

City Council Work Session
July 18, 2023

Work Session started at 5:34pm

Councilmembers present: Karla Davis, Cindy Stelten, Jody Orbeck and Steven Dahlager; Kyle Christensen absent

The Council reviewed the portions of the parking information from Ord. 505.01 Subd. 3 (g) and Ord. 1170.02 (1) prepared by the Deputy Clerk and the recommendation that Ord. 505.01 Subd. 3 (g) be removed. The Council looked online and discussed recommended verbiage to see if there were better options. While they do not want people parking in their yards, they also do not want to be requiring residents to pave or cement and existing gravel driveway to expand it to accommodate more parking for vehicles. The Council was in agreement to remove Ord. 505.01 Subd. 3 (g) and also the last sentence of Ord. 1170.02 (2).

The Council reviewed the proposed chicken regulations and permit application prepared by the Deputy Clerk. They would like verbiage included regarding no free-range chickens allowed; setback distances were discussed at length. Current accessory building regulations are 10ft from the property line; the Council feels that with some of the smaller backyards in town residents would not have a place to put their chicken coop or this would have it located too close to a home. Council was in agreement that the setback should be 5-10ft from the property line with verbiage stating that the resident does so at their own risk (in regards to being placed in a utility easement, needing to be moved later, etc.). A site plan must be submitted with the application and staff must take a picture when the resident has finished or the resident must submit a photo at completion.

The Council reviewed the nuisance letters sent out by the City Attorney.

Mayor Davis discussed the signage request received from Jeremy Kuechle with those present; no motion was made at last week's Council meeting. Upon further discussion, the Council will make the following motion at the August 7th Council meeting: interested parties can apply through the City (and we will submit the application to MnDOT), they will also be responsible for paying any applicable fee for the application. The sign can remain in place for a 1-year period and if no one else is interested in having a sign put up, then it can stay up.

The workshop ended at 7:00pm to allow for a Special Meeting to be held.

The Council reconvened the workshop after the Special Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm

The City Clerk discussed the water tower heater with the Council. She believes if she heard correctly, the Public Works Bldg. bids came in much higher than anticipated. Staff was having a hard time getting logged into the opening and was only able to catch the very end of the bid opening; she will double-check with the City Engineer. If that is to be the case, she is recommending that the Council proceed

with the water tower heater to keep moving forward on that project before winter. The Council was in agreement with that.

Those present discussed a cannabis moratorium ordinance and reviewed the proposed one being presented for the Public Hearing at the July 31st Special Meeting.

The City Clerk reviewed the additional funding passed by the legislature this session with the Council; dedicated small cities funding was put into place and will start in 2024, the city will receive a one-time payment of public safety aid in December 2023 and a new LGA formula has been set so additional funding will start being received for that in 2024. The City Clerk also handed out an informational sheet prepared by Carver County on the assessment and property tax cycle that demonstrates how long it can take a newly constructed property to come onto the tax role. Also handed out was YTD revenue and expenditure information.

The Council discussed the preparation of the tax levy and budget for 2024. The City Clerk explained that with the spreadsheet received from Stearns County, entities are able to see their current tax capacity rate, levy, value, etc. and information is also shown and can be input to keep the same tax rate, levy, have a 5% increase, 10% increase, etc. The Council directed the Clerk to prepare the 2024 levy the same as 2023. The City Clerk explained that currently (as of 6/20) the tax rate was 66.72% and that keeping the 2024 levy the same as 2023 would reduce the tax rate to 61.39%. The Council liked this idea and would like to see if this is possible.

The workshop ended at 9:00pm