

CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Monday, November 4, 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, Jess Robertson, and Dick Swanson.

ABSENT: None.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Finance Director Joe Huss; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Engineer Dan Schluender; City Planner Lori Johnson; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Senior Engineering Technician Al Thorp; Budget/Fiscal Analyst Ward Brown; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Communications Coordinator Ben Hayle; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Royal Lakes Center – Event Center Proposal.

This item was withdrawn by the applicant and will be brought back to the Council for consideration in December.

3.2 2020 Proposed Special Revenue Funds Budget Discussion.

Councilmember Jeppson recused herself from discussion on this item.

Finance Director Huss stated as part of the City's comprehensive budget process, staff will present preliminary budgets for two special revenue funds. Staff provided the Council with a detailed presentation on the Communications Fund and the Charitable Gambling Fund. He asked for questions or comments from the Council.

Councilmember Garvais asked what the pros and cons were of adding another City to the cable membership.

Councilmember Swanson stated this should not be a problem for the cable collaborative noting the organization already had two cable trucks and ample staff. He indicated this should be a positive for the organization.

Mr. Huss reported the Council should begin to consider who they wanted as a representative after Councilmember Swanson steps down from his position in 2020.

Councilmember Paul requested further information regarding how PEG fees can be used.

Councilmember Swanson detailed how PEG fees are collected and can be used by cable franchises.

Mayor Ryan recommended the City continue to support the Civil Air Patrol group.

Councilmember Hovland asked if Alexandra House made a request to the City every year. Mr. Huss reported this did occur.

Councilmember Garvais suggested the funds for Beyond the Yellow Ribbon be redirected to the local food shelves if not needed as indicated earlier by Mayor Ryan.

Councilmember Robertson supported the organizations making a request to Council to review their needs and better understand how many members of the community were being served.

Mayor Ryan agreed with this recommendation.

Councilmember Garvais agreed as well and suggested the food shelf organizations provide the Council with information on the community they serve, a brief overview of the organization, describe the purchasing power for donations, and what population is served. Mr. Huss stated he would speak with these organizations in order to have them prepare a presentation for the Council.

3.3 Mary Ann Young Center Facility Use Policy.

Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Therres stated in the spring of 2018, the City Council discussed the construction of a new senior center and decided to use funds in the City's capital improvement fund to finance the project. One of the discussion items for the Council was to make sure the new building is available to the public when not in use for City activities. The most discussed item was the public use of the kitchen facilities. In May of 2018, the City Council reviewed a draft facility use policy for the new Mary Ann Young Center and consensus was that it was in line with the discussions on the use of the facility and proceeded with the project. As the Mary Ann Young Center is getting closer to completion, staff wanted Council to review the facility use policy to make sure it met expectations on public use of the facility.

Mr. Therres explained the plan to charge a room rental fee for outside groups at the Mary Ann Young Center and by extension City Hall. Currently the City charges a \$25 room set-up fee for the Cloverleaf A and B meeting rooms but does not charge a fee for any of the other rooms. Recommended fees based on staff research are \$50 per half-day rental for the smaller rooms and \$100 per half-day rental for the larger/combined rooms. Staff is still researching rental fees for the kitchen and will have further discussion prior to approval of the annual fee resolution. Council should have some discussion on whether some user groups should be exempt from a rental charge. Currently the City charges all user groups for rental of any park facilities/shelters.

Councilmember Hovland asked what the damage deposit would cover. Mr. Therres explained if cleaning or repair work were required after an event this would be charged against the damage deposit.

Councilmember Garvais stated he liked the policy. He recommended a commercial kitchen rental fee rate be set that was not too high but high enough to assist with maintaining the space.

Councilmember Jeppson indicated she wanted to see the rental rates set high enough to cover the long-term maintenance for the space, which included carpet cleaning and painting. Mr. Therres reported staff was taking this into consideration.

Councilmember Hovland commented if the City started charging all of the groups at City Hall they would not have sufficient funding for meeting space and supported the City allowing non-profit groups to meet at City Hall free of charge.

Councilmember Garvais stated he would rather not make it harder for organizations to meet at City Hall.

Councilmember Paul supported staff conducting research to see what the rental rates should be. He anticipated the rental rates could be adjusted if the prices were too high. He asked how garbage would be collected from the rented rooms. Mr. Therres explained the City does not require garbage to be taken out to the dumpsters but does require garbage to be collected within the room.

Councilmember Hovland indicated he did not want the City to compete with local businesses for rental space and recommended staff speak with Blainebrook, local hotels, the Mermaid, VFWs, etc. to learn more about current fees for rental space. Mr. Therres reported staff would be looking into this then noted the main difference between the City Hall and Mary Ann Young Center space was that the City did not allow for the service of alcohol.

City Manager Wolfe stated she had concerns with security at City Hall in the evening hours. She indicated some level of security may have to be considered for City Hall and the Mary Ann Young Center during evening hours when there is public use.

Councilmember Robertson suggested the rental fee be based on the number of people attending the event. Mr. Therres explained staff was proposing fees for the Mary Ann Young Center that were based on the size of the room being rented.

Councilmember Robertson reported she did not believe \$50 and \$100 for a half-day was enough to cover the cleaning and maintenance of the space.

Councilmember Paul commented one option to address the security concern would be to have larger events be required to have their own security. Ms. Wolfe explained her main concern with security was having the City Hall building open in the evening hours to the general public. Mr. Therres reported the Mary Ann Young Center would have a little more security in place as renters would be given access to specific doors (via code) to those renting the space.

Mayor Ryan anticipated the City would not have too many kitchen requests given the training that would be required to use the space. He believed the smaller kitchens would be utilized more frequently.

Council consensus was to support charging room fees for the Mary Ann Young Center but not for City Hall.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

Tom Ryan, Mayor

Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk
Submitted by TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.