

UNAPPROVED

**CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Monday, July 15, 2019**

6:00 p.m.
Cloverleaf Farm Room
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Tom Ryan, Councilmembers Andy Garvais, Wes Hovland, Julie Jeppson, Richard Paul, and Jess Robertson.

ABSENT: Councilmember Dick Swanson.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Clark Arneson; Captain Dan Pelkey; Finance Director Joe Huss; Community Standards Director Bob Fiske; Economic Development Coordinator Erik Thorvig; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Engineer Dan Schluender; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Budget/Fiscal Analyst Ward Brown; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Communications Coordinator Ben Hayle; Fire Chief Charlie Smith; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Police Training Simulator Demo.

The Council received a demonstration on the Police Department's police training simulator.

3.2 3M Open Debrief.

Captain Pelkey provided the Council with a debriefing on the 3M Open. He noted it was a busy week with 107 medical calls and a handful of police calls. He stated he appreciated the strong partnerships the City had in place during this event. He explained there were a couple of learning items the department had taken notes on and would be implementing in future events.

City Manager Arneson reported he met with two PGA representatives who were both highly complimentary of the Blaine Police Department.

Councilmember Robertson thanked all who were involved in planning this event and for establishing an excellent command center.

Councilmember Garvais thanked the Blaine Police Department for taking into consideration assignments types for all officers, including those from other departments, as they will be more likely to help in future events, adding this event could be used as a recruiting tool for the department as well.

Councilmember Jeppson thanked the Blaine Police Department and Captain Pelkey for his tremendous work during the 3M Open.

3.3 Reasonable Accommodation Ordinance (Sober House).

Community Standards Director Fiske stated One Love Housing had approached the City requesting a process to allow a private provider to operate a single-family home as a multi-person sober house. This has been occurring in other communities and each city has been asked to address this in a similar manner, consistent with the language found in the Fair Housing Amendment Act of 1988, through the adoption of a Reasonable Accommodation License. The Fair Housing Act (FHA) directs that individuals recovering from addiction are federally protected as a disability group and therefore should receive reasonable accommodations from cities for their lodging and addiction support.

Mr. Fiske explained an issue in most cities is the definition of "family". Blaine, as in several other cities, defines family, when not related, as not more than four (4) unrelated individuals. One Love Housing is requesting up to seven (7) unrelated individuals be allowed. What is clear is that the Fair Housing Act (FHA) does compel the City to provide a process for this type of request. It is envisioned that this would require the processing of a code amendment to the Rental Licensing program. It would establish an application process with neighborhood notice and subsequent action required by the City Council on each Sober House license. He explained the City Council should expect this to be brought forward fairly soon.

Councilmember Hovland questioned if the City could regulate this type of use. Mr. Fiske explained the proposed use would be regulated in the same manner as a group home.

Councilmember Jeppson explained she visited the website for this organization and indicated they had a robust program and stringent requirements in place for their residents.

Mayor Ryan anticipated this use may not be received favorably by a neighborhood depending on the size. Councilmember Jeppson agreed.

Councilmember Paul asked if the residents would have to prove they had a disability. Mr. Fiske reported applications would have to be reviewed to see if a disability was involved.

Councilmember Hovland stated he would be concerned for the neighborhood if a sober house were considered and approved. Mr. Fiske discussed how any City Code and State violations would be managed by the Police Department should they occur.

City Attorney Sweeney reported this organization was currently in litigation with the City of Cambridge and the City of Anoka as reasonable accommodations were not made by these cities.

Councilmember Hovland stated he wanted to see the City do its part to assist with treating drug and alcohol abuse. He questioned how many individuals could live in the sober house. Mr. Fiske stated the organization was requesting to allow no more than seven individuals in one location.

Councilmember Hovland asked how many homes in the City could accommodate seven individuals.

Councilmember Robertson stated she would like to see the City pursuing an ordinance that would assist individuals in need of sober house.

Councilmember Hovland commented he believed it was reasonable to have four but no more than seven individuals in the sober house. He recommended that the sober house maintain all other City Code and rental property requirements. Mr. Fiske reported this would be the case.

Councilmember Robertson recommended the sober house license be non-transferrable. She questioned how quickly the City had to take action on this item. Mr. Arneson reported the Council had some time to consider this matter. He suggested this item come back to the Council at the first workshop meeting in August for further consideration.

3.4 2020 Budget Update – Initial Finance Review.

Finance Director Huss presented an overview of the 2020 General Fund Budget that incorporates initial departmental requests. It was noted at the budget workshop of June 10, staff presented Council with a quick overview of department head requests and confirmed the Council's direction to begin 2020 budget planning under the assumption that the overall combined tax levy for the City and EDA will match that of the 2019 overall tax rate for the City and EDA.

Mr. Huss reported as of July 10, after preliminary Finance review, with allocation of the 2019 preliminary levy based on the most recent Anoka County valuation data, the General Fund Budget will have a safe margin of revenue over expenditures as defined by the City Charter. Staff is seeking Council direction on the tax levy relative to other funds that receive property tax revenue. At this point the 2020 Preliminary Budget is under City Manager review. It is expected that the City Manager's recommended 2020 General Fund Budget will be reviewed with Council at the August 12 Workshop. As part of the review process, staff will be reviewing division level responsibilities and identifying programs and activities that fall within the City's strategic plan and are relative to the City's five-year budget model. It was noted further discussions of the budget would occur with the new City Manager.

Councilmember Jeppson stated she would like to see the Council direct more money to reserves in the event the economy were to change in the future.

Mayor Ryan commented he would like to see the City Council remain committed to roads going into the future.

Councilmember Paul discussed the upcoming elections. Mr. Huss discussed how the 2020 budget included funding for four elections in 2020.

Council consensus was to direct staff to bring this item back to a Council workshop meeting in August.

3.5 Discuss Future Zoning for 105th Avenue/Nassau Street Redevelopment Area.

Economic Development Coordinator Thorvig stated when the 2030 Comprehensive Plan was approved ten years ago, the land use designation for the area was changed from Heavy Industrial (HI) to Planned Commercial/Planned Industrial (PI/PC) to reflect the future vision of the area and encourage commercial uses when redevelopments occur. The PI/PC designation generally encourages commercial and industrial uses that are part of an overall master development plan. The zoning, which regulates permitted and conditionally permitted uses, is I-2 (Heavy Industrial) which is inconsistent with the future vision for the area. The Comprehensive Plan suggests implementing a zoning change to Planned Business District (PBD) which is more consistent with the land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Thorvig explained the Blaine EDA has been active in acquiring property and now owns three properties within the redevelopment area and has a fourth under purchase agreement. There are several properties that are currently for sale or lease. Staff's concern is that a use that is allowed under I-2 zoning regulations, however not consistent with the vision for the area, will either lease or buy a property and have a long-term operation. The I-2 zoning district allows heavier industrial uses with outside storage. He provided further comment on the proposed rezoning and requested feedback from the Council.

Councilmember Jeppson questioned how property values would be impacted if the City were to rezone the land. Mr. Thorvig stated property values are general based on how the property is used and in fact could increase the value of vacant land.

Councilmember Robertson indicated she would support the rezoning but wanted to learn more from staff after Mr. Thorvig's conversations with the affected business owners. Mr. Thorvig stated he could reach out to these business owners and report back to the Council if there seemed to be some concerns about the proposed rezoning.

Council consensus was to direct staff to contact the business owners who would be impacted by the proposed rezoning then bring forward for formal consideration.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Ryan mentioned an upcoming gambling fund request for St. Tim's for some electrical work reimbursement.

The Workshop was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Tom Ryan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk

Submitted by TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.