

Lewiston City Council Agenda
Special Council Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2017
Lewiston City Hall – 6:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Special City Council Meeting called to order by Mayor Beth Carlson at 6:00pm on March 6, 2017.

2. Roll Call

Present (5): Mayor Beth Carlson, Council Member Larry Rupprecht, Council Member Dan Robertson, Council Member Jeremy Kelly, and Council Member Bryce Lange. Not Present (0): None.

3. City Auditor- Thomas Cummings

Mr. Cummings informed the Council the current financial state of city funds by account. The City's money is broken up into different accounts to include a checking and money market account. The total funds available to the City are broken up into multiple funds which include the City's reserve. The general reserve fund contains enough money for the City to operate for approximately one year. It was also explained the amount of reserves the City holds affects the bond rating of the City which is currently an A+ rating.

Mr. Cummings also informed the Council the state of the City's enterprise funds which are comprised of the water fund and sewer fund. The water fund intakes enough revenue to support the water operations within the City. The sewer fund breaks even at best due to outstanding debt services and the payments made on those bonds.

4. Emergency Services Building Committee

Ambulance Director Matt Essig presented the work which has been done by the Emergency Services Building Committee over the past several years. The accomplishments of the Committee include: identifying the deficiencies of the current building with the guidance of Yaggy Colby, a location study which was completed by Five Bugles, and a working floor plan for a new building.

Director Essig informed the Council of the difficulties of having the Ambulance Office in City Hall and the Ambulance at the Fire Station which affects response times to calls as well as splitting different equipment between two buildings. It would be beneficial to have a dedicated

area for training and classes compared to sharing the community center with other groups. The current facility spaces do not include adequate sleeping quarters or hygiene facilities such as a shower. There is also a potential need to be able to store a second ambulance in the future which would be difficult as there is only one bay which has space to store the current service ambulance.

Fire Chief Tim Dahl informed the Council that fire trucks are getting bigger providing less and less space for firefighters to put their gear on for a fire call. The diminishing space is leading to a greater risk of injury prior to and after a fire call. There are also OSHA concerns regarding the lack of space and proper ventilation for running trucks as they enter and leave the station. There are structural concerns of the building and adequate parking for the volunteers who respond to the fire calls. Chief Dahl informed the Council that if a fire truck is leaving while other firefighters are arriving, there is the possibility of having an accident as almost all the firefighters park on the street in front of the station.

Other concerns expressed included the lack of dedicated space for cleaning equipment after a fire call and inadequate space to store SCBA equipment. There was also a concern regarding the current office space along with the ability to store records and other administrative materials.

Police Chief Scott Yeiter expressed concerns regarding administrative space needs. There is currently only one office for the police department. There is a lack of secured space for evidence is currently is stored in the office. There is no separate space to interview victims, witnesses, or suspects involved in an investigation of a crime. Chief Yeiter expressed his desire to have separate spaces for the chief and other officers as the space is shared between all the police personnel. The space to store police vehicles is very limited. Currently the only place to store police vehicles inside is in the public works building taking up space for public works vehicles and equipment. Chief Yeiter expressed other concerns such as not having a heated garage to store police vehicles. The extreme temperatures Minnesota has between the winter and summer can be hard on not only the vehicles but also the squad computers.

Chief Yeiter expressed the ability of a new building to house space for computers which could also be used as a back-up dispatch location for Winona County emergency services. If there is a major incident which does not allow for the current facility in Winona to be used, Lewiston

could be suitable to be used as a back-up location for the coordination of county wide emergency services. Chief Yeiter stated he has spoken with individuals from the County's emergency services for having Lewiston as back-up location along with different ideas to compensate the City financially for the use of the space.

Citizen concerns arose regarding the position of a new building regarding its location to the railroad tracks. Director Essig explained the idea of having a building on both sides of the tracks has been discussed. The results favored the purposing of only one building due to call volume and the division of resources.

Director Essig informed the Council research had been done regarding the ability to re-hab the current building. Working with consultants, the recommendation was not to perform a full re-hab of the building. This is due to the amount of work that would need to be done and it would only provide a short term solution to the building's condition.

