

MINUTES
COUNCIL WORKSESSION

The City Council of the City of Mason City, Iowa, met in Worksession pursuant to law and rules of said Council, in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of City Hall at 7:00 P.M., on February 8, 2024. The meeting was called to order by the Mayor Pro tem and on roll being called, there were present, Mayor Pro tem Adams in the Chair and the following Council Members: Jaszewski, Latham, Symonds, Adams. Absent: Mayor Schickel, Lee and Masson.

Administrator Burnett stated this was intended to be the final meeting and any concerns should be addressed now.

Hinson stated after this was settled tonight the next step would be to order a public hearing at the February 20, 2024 Council Meeting. Following that, the Cerro Gordo County Courthouse would be sending notices to the taxpayers and the next action would be Special Meetings on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, adding the meeting was moved from the original date of March 28th to the 26th due to conflicts.

Council discussion followed regarding the required taxpayer mailings that would be sent by the County, the implications of the mailings, what was included and what the perception would be.

Hinson noted that one or two things had been changed from the last meeting, but they were nothing of significance.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT BUDGET:

No additional changes were requested.

OPERATING BUDGET:

No additional changes were requested.

OUTSIDE FUNDING REQUEST:

Latham stated he would like to see the City fund \$10,000 to the Northern Lights Homeless Shelter, explaining they received no Federal funding.

Adams asked if that was because they did not apply for it with Latham stating their funding source wasn't doing it anymore.

Symonds stated he was not opposed to the funding, but worried about setting a precedent and stressed the importance of having a rubric to receive applications because there were tons of worthy entities in Mason City.

Latham commented on his experience serving on the County Board of Supervisors, advising they typically received 40 to 50 requests a year and

took into consideration whether those requests received other funding. He stressed the Northern Lights Homeless Shelter offered a good service to the community.

Burnett stated even though Lee was absent tonight he had sent an email expressing his opposition to funding the Northern Lights Homeless Shelter and the YMCA. He also stated he had received an email from Masson who was in favor of funding \$10,000 to the Northern Lights Homeless Shelter.

Jaszewski asked how the \$10,000 would be used with Latham stating operations.

Jaszewski stated he would support the funding and Adams stated it was the right thing to do especially since there was \$180,000 in reserves in the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund at the current time.

Hinson agreed \$10,000 was not a budgetary issue.

Discussion followed regarding looking at the requests on a year-to-year basis.

Latham referenced housing and the North Iowa Corridor and whether they needed more money to add a position to help with housing with Hinson stating if the City wanted to provide for that it could be done through the Forest Park TIF and Burnett advising that whatever Schreck needed to do the City would help support those efforts and while there was nothing in this budget there was funding available to them and the City could identify it as a TIF eligible expense.

Latham stressed he wanted to see that project succeed.

Adams mentioned information sent by Burnett regarding the YMCA and how no formal request had been made but they were in need, but the larger issue was how much and whether it would need to be more than one year with Burnett stating it would be \$150,000 or greater and it would need to be for multiple years.

Symonds emphasized that was another reason to have a rubric with Burnett stating he would put extra time into that next year, noting the Council would need to decide what they wanted to do, adding the original intent was that any funding not before operating.

Jaszewski requested a Worksession with Burnett agreeing that would be a starting point and suggested sometime in October having the Council provide him with information concerning what their priorities were.

Hinson stated the change of \$10,000 to

the Northern Lights Homeless Shelter would result in a very slight spend down on the fund balance.

Adams referred to the sheet showing the effect on average residential taxpayers and utility users and asked if the out years would be keeping a flat tax rate with Hinson concurring.

Adams asked if there had been any feedback from industry with Burnett stating there had not.

Further discussion followed regarding automated sanitation.

Burnett pointed out that included in the budget was changing Finance Director Hinson to a Senior Deputy City Administrator and moving him into a W classification with a Resolution to come forward soon. He stated the intent was for this position to be a 2nd in command and the "Senior" meant there would be a lot more responsibility.

Symonds questioned whether Hinson was currently in line with other communities with Burnett stating staff had looked at Marion, Iowa which would be the most comparable and that paid \$177,000.

Latham asked where Hinson was at now with Buffington stating \$148,000 and Burnett stating this classification would give him more years before topping out.

Adams stated Hinson's value was obvious and he was well worth the extra money, and he would well support the recommendation, with Latham also concurring.

Symonds asked what our current taxation was with Hinson stating the proposed rate was \$13.98329/\$1,000 valuation, versus the current level of \$13.98800.

The Mayor Pro tem adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

/s/Paul Adams
Paul Adams, Mayor Pro tem

ATTEST:
/s/Aaron Burnett
Aaron Burnett, City Clerk

Publish 2-17-24
Emailed 2-14-24