

CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
APRIL 24, 2013 – 12:00 TO 5:00 P.M.
Wahpeton City Hall

(This meeting was voice recorded.)

Members Present: Mayor, DeVries, Schmidt, Hansey, Dale, Bajumpaa (left at 4:00 p.m.), Mitskog arrived at 1:11 p.m., Bertsch, Bohn, and Mitskog.

Staff Present: Lies, Huwe, MacIver, Anderson, Nelson, Broadland, Priebe and Gutzmer.

Also Present: Matthew Liedke with the Daily News.

Welcome

Mayor Sturdevant welcomed all at 12:04 p.m.

Leadership Code

Attorney Lies explained that retreats should also be a self-evaluation/analysis. Three R's: Roles, Responsibilities; Respect. He stated that most people are on the city council to lead the community to become better. Value based codes are based off values or principles; Cardinal virtues: Prudence (get all facts & use common sense in applying to decision making process), justice (determination to give everyone their rightful due – being fair), fortitude (strength to do what is right – challenging; exemplify by doing the right thing even if there are political consequences), & temperance (patience & self control – need to digest & gather facts before act or take action) – in 300 B.C. people were talking about these virtues in governance. Seven capital sins – Pride, greed, anger, envy, laziness, gluttony, and lust. These are basic causes for needing a rule based code; rules on conflict of interest; discussed that leadership codes purpose is to guide and goals for standards of behavior expected of elected leaders and appointed staff. Leaders should use this as a guide to inspire to do what is right because they hold public trust. There is a need to be able to explain to citizens the city's needs. You need to make sure that you listen and are informed of both sides of issues before making a decision. Challenges are to get people to participate in meetings and that people watch meetings on TV; with open records & meetings law the attorney general website has its own category on this issue. Any time there is contact of a quorum of a committee or a majority of that group that hasn't scheduled or give notice, the open meetings act is violated in any form of communication (Schmidt talked to Hansey and then to Dale). A personal email at home that relates to city business is a part of open records even though they are not sent to city hall or on city computers. The Mayor counts in a quorum of council w/2 finance & 2 pw committee members. Lies discussed that emails can be reconstructed even if you delete them. Priebe asked about in a social environment - does it constitute as a quorum? Lies stated that as long as they don't discuss city business when quorum is present. He stated there is a need to be careful of being critical of the body with which you belong – don't degrade them. There are decisions that are unpopular with citizens but members need to accept responsibility. Code of Conduct was adopted on 4-21-03 to inspire and encourage the highest standard of conduct for officials and so the public is aware and has more confidence in city government. This should be an aid in decision making.

Lies stated that the new code has red revisions – mostly housekeeping. The Finance Director serves as City Auditor and changes with titles for staff need to be done. Since ordinances went on Municode they have different numbers. Added duties to the Mayor & city chair are to assure compliance with open meeting laws. Motion to close to go into executive session needs to have reason for closing the meeting. Subject should be named and needs to be unanimous to suspend rules to bring up a certain subject. The Mayor is the chief executive officer and is the immediate superior/boss to city officers/department heads. The Council is legislative branch of city government, and the municipal judge is the judicial branch. Lies discussed police officers being wired and video recorded every time they make a stop. The camera goes back 5 seconds before the siren is activated. Lies discussed council conduct with one another and said they should try to use positive format. Bajumpaa asked if discussions should be brought forward before a vote. Lies said there should be some discussion on why people are in favor of or opposed of items coming out of

committee so the public has some understanding of the decisions. Lies explained that staff's time is spent dealing with and satisfying 9 council members who need to be aware of that. Lies described instances when council members should not get involved in administrative functions. He suggested that the Deputy Auditor Gutzmer not Amos be contacted when seeking copies of documents or schedules. Council conduct with the public and other agencies was discussed. Lies discussed self reflection to be a better council and for staff to be better.

Evaluation – Fundamentals of Successful Governance

Huwe discussed 15 points to be used as guidelines. If something is brought up that is not on the agenda, Lies said should have a motion to suspend the rules. The timeframe to call to ask to put on the agenda is a 24 hour notice to department heads. Huwe said agenda items need to go to committee agenda from the city council. Lies said there are some things that come up in the meantime where the rules could be suspended. Council members took time to complete the evaluation with staff absent. Discussion followed regarding the scoring of the 15 points as follows:

Topics that went well in 2012

1. Westside drainage project collaboration.
2. Town Centre Square plaza renovation & funding
3. South side drainage project
4. Downtown Revitalization
5. Flood protection/Brairwood levee
6. Housing
7. Share Use Paths
8. Communication
9. Financing & infrastructure
10. Council cooperation

