

February 27, 2010
CITY OF WINDSOR HEIGHTS
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
7:30 A.M. – Council Chambers
Unabridged version

Item 1: Roll Call

Mayor Sullivan called meeting to order at 7:35 a.m. Council present: Charlene Butz, Diana Willits David Jenison, Betty Glover, and Steve Peterson. City Administrator Marketa George Oliver, Police Chief Gary Walters, Community Services Director Josh Heggen, and Police Captain Dennis McDaniel.

Item 2: Approval of the Agenda - Roll Call 067

Peterson moved Willits seconded approval. Voice vote passed unanimously.

Item 3: Consideration of resolution 10/0227-068 confirming police succession plan and adopting employment agreement. Roll Call 068

Butz expressed her concern that she was not informed at a prior point that this was going to happen, since other council members had known about this. Oliver reiterated what she had said when they had spoken privately about this earlier that it was an oversight. She had thought the Mayor was talking with Council Member Butz and vice versa. Chief Walters is excited that the city can take on this succession plan, noting that he thinks the City does a tremendous job training and grooming staff for more responsibilities. He said he indicated during the discussion at Public Safety Committee meeting that he had been grooming Captain McDaniel to become the future Police Chief, but apparently the timeline regarding when he was planning to retire was not clear. Walters said McDaniel is an exceptional young person with the skills and the drive to become a great police chief. He said the City would benefit greatly by adopting the succession plan before another City hires him away from Windsor Heights.

Oliver noted this plan will also save the City money, that during the last police chief search, the City spent over \$12,000. Glover asked if McDaniel would consider moving into Windsor Heights from his home in Norwalk. McDaniel said he would have to have a conversation with his wife and family first, noting he recently built a home in Norwalk and they have family in the area, so it would be a really tough decision and move. He said that is not to say that it could never happen and that he was not committed to the Department. He has poured his heart and soul into the Windsor Heights Department. Jenison said given the change, he would love to have McDaniel as a neighbor. He said he has ridden with a police officer and morale in the department seems to be excellent. Butz said she thinks it is great to have a candidate so qualified in house. Willits noted she does not think we have ever had a police chief live in town. All the council expressed excitement that the city had such a great, well-qualified internal candidate to fill the position. Peterson moved Glover seconded approval. Roll call vote passed unanimously.

Item 4: Discussion of Budget Items

Oliver reviewed the proposed city budget and some areas where the city could enhance revenue or save money. The council reviewed the document. Oliver said the first discussion item was of stormwater fees. She said already included in the budget was the Stormwater Advisory Committee's recommendation to increase the monthly residential fee from \$3.50 to \$4.25 and make other adjustment to the commercial rates accordingly. Glover said she would rather see a levy rate adjustment than have the stormwater rate increase more, because people can take property taxes as a deduction. Jenison thinks it is important to give the most potential tax breaks possible to the resident. She said the Advisory Committee is going to discuss the commercial rates further. Oliver added that currently, for example, the Walmart on the southeast side of Des Moines pays \$2,900 in stormwater fees monthly. The Committee is going to review commercial rates further.

The council also suggested that a fence permit and basic life services fee be put into place. Peterson said the cost should not be less than a sidewalk permit. Peterson also suggested that a 5% capital equipment replacement fee for the ambulance be pursued and there was consensus to do so.

Oliver distributed updated Pilot information and discussed how the "payment in lieu of taxes" was calculated, on the percentage of the general fund levy rate that was dedicated to public safety. The total annual cost of community protection for the properties is \$40,620. Peterson asked Oliver to update the spread sheet to add police and fire calls for 2009.

Council liked the idea of charging more for special event items. The council also discussed and suggested several different ways the city can save some funds. Ideas included reducing the amount the city pays in fireworks (which will affect the fireworks in calendar year 2011), adjusting the July 4th schedule/events, holding fewer movies in the park and golf carts on the 4th. Another suggestion was to look at moving the July 4th festivities to a date in early August in 2011 for the celebration of the City's anniversary. Peterson thinks it could hurt the parade. The suggestion was also made to have the parade later in 2010 and condense the timeline of events in the park. This would save staff time and the money spent for Bill Riley and the parade would then end in the park, just as the first band is beginning to play and also around dinner time, which could be beneficial to the vendors. Willits hates to lose the Bill Riley talent show. Walters thinks if the parade is going to be moved in 2010 to a later

time, they should look at even later – maybe 5:00 p.m. Willits suggested having the Special Events Committee looking at it and taking their recommendation.

The city will move ahead with LED traffic lights, make a police position ½ time and not fill the captain position once Captain McDaniel is promoted. The council also discussed having fewer or no flowering baskets along University Avenue. Glover said it should be clear that it would be just one year and it shows the community that the City is doing its part to save money. She suggested that the City talk with the Chamber about this and see what they think.

Glover noted she thought the city could probably do more and should look at ways to cut operating expenses, for example, how much did it cost for the City to participate in the Sister City Commission, etc. She suggested having department heads and staff come to meetings to share ways they have saved money. Willits suggested maybe having some type of monthly money saving challenge.

Oliver recapped the discussion and indicated that she would provide budget documents that reduce the special events budget by \$9,000 and the salaries line item in the police department by \$53,000; and create a fence permit and fee; a charge for “Basic Life Services”; a stormwater management plan and permit fee and a 5% capital equipment replacement fee charge for the ambulance. Oliver confirmed that the vision for the baskets was to have them but try to find different ways to pay for them if possible. She will follow up with documents for the Council on Monday night.

Item 5: Discussion of Energy Grant

Heggen discussed the energy grant the City was applying for with the state and said there would be follow up information on the agenda for Monday.

Item 6: Adjournment - Roll Call 69

Sullivan asked if having the next council meeting on March 22nd worked for everyone, they agreed. Peterson moved Glover seconded to adjourn at 9:01a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on March 1st, 2010. Roll call vote passed unanimously.

Jerry Sullivan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Marketa George Oliver, City Administrator/Clerk