Director Essig informed the Council the Committee has reviewed a wants and needs list which was scaled down to only have the basic needs put into a plan. This list was given to Five Bugles who specializes in emergency services buildings. They reviewed possible site locations for a new building to be built. The two best site locations included the current site with the addition of the adjacent parcels and the Brion Plumbing site. Through Committee discussion, it was concluded the best of the two sites would be the current site with the adjacent parcels. Director Essig presented this site location with a layout of how it could be transformed to best meet the needs of each emergency services department along with a concept building plan.

Director Essig informed the Council of an EDA study of the two locations. The EDA evaluation of the Brion site took into account different factors. Mr. Brion did not prefer a land swap but was willing to entertain the idea. Mr. Brion also has two income generating properties, a garage, and a house.

Director Essig informed the Council of the second site location which is adjacent to the current fire station. The property consists of three lots and has a convenient access to Highway 14. This property was also purchased by the City without the land being dedicated to any specific project or use. The Committee is recommending the best site for a building to be placed is on the

property adjacent to the existing site. The current fire station would remain in service during the construction and then would be knocked down when the new building became operational.

The second site location would allow for emergency vehicles to be stored until the new building is operational. It would allow for safe and adequate parking for all events and fire calls as there is the potential to have over 30 vehicles needing a place to park for a fire call. It would also provide a space within the parking lot for a helicopter landing zone. With more space, emergency vehicles would be able to operate with greater safety and efficiency with quick access to major roads. The conceptual building plan includes two drive-thru bays which decreases the need to back fire trucks into a stall and decreases the potential for an accident to occur.

The second location would also provide an improved ability to showcase the Lewiston Emergency Services as all police, fire, and ambulance would be in one location. The location has suitable room for expansion to meet the growing needs of the community and an increase for a safer response from volunteer firefighters. The conceptual building plan would provide a dedicated space for activities, fundraiser, and training. A new building would demonstrate the City's desire to recruit and retain volunteer members of the Fire Department and Ambulance Service.

Director Essig informed the Council that potential funding sources would be pursued through grants, donations, fundraising, and potential funds from Winona County. To obtain success in funding, the land would need to be shovel ready. The money not be raised through fundraising could be done through a city bond. The bond can be voted on by Council or put to a referendum.

The Emergency Services Building Committee recommends the Council dedicates the land around the current Fire Station to be used for a future building, give permission for the Committee to develop a conceptual drawing of the current site and floor plans, begin to develop a financial strategy with goals and a time table to follow, and to have a community forum held to present the conceptual drawings.

Mike Bubany provided his recommendation for the City to dedicated the land and have a referendum allowing the community to decide if they are in favor of a new building. He also stated the cost of a new building will only increase the longer it takes prior to approving a build.

5. City Engineer- Bryan Holtz

Mr. Holtz presented the street rating system used in 2016 to determine the condition of each street. He presented information on the streets with a rating of three or below. The streets with a low rating are: Service Drive, Rice Street, First Street, Second Street, Benike Street, North Fremont Street, West Main Street, Country Club Drive, Riverside Drive, Meadow Drive, East Street, Linden Street, and Nicholas Drive. The estimated financial cost of fully reconstructing each street was presented totaling approximately \$9.2 million dollars. Full reconstruction of the streets would include water lines, sewer lines, storm water lines, the street surface, curbs, and sidewalks.

Mr. Holtz presented a three project scenario to include a project in 2018, 2021, and a future planned project. The project order would provide repair to the lowest rated streets while spreading the cost of the projects out over several years. Mr. Holtz also briefly informed the Council there is a report regarding refurbishing the water tower but he had nothing to add from the prior Council meeting where it was presented.

6. City Financial Advisor- Mike Bubany

Mr. Bubany informed the Council he had been working with Administrator Travis Brierley regarding different strategies to maximize the ability of the City to complete as many projects as possible. Those discussions included streets, the water tower, city vehicles, and an emergency services building along with different options of funding. Mr. Bubany demonstrated the ability of the City to fund larger projects along with the impact to the City's tax capacity, debt per capita, and water and sewer rates. Mr. Bubany informed the Council that after a timeline was set for projects, he could better project the financial effect on the City and the community.

Member Robertson motioned to adjourn the Special City Council Meeting. Seconded by Member Kelly. Approved 5-0.

The Lewiston Special City Council Meeting was adjourned at 8:37pm on March 6, 2017,

Submitted by:
Travis Brierley
City Administrator/Clerk