Topics that did not go well in 2012

1. Budget collaboration with Richland County
2. Abandoned properties
3. Gateway improvements
4. Succession planning
5. Housing in existing neighborhoods/reinvestment

Topics to work on in 2013

1. Housing Development, Reinvestment & Revitalization
2. Downtown Revitalization & Rehabilitation
3. CIP Plan Adoption
4. Job Growth & New Industry
5. Land Use Plan Implementation

Project Funding Scenarios

Huwe discussed the need for a policy to designate matching funds annually for special assessments & infrastructure projects. She discussed special assessment and public meetings and correspondence from Cottonwood Crt residents petitioning out of the project. Huwe asked what if the city goes into project where no more than 50% will affect property owners. She discussed setting the goal for matching funds on special assessments with matching dollars. Would we be able to implement that policy with ½ cent sales tax to buy down costs for a \$1 million that would be \$500,000; \$450,000 will be received for fuel tax from Hwy Tax revenue and it could be more; the top 10 cities census numbers are used to calculate funding. Activity in the oil patch is generating revenue that must be used for street maintenance purposes. Huwe discussed budgeting in anticipation of getting this revenue. These funds could be dedicated to projects on the ground and not in budgets as is currently done now. The DOT budget is the largest in appropriations and she said the funds were received in March for non-oil producing counties. Huwe reported that they

haven't received a financial status number for some time so she is unsure of what is unfunded. It could be \$1.7 million and said we haven't pulled up to \$1 million with SWC. Debt obligation is until 2026. Transportation reports each march identifies special highway funds and this is the 3rd year the city has received them. She explained the projects that are paid for by these funds. If set up policy there is risk and precedence would be set. Nelson discussed projects that this funding has and could be used for. He discussed annexation that could be done. Huwe discussed rural fire departments like the Dwight where Wahpeton's fire department rolls out as well. She asked if Cargill should also pay us to provide that service because Wahpeton resident's pay for the equipment. Huwe said a Mutual Aid Agreement will bill for our services as there are times where we let revenue go and it's hard to fund some pieces. Nelson stated that a tax designed for a specific use has half a chance. He discussed the 3rd Av project and discussed costs compared to funding at first vs now. Sturdevant talked about law enforcement dispatching with the county; addition of a storm sewer fee that should be used and reviewed as a selling point, like the street light fee where everyone pays for them. Schmidt questioned amount of dollars the county extracts from city with taxes and said this has bothered him when we gave employees 1% raise & county gave theirs 4%. He asked what our share is of the \$225,000. Huwe explained their formula and said the city gets deduct for city's value in mill. They take the total call volume and 6500 generated for COW; the only entity based on call volume is COW, NDSCS gets billed but not on volume. Cell phone bills pay 911 fees. Lies the county gets all 911 funds. He said multiple phone lines have the 911 charge as well. The Wahpeton numbers are probably close to 1/2 of all county numbers. Mitskog said this has been a recurring issue and there is a need to sit down with county elected officials and bring all these points forward and let them know that all our citizens are being double charged and we need some accountability. A meeting will be scheduled with Richland County officials.

Break

Huwe stated that the Mayor, Hansey and Dale had meeting with Masonite. Mayor discussed need to have something done; they have have the fire and health departments involved. Masonite has put together a proposal to cut back on their straw piles. Hansey said they have 15,000 tons on site with 30% recoverable and 70% for compost. Masonite will put together a compost site on #18 and will re-bale, stack and reuse straw. They have traps set around perimeter of facility for rats & mice. Masonite is hoping to get a permit from state for compost sites from the State and permission from Ottertail Power. Dale stated that Masonite sells compost to a facility in Illinois and to farmers. Bajumpaa would like to buy some and will contact them. Mitskog asked if this is a reaction from pressure we put on them or what prompted the cleanup. It was reported that the health department pressured them to have a process in place by May 1st or there would be a fine. Dale said he got calls from neighbors. The health department wants a meeting in a month to see what has happened. Mitskog stated that the area is growing residentially to the west and the city needs to be proactive with this issue.

Economic Development Update

Priebe explained changes on Dakota Avenue. She discussed the funding program. At 720 Dakota Ave all rooms are apartments. The structure is on the national register of historical places; Nelson did not participate with historical funding. Schmidt recommended that the newspaper publish before & after pictures so public can see improvements.

Priebe discussed her report and the people who serve and assist the city council with their decision. There is an article about housing, major street plan, and land use plan by the bypass. The golf course had a good year last year and she discussed issues with opening this year. Exceeded \$2 million in sales tax and explained the breakdown; still maintain those percentages; fund expenses discussed; mini match program explained; Bell State Bank should have checked with state historical society before demolishing a house; other buildings were discussed that were either built or renovated. JCP storefront on hold until it is coordinated to repair the water break in front; Oasis and TCS plaza improvements were discussed. Priebe appreciates DeVries reports on the radio and said that helps the public understands projects by getting the word out to the public. She said maybe we can do something more often in the newspaper. Priebe discussed what Wahpeton has to offer for recreational and businesses. Leadership Team has developed a team including Huwe, Lies, Broadland, Priebe & Nelson to develop strategies.

MacIver discussed the library improvement project that should be included as part of the beautification of the city. Mitskog asked about numbers for employment and if there has been a recap of lost jobs. Priebe explained that Job Service's employment numbers are for all of Richland Co instead of just Wahpeton. Wahpeton is considered a micro polity community. She will check on numbers.

Collaboration with other Political Subdivisions

Huwe discussed collaborating with Richland County and the Airport Board and Park Board. Joint powers agreements are held with them and there is a need to sit down with the organizations with a specific agenda to discuss issues. Thorsteinson said it is a good product provided by 911 communications. Overall it goes above & beyond what we need. The point of conflict is how the cost is allocated. Anderson discussed benefits working with someone you know everyday vs someone in Bismarck. He explained that they wouldn't have access to some of the information as they do now. The Chief agrees that price is high. Schmidt said Chief has talked about file issues to which Anderson reported that space is inadequate. Schmidt said maybe the city needs to look at our own building. Mitskog said old city hall building right in that area. Hansey reported that there is a minimum need of 5 people to operate a jail 24/7. He discussed equipment costs and said there would need substantial investigation before making a change. Lies said the city doing their own operations is not feasible, but the city could contract with Breckenridge or connect in with Fargo system or state. He said he feels that the city is paying way too much for dispatching. Sturdevant recommended putting a cost analysis together and meet with the county about these concerns. Mitskog suggested needing a strategy, facts and good valid ideas to participate in cost. Bohn suggested putting a proposal together to make the determination that the city will go with an alternative or the county won't take us seriously in negotiations.

Recap of 2012 Council Goals & Priorities, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Challenges – Huwe said this is meant to be a discussion and it is good to acknowledge accomplishments. She discussed Dakota Av where great progress was seen. The joint agreement with the park board that Nelson and Bajumpaa played a role. Restaurant tax just starting to show – looked at new Christmas ornaments, TCS plaza improvements. Housing Development, Reinvestment & Revitalization is another area where the number of households are growing, but not the population. Housing development will always grow and more emphasis on development is needed and the need to keep looking for developable lots. Westside Drainage Improvement Project with Dwight & Center townships. Nelson said natural drain from Wild Rice from west side of Schmidt Addition was cleaned to Highway 210 plus cleaning in the storm sewer to improve the drainage in area. The board will meet in July to decide whether to continue as a board. Bohn asked if there an ongoing maintenance agreement. Nelson stated that not at this time. Bajumpaa discussed partnering with the townships and acquired a grant to draw down taxpayers cost. Landowners were happy with the results. Huwe stated that this was long time coming and a contribution of time and effort. Dale stated that it was deemed necessary in 1992 to which Nelson stated was over due at that time.

Community promotion – Huwe said there have been concerted efforts with Priebe & Shari Hetland and with great volunteers with economic development and CVB to get the word out. Social media is used effectively to get news to citizens. Sturdevant discussed activities in town. Bajumpaa said he appreciates emails about community events. Mitskog said they are noticeable and appreciated. Priebe said that Shari does all the posters and follows up on complaints. Huwe discussed CVB recently conducted retreat with Cole Carley, who is public relations professional. The CVB is making great strides by contributing to our community and that a lot of people who are not residents serve on CVB.

CIP Plan Adoption – Huwe discussed the plan and said the city is closer in 2012 in presenting a fiscally constrained plan. Activity earlier makes it closer to CIP to be adopted and presented to the public. This plan needs to be carried out and implemented so there is a significant plan that would have to forgo other commitments. If the city doesn't adopt, they will continue to progress on its own. In next 2 months Huwe said to look for a public hearing maybe in May and there is a need to be ready to stand behind it. Like housing the CIP should always be on our agenda.

Strengths & Weaknesses – Huwe asked how is the city doing competitively – how are we doing with our resources. Weakness need to be identified because unfortunately let people down.

Opportunities & Challenges – Huwe recommended that the council think about these and how they should be handled.

2013 Priorities

Huwe discussed setting goals for 2013. Bohn said a PWD replacement for Nelson is one of the things that will take place in 2013.

- Housing Development, Reinvestment & Revitalization
- Downtown Revitalization & Rehabilitation
- CIP Plan Adoption
- Job Growth & New Industry
- Land Use Plan Implementation

Adjourn

Motion by Mitskog to adjourn at 4:06.

Submitted by Jerrilyn Gutzmer