

October 5, 2016

The City Council held a Work Session on the above date. The following were present: Mayor Randall Simonson, Council members Bob Hegland, Dan Lee, Chris Ness, and Jim Schneider. Staff present: City Administrator Neil Soltis and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

Mayor Simonson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Ness, seconded by Hegland, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.**

### **DISCUSSION ON DRAFT SHOOTING AND HUNTING ORDINANCE**

The Council continued its discussion from last month on regulating discharge of firearms in response to complaints the City received concerning duration and frequency of target shooting, proximity to residences, and alcohol use while shooting. Administrator Soltis prepared a draft ordinance in response to these concerns, with some language taken from the shooting ordinances of nearby communities. The draft also referenced the city's noise ordinance and the state's fish and game statute.

Mayor Simonson began by stating that he is not comfortable supporting an ordinance at this time since the complaints deal with only a handful of properties and he does not see a need to penalize the rest of the community. The Council members all stated a similar position that shooting regulations are not needed at this time and that police have enforcement options in response to unsafe shooting. Administrator Soltis noted the issues that the Deputy has in the difficulty of citing violators.

Jerry Cusick, Washington County Sherriff's Department, stated that there are state laws in place that address dangerous weapon discharge and trespass laws that regulate no shooting within 500 feet of an occupied building or livestock. He asked that the Council be cautious and tolerant with this issue – Scandia is not Woodbury.

Tom Boesel said the City should not get to the point of "no hunting" since Scandia is still rural and should keep the reputation of being able to hunt wildlife. Putting regulations in place can get out of hand.

Rita Erickson, 21957 Pomroy Avenue, said she lives here to enjoy the peace and tranquility and is in favor of some restrictions on distance from occupied buildings. She said the noise ordinance addresses prohibitive noise. Jerry Cusick added that it seems the complaints were noise related and noise statutes could address this.

**Lee, seconded by Schneider, moved to take no action on a shooting and hunting ordinance. The motion carried 5-0.**

### **DISCUSSION ON ESTABLISHING A ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE POLICY**

Administrator Soltis explained that Public Works mows the roadsides in June and September and receives numerous requests to custom mow roadways, such as those residents who have prairie plantings right up to the blacktop. Soltis recommended a policy that would clearly provide guidelines on right-of-way maintenance. Karen Schick, on behalf of Friends of Scandia Parks and Trails, was present to explain her request to adopt a roadside maintenance policy that would protect wildlife species. Schick asked that the policy provide twice yearly mowing for safety but also to maximize the habitat for nesting birds, pollinators and monarch butterflies.

Much discussion on limiting mowing width and adjusting calendar dates for mowing concluded that mowing would begin early to mid-May at a width of 5 feet and again in September at a width of 8 feet. Cutting height restrictions would not be defined as the equipment does not adjust for this. A draft policy will be prepared for the November Council meeting.

### **REVIEW OF PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR APPLICATIONS**

Administrator Soltis reported that six applications were received by the deadline for Public Works Director, with three of the candidates having the background and supervisory experience for the position. Council agreed to interview the top three as recommended.

A special meeting of the City Council will be held on October 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. to conduct interviews with the three candidates.

### **DISCUSSION ON THE 2017 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS**

Administrator Soltis led a review of the 2017 budget in preparation of finalizing the budget at the December 20<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. The following items were covered:

- Administration – no revenue projection for Small Cities Assistance; insurance dividend uncertain; allocate Administrator benefits as 80/20 admin/planning to match the wage allocation; misc contractual line item includes \$3,000 for website upgrades; 5% budget increase
- City Council – adjust compensation per Ordinance 156
- Elections – no Federal election in 2017
- Planning and Building – revenue from building permits was increased; \$56,000 expenditure for Comprehensive Planning consultant
- Police – 4% increase estimated from Sheriff's Department for police contract
- Community Center – 2% budget decrease
- Debt Service Fund – balance of 2007 Blacktop Fund transferred to Local Road Improvement Fund; balance of 2010 Fire Rescue Truck Fund, which was paid off in 2016, transferred to 2015 Tanker Fund; and the balance in the 2011 Dump Truck Equipment Certificate, which was paid off in 2016, transferred to Equipment Replacement Fund.
- Capital Improvement Fund – \$11,700 towards technology improvements to computer systems; \$55,000 towards Log House Landing boat ramp assuming \$15,000 National Park Service grant and \$20,000 cost sharing with the Car-Mar Watershed; \$200,000 improvements to 205<sup>th</sup> Street with \$100,000 contribution from an undetermined source

- Park Capital Improvement Fund – cost of personal services for grounds maintenance and supplies for the Wayne Erickson ball field will be budgeted to be paid from this subfund instead of the General Fund Parks budget; improvements to Lilleskogen of \$35,200 to be funded 100% from donations

Administrator Soltis noted that any savings over the budgeted amounts will be transferred to the Road Improvement Fund for street reconstruction projects.

Council member Lee stated that animal control should be expanded to include the pickup of cats, as Animal Control Officer Sherrill Reid had offered to adjust her rates if the City allowed for this. Lee will further investigate this with Reid and report back at a future meeting.

Council member Lee asked if codification costs should be included in next year's budget. Administrator Soltis explained that indexing the City's ordinances is important, but recommended it be put on hold until after the Comprehensive Plan update is approved.

The Council offered no changes to the presented budget, and will review budgets for the remaining departments at the November Work Session.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk