

CITY OF EXCELSIOR
Hennepin County, Minnesota

MINUTES

City Council Work Session

Monday, June 3, 2013

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Mayor Gaylord called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilmembers present: Beattie, Miller, Fulkerson, and Mayor Gaylord

Councilmembers absent: Caron

Also Present: City Manager Luger, Public Works
Superintendent Wisdorf, Finance Officer
Tumberg, and City Clerk Johnson

2. Agenda Approval

Beattie moved, Fulkerson seconded, to approve the agenda. Motion carried 4/0.

3. Establish Annual Budget Prioritized Goal List

Tumberg said that the City Charter requires that the City Council establish, by resolution, a prioritized list of goals and objectives to be funded in the next year's Annual Budget before July 1st of each year. The list is intended to provide guidance to City staff in preparing the preliminary Annual Budget for the next year and provide the public with the priorities of the City that the Council established. She noted that the list needs to also be published in the City newsletter, on the City's website, and the official City newspaper.

Tumberg said the purpose of this work session is for the Council to identify and prioritize goals and objectives to be included in the 2014 Budget. She noted that a list of goals and objectives for the Council to consider were listed in the staff memo.

Fulkerson asked what was entailed with creating an advisory commission policy. Luger stated that the Council had stated that they wanted to look at a policy to addresses attendance, term limits, behavior of commissioners, etc.

Tumberg asked the Council how it would like the goals and objectives to be published in the newspaper. The Council directed staff to publish the list of goals and objectives as they are listed in the staff memo.

Tumberg said that staff will place the resolution to establish the 2014 goals and objectives on the consent agenda for the June 17, 2013 Council meeting.

4. Scenic Byway

Mayor Gaylord said that he has spoken with the Mayor of Wayzata to get more information on the history of the scenic byway. He said he thinks it is a good idea to have a scenic byway around the lake and that it could be a good cooperative venture with the neighboring cities. The byway should not take a lot of effort to achieve or be costly for the cities to participate.

Fulkerson asked if there would be any ramifications to the residents. Mayor Gaylord said he did not think there would be. He noted that there would be signage installed along the trail and major roadways to identify certain sites and amenities along the route. Luger said that this shouldn't impact Excelsior residents very much; the pathway goes along roads that are already busy.

Luger said the Council should discuss whether the City is interested in exploring this. Signage, costs, etc. will be discussed by each Council if this moves forward.

Beattie said on the surface it looks like a great idea. Mayor Gaylord said that a scenic byway would be good for the whole area.

Miller said that Three Rivers Park had talked at one point about designating the whole Lake Minnetonka area as one region; maybe this would be a way to get discussions started toward possible funding options.

The Council stated that they were interested in participating.

Beattie asked if Wayzata will take the lead on this project. Mayor Gaylord said not necessarily. The first step was to see if the cities were interested.

5. Exploring Joint Delivery of Public Works Services

Mayor Gaylord said that Shorewood Mayor, Scott Zerby, is interested in having a discussion with the cities of Excelsior and Tonka Bay about the possibility of a joint delivery of public works services. He noted that at a high level it makes a lot of sense to consider some type of consolidation for public works. The cities currently have an informal agreement for sharing equipment; this would take it to the next level. It would be good to be able to share the high costs for purchasing equipment with the other cities. There would be a lot of details that would need to be worked out, such as staffing, training, education, etc.

Fulkerson said she is uncomfortable getting into the sharing of personnel.

Wisdorf said even though the policies seem the same, there are significant differences between the public works departments. For example, one of the cities is covered by a different union than the other two cities.

5. Exploring Joint Delivery of Public Works Services – (Continued)

Beattie asked when the union contracts expire. Luger said that Excelsior's contract is up this year. Typically, the term for Excelsior's contract has been only one or two years; she would prefer to see a longer term contract.

Luger said she thought sharing the on-call with the other cities would be a plus but then she learned that there are differences in the level of training. Excelsior's staff is trained more in water and sewer than the other cities. She said that there may be other areas that can be explored.

Beattie asked if Excelsior gets compensated now for items that are shared. Wisdorf said there is a little bit of both. A city might borrow a piece of equipment for a couple of hours without a charge. He noted that if the City's street sweeper is borrowed, Excelsior does invoice the city for the use of the street sweeper. He said that each city has a list of rates that they charge for items.

Miller said the residents have a good quality service for they pay for and the City is doing alright budget wise. He knows that there are always ways to improve, but he wants staff to be comfortable with sharing services. He agrees that it makes sense to investigate this and would support it if staff was comfortable looking into this.

Mayor Gaylord said that previous Council's had explored sharing public work departments and staff has documents from those discussions that can be looked at. Shorewood Mayor Zerby wants some discussion with the cities to get an understanding of whether this makes sense. He asked the Council whether they were interested in moving this forward for discussion.

Beattie said there is some appeal and it seems to make sense.

Luger said Lake Minnetonka managers met this past week and discussed some of these items. The City Administrator from Orono told the managers that Orono only saved \$100,000 by taking on the Mound Police Department, but only because they decreased the number of supervisors. She thinks all cities would say that they can't do the work with less people, so that would leave the equipment, but it wouldn't hurt to study this. One issue that has always come up is whether there is the political will to pursue this. If the Council is not interested, it doesn't pay to do it.

Mayor Gaylord said the City of Excelsior would need to keep the same service or better and save money. If those two goals can't be met, it wouldn't be worth pursuing.

Beattie said given the level of education that Excelsior's employees have with regard to the utilities it seems unbelievable that another city have control over Excelsior's utilities.

5. Exploring Joint Delivery of Public Works Services – (Continued)

Mayor Gaylord said that the cities could spend some time over the summer and next fall looking at this. He doesn't want to spend a lot of staff time on this during the initial explorations.

Beattie said the governance issue is something that needs to be taken into account.

Bob Bolles, 229 George Street, said he appreciates hearing what has been said this evening. He thinks the savings may just end up being one supervisor's salary. To run an efficient department you'll still need all of the other employees. The City may end up hiring someone else to do some of the tasks that the supervisor is handling. There should be a significant savings for the City to move forward with merging public works services. He could see a possible savings if the services were charged based on ad valorem.

Mayor Gaylord asked if there was a Councilmember who would like to work with him on this. Councilmember Beattie volunteered to work with Mayor Gaylord.

Luger said that the cities of Shorewood and Tonka Bay are very interested and have committed to studying this.

6. Siren

Luger said that the siren has not sounded precisely at noon, 6:00 p.m., and 9:00 p.m. for the last couple of months, which is upsetting some residents.

Wisdorf explained that the old siren was spring loaded with old fashioned controls. What the City has now is a mechanical timer with 15 minute intervals that needs to be handset. He noted that several years ago when the controls needed to be replaced, the Council decided to purchase a mechanical type control because a digital control was too expensive.

Luger said that staff is looking for direction from the Council on whether to investigate new controls, turn the siren off, or leave it as is.

The Council directed staff to leave the siren as it is.

7. Adjournment

Fulkerson moved, Miller seconded, to adjourn at 6:53 p.m. Motion carried 4/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheri Johnson
City Clerk