meeting/ Office Space Study*

The Capital Improvement Fund has designated \$18,000 for an architectural study to determine short and long-term needs of the existing city office space and Community Center. The study would include possible use of the annex (old fire hall). This project was included to plan for future long-term expansion needs for meeting space, public service, employee work areas and storage.

Consensus was not to proceed with this project, as funds are not available to pursue plans for remodeling or expansion.

### **BUILDING OFFICIAL POSITION**

Council member Schneider recommended that the position of Building Official be cut and that this be a contractual or part-time position. Council member Swanson agreed that cuts are being made in other cities and this issue needs to be addressed. Both stated that the city's expenditures are too high.

Administrator Hurlburt asked that the council consider the roles that this position has taken on, such as supervising the Public Works department, monitoring the water and septic systems, working with developers and having daily contact with the public as they drop into the office. Hurlburt advised that this is a more complicated issue than what is being proposed. By eliminating the position, there will still be costs to provide these services through the city's engineering and planning staff.

Attorney Hebert recommended that the council review the information about this position first then make an informed decision based on this knowledge. Regarding finances, Hebert stated that the city operates on a very conservative budget and is one of the lowest taxed cities in the metro area. The fund balances are good and the city is not in a financial crisis.

Council member Ness felt that this brings up many questions that need to be addressed. Ness recommended that staff have time to prepare a report on the Building Official's duties and the effect of eliminating this position. Ness also stated that this issue needs to be decided at a regular council meeting, not at a work session.

Swanson and Schneider expressed that they were not interested in a detailed accounting of daily activities. Schneider stated that he has all the information he needs and a report would not sway his decision to eliminate the position.

**Simonson, seconded by Swanson, moved to direct staff to gather information regarding the Building Official's position and discuss the issue at a future work session. The motion carried 4-1, with Schneider opposed.**

### **PARKING ON OLINDA TRAIL BETWEEN SCANDIA TRAIL AND 209<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

Action on the issue of posting "No Parking" signs on County Road 3 in the Village Center was postponed from the April 19, 2011 meeting. Property owners Wayne Schmitt and Sue Rodsjo were invited to continue the discussion at this work session. Ms. Rodsjo was in attendance, but Mr. Schmitt was not.

Ms. Rodsjo stated that it would be a hardship to the tenants of her building to not allow overnight parking in front of the building. She stated that she understands the frustration of the adjacent occupant in having difficulty with access to his business, but she has found alternative parking solutions and has requested that additional parking options continue to be pursued.

Mayor Simonson suggested that any action be held off until Mr. Schmitt can provide input on this issue. It was agreed to schedule discussion of overnight on-street parking on Olinda Trail at a work session meeting when both interested parties can attend.

**AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE WORK SESSION**

Council member Swanson requested that Bolton and Menk provide an update on the Uptown Sewer System study.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Ness, seconded by Schneider, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
*Deputy Clerk*