

CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
March 16, 2012
8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Mayor Sturdevant, Bertsch, Hansey, Hartman, DeVries, Dale, Bajumpaa, and Bohn.

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

Called to order at 8:10 a.m.

Mayor welcomed everyone and said it will be good to get new ideas.

Darcie provided a quote from Steve Jobs: ***“But innovation comes from people meeting up in the hallways or calling each other at 10:30 at night with a new idea, or because they realized something that shoots holes in how we’ve been thinking about a problem. It’s ad hoc meetings of six people called by someone who thinks he has figured out the coolest new thing ever and who wants to know what other people think of his idea. And it comes from saying no to 1,000 things to make sure we don’t get on the wrong track or try to do too much. We’re always thinking about new markets we could enter, but it’s only by saying no that you can concentrate on the things that are really important.”***
Steve Jobs in BusinessWeek Oct. 12, 2004

MuniCode Demonstrations

Lies explained MuniCode that is located on Wahpeton’s website and how to navigate through it when you are searching ordinances. Zoning classifications or maps are not located in the ordinances. Broadland stated that the zoning map is available on Richland County’s GIS program. The zoning maps are also located on the city’s website.

Residential Growth Management

Priebe explained marketing strategies and an advertisement that was placed in the Fergus Falls Journal Progress report to market Wahpeton. She discussed developing neighborhoods; parks, shared use paths, and close location to shopping etc. She explained revitalization in neighborhoods along with the mayor setting up a housing committee. Highway 210 is a focus area and she explained what’s proposed for the next 20 years. Some of the commercial was changed to mixed residential area and on the Rosewood ring where there can be additional housing. Nelson said this is a future land use plan but no zoning ordinance changes have been made yet. He discussed commercial areas and said a decision hasn’t been fully implemented. Priebe discussed the downtown focus area and described property near Fairview cemetery area that could be used for mixed housing. She suggesting utilizing the RZ zone to promote housing and said no one has utilized that program for housing. Nelson explained that there are different zoning uses and he doesn’t encourage a mix of commercial and residential districts. He said zoning should be changed in the downtown area, i.e. apartments. Nelson explained the south west focus area and recommends an rfp for a mini-match for this particular area. The housing task force has looked at land behind the Roadway Inn and there are a lot of city owned lots that could be marketed for construction. The housing task force is focused on new construction. Priebe discussed priorities for single family/detached and multi-family/attached housing.

Priebe met with Jeff & DeeDee Nelson about renovating the old hospital at 720 Dakota Av. She said some people like to live in unique locations close to shopping, etc. Broadland explained that there are 13 apartments in that building. Priebe stated there is an appearance grant program that sunsetted on December 31st. The development team said Nelson’s could use it for the Dakota Ave and the street sides as the grant is for store fronts. \$17,000 for ½ windows, the face of the building, and the railing of the balcony needs to be refurbished. A 2% revolving loan of \$35,000 with grant matching of \$22,000. The building was purchased for \$25,000. Nelson’s opted out of RZ historic tax credits even though the building is on the historic list. Priebe stated that if he wanted to tap into state historical funds, he would have to stay with their restrictions.

Priebe said Tedrow will be building 2 more twin homes. Broadland has received several calls from people who want to sell their homes to get into Tedrow’s twin homes. Nelson discussed the comprehensive plans

goals on housing. There are a number of policies that gets back to preservation and development. Priebe said individuals are taking serious looks at older neighbors, buying and demolishing structures and building what they want. She said the revolving loan fund account was started through housing and reinvestment although the focus lately has been on commercial. The city has partnered with Gate City Bank for housing rehabilitation and so far only ½ of \$250,000 has been used for the HIPP program. Priebe said the program is income tested which may account for low usage. She discussed creating partnerships for grants for construction of two new single family homes for low-moderate income people and should hear the end of April if it has been approved. There was previously a 3rd forgiveness program that the elderly used that had a 1% interest loan.

Current Infrastructure Issues

Nelson presented a short tour to explain the city's assets. LS 3 will be a major project as it is undersized for area it serves. There will be changes to the sewer line with moving and adding more pumping and pipes to LS 1 at an estimated cost of \$1.6 million. He said LS 1 is the major pumping station that covers the whole city. Parts are now obsolete and the odor is caused by hydrogen sulfide that is hard on concrete. Nelson discussed problems with winter storage at the lagoons. He said the city could add more storage space to the north. Wahpeton's wastewater rates are among the lowest.

Bad streets – Nelson presented photographs of streets throughout the city that are in need of repair. Replacement costs are \$70,221,622.00 and annual R & R is \$1,796,000.00.

Water system – He explained the lime system, chemicals to treat water, and equipment that is used. \$200,000 is needed for repairs in the water plant. Nelson explained laptops that each plant operator has at home to handle issues that may arise and every pump station, lift station, and towers have a radio in them. 3 million gallons of water can be run through the plant for storage. He said Breckenridge has toured our plant because they have major issues with theirs and need to make a decision on repairs or replacement of theirs.

Westside drainage – goes to the Wild Rice by two drains. Nelson discussed the drainage ditches, cleaning, and said the whole conveyance needs attention. He explained the project between city and townships to maintain and clean the ditches. Bajumpaa discussed tying into drain 1 to combine into a single conveyance with the 16th Ave drain.

