

Special Wahpeton City Council Meeting
Committee of the Whole
March 12, 2024
4:30 p.m. – Wahpeton City Hall

City Council Present: Mayor Brett Lambrecht, Council Members: Shannon Schillinger, Dr. David Woods, Jason Goltz, Tiana Bohn, Renata Fobb, and Cory Unruh

Absent: Kelly McNary and Chad Perdue

City Staff Present: Darcie Huwe, Dennis Miranowski, Carla Broadland, Chris DeVries, Matthew Anderson, Todd Johnson, Kyle Rogahn, and Assistant City Attorney Will Budke

Mayor's Ad-Hoc Committee on Recreation Present: Amanda Fisher, Stacia Henningsen, Dr. Rod Flanigan, Michael Kaiser, Julie Rosenberg, Roger Jensen, Brad Edwardson.

Others Present: Jim Sturdevant, Kevin Brennan, and Steve Dale. Adam Barnett of JLG Architects

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Lambrecht at 4:36 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

Proposed Wahpeton Wellness & Recreation Center Ad Hoc Cmt. Update with JLG Architects

Lambrecht reviewed a timeline of activities working on the feasibility of a community wellness and recreation center from May 3, 2021, to present. Specific detail was provided on the activities of the Mayor's Ad-Hoc Committee created August 21, 2023. Amanda Fisher and Stacia Henningsen were part of the original grass roots effort in 2021 and have subsequently been appointed to the Mayor's Ad-Hoc Committee.

Lambrecht explained Fisher has created a nine-step progress plan for 2023-2024 that includes 13 amenity specific subcommittees; aquatics center, fitness center, group fitness rooms, gymnasiums, indoor play park, indoor turf, marketing, offices, pickleball, public meeting space, senior center/kitchen/community room, storage and walking track. Each committee included 2 – 6 members, several individuals serve on multiple committees. Each committee was tasked with preparing an amenity report to address the following: 1) needs assessment, 2) type, size and layout of the specific amenity, 3) detailed description including intended users groups, ages and adaptability, 4) funding source/revenue streams, 5) identify potential partnerships or sponsorship opportunities for the amenity. Flanigan, Edwardson, Kaiser, Fisher, Jensen and Henningsen provided input on the need for additional recreational facilities in Wahpeton to attract and retain residents. Fisher added a corporate sponsor interested in making a significant cash contribution for naming rights of the facility has come forward.

Fobb inquired about the process asking if a budget is established then a facility concept designed or a facility concept designed then the budget? Adam Barnett of JLG Architects explained the budget, site and visual concept are essential for decision makers and voters. The progress plan and sub-committees are part of the process of determining amenities and the subsequent costs. Barnett explained the pre-design proposal includes conceptual floorplans, renderings and preliminary budget. The basic services compensation for pre-design services is \$60,000; if the project proceeds to construction the \$60,000 will be applied towards the total professional fee ranging from 6.5% to 8% of the cost of construction. The architectural work schedule proposed is April 2024 with final deliverables by the first week of June 2024.

Goltz stated the ability to levy a sales tax for recreation should not be taken lightly by the City Council. Goltz referenced census data for Wahpeton with a per capita income of \$30,450, 18.3% of the population living in poverty and 11.7% of all school aged children in Wahpeton living in poverty. Goltz noted the regressive nature of sales tax having a higher impact on people with lower incomes. Goltz stated he wants

to see a scaled back construction project funded with donations. Goltz added he is opposed to the city levying sales tax for recreation at the expense of essential infrastructure currently funded by sales tax. Goltz expressed the importance of the Park Board and School District to take responsibility for the programming and operational costs of a recreation center (outside the scope of city obligated services). Barnett concurred most similar projects are funded by a combination of public private funds, the only way to build a multi-generational facility is to prioritize, coordinate and commit funding from multiple sources. Fobb stated she would like to see the Council set a specific percentage of the project cost to be privately funded.

Fisher explained as of March 5th, 2024 all subcommittees have presented their reports to the Ad-Hoc committee, the information was aggregated to estimate two concepts (low and high) of the recommended square footage needed for each of the amenities, storage and office space completing the collection of information and programming concepts of the progress plan. Committee agendas, minutes and materials are available upon request.

Lambrecht stated the next steps in the progress plan require professional architectural services to draft a building plan and budget. **Motion by Bohn, seconded by Woods, to approve the pre-design proposal from JLG Architects for \$60,000 funded from the Sales Tax for Recreation. Roll Call Vote with Bohn, Woods, Schillinger, Fobb and Unruh voting (aye) and Goltz voting (nay). Motion carried 5 to 1.**

Motion by Schillinger, to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Mayor Brett Lambrecht

Darcie Huwe, Auditor