Levees and pump stations - Nelson explained pump stations and the rip rap installed. He discussed the pond behind city hall that is used for drainage. He discussed the breakout area south.

Public Works facility – discussed the old shop areas that are tight on space for vehicle storage. \$167 million is needed for replacement costs for city infrastructure, shared use path, alleys, signals, etc. This would come to \$3.3 per year.

Nelson discussed RBT's:

Plan, Fund & Construct:

- Eastside Sanitary Sewer Improvements
- Westside Drainage Improvements
- Generation II Storm Pumping System
- Public Works/Public Safety Facility

Finish Flood Protection System:

- Draft & Publish Flood Protection Manual
- Establish Break-out Area Management Group
- Update Floodplain Ordinance

Prepare Facility Plans for:

- Water Supply & Treatment
- Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Prepare Land Use Plans for:

- Southwest Area
 - Downtown
 - Northwest Area
- (per comprehensive plan action items)

Institutionalize the CIP (So it's like an annual visit to the dentist – routine)

Reduce Over-Reliance on Assessments (for funding the CIP)
Establish a Storm Sewer Enterprise Fund

Prepare Rate Studies for:

- Water
- Sanitary sewer
- Storm sewer

Build, Train & Drill All-City Emergency Management Team
Reorganize PW Department (to include Operations Manager)

Nelson discussed needed reorganization of public works department structure. He said his position has a wide variety of responsibilities, including vector, budgeting, and CIP. He discussed finances and budgeting needs with immediate needs for structure. He said every time there is a switch in top management there is an opportunity to make changes. Proposed PW Operational Manager should be brought in for day to day operations that the PW Director/Engineer handles now. The position doesn't need to be an engineer. Nelson does have drafts of job descriptions and he suggests 4-year degree or equivalent experience. Mayor, personnel & pw chair & pw director will meet regarding the proposed position.

Succession Planning

Nelson suggested that the city council take time to plan for his eventual retirement and discussed things they need to address. MacIver is working on her personal tasks as a librarian for whoever would take over her duties when she retires. She recommends that her replacement have a 4-year degree with library administration experience. Currently the staff is self sufficient and can run the library without her, but no one is qualified for her position.

Joint Powers Agreements with Park Board

Darcie explained the joint powers agreements that were discussed at council retreat last year. Lies explained that jpa's need to be fairly specific and he would like a MOU or a Memorandum of understanding, which is a generalized document. He said the city could have a master jpa along with separate items. An MOU is a temporary document with a time table and priorities. Huwe discussed the 16 items to use for a jpa and they need to be prioritized in the budget. Funding sources for projects were discussed. Lies explained if a MOU is drafted to prioritize projects it should be done by June for 2013 budgeting and to do each year ahead of budgeting. Huwe discussed employee payroll and benefits that need to be addressed now and said there are examples out there that we can use to model jpa. Lies, Nelson, Huwe, Priebe, and Beyer will meet and prioritize before bringing it to the council and park board on April 16th.

Measure 2 Overview

Huwe discussed Measure 2. Priebe discussed voting done by a talk radio station show. Priebe said no votes were from renters. Huwe said this has been widely discussed on talk radio and there will become more activity along with litigation that accompanies it. The legislative interim committee agenda is not posted yet but a meeting is scheduled for April 3rd. Clark Williams is a knowledgeable political figure that represents Wahpeton. He provides budget interest in strong detail. Huwe discussed a fiscal impact statement and how it will affect state coffers not city's coffers. There is a need to know if it is enough and sustainable. There may be a need to meet and formulate responses and be prepared to participate in special sessions.

Mayor discussed the interim legislative committee that has to come up with a plan to replace funding that would be lost with property taxes. KeepItLocalND.com has information and shows agencies that are in support. April 10th a meeting is scheduled here managed through the local Chamber of Commerce. Lies hasn't received Attorney General opinion, which will also say if allow AAUW can broadcast from city hall. Bertsch said the AAUW may assist COC in setup of these forums. Lies asked if they still would have a candidate forum using city facilities. Bertsch said they may still hold a candidates forum. Mayor said COC is requesting funding assistance to help finance advertising and rental space. Bertsch asked what would happen with no property taxes to city finances. Huwe reported that 25% of the operating revenue is

based on property taxes. City has a large TIF district, i.e. Wal-Mart and explained TIF. Measure 2 said can't levy tax based on value; there are areas that are conflicted and discussed bond payments. There are real implications with wording.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Challenges

What Went Well

- Town Centre Square
- Flood protection system
- Drainage improvements
- City's image improving
- Comprehensive Plan
- Infill – housing progress, dilapidated properties

What Did Not Go Well

- Infrastructure (Special Assessments)
- Certification of levee system/continuation of levee system
- Lack of housing – need to develop housing alternatives
- Dakota Avenue CAM
- Communication between staff and elected officials
- Capital Improvement planning
- Budget

Work on in 2012

- Dakota Avenue CAM & city-wide beautification; develop and marketing program
- Housing development & revitalization & presentation
- City/Center & Dwight townships completion of west side drainage & identify opportunities for future maintenance
- Community promotion
- Capital Improvement Plan

Huwe said GASB54 guidelines stated that if funds are dedicated by the city council they go into the financial statement, not just the minutes. Those funds are restricted or committed.

Adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Submitted by Jerrilyn Gutzmer