THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO
Proceedings of the Huron City Council
Work Session Meeting Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

A work session of the City Council of the City of Huron, Ohio was called to order by Vice-Mayor Monty Tapp on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 5:30p.m. in the conference room of City Hall, 417 Main Street, Huron, Ohio.

The Vice-Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll. The following members of Council answered present: **Christine Crawford, Mark Claus, Monty Tapp, Joe Dike and Joel Hagy.** Members absent: **Sam Artino and Trey Hardy**.

Also present: City Manager Andy White, Law Director Benjamin Chojnacki, Finance Director Cory Swaisgood, Assistant to the City Manager Mike Spafford, City Engineer/Zoning Inspector Doug Green, Executive Administrative Assistant and Clerk of Council Terri Welkener.

Old Business

Part-Time Code Enforcement/Zoning Inspector
Mr. White stated that he wanted to continue the conversation as we roll through the legislation that is going to codify to lodging tax expansion and the regulations. Staff would like to have Council's input and support for the hiring of the position. Council has seen the updated job description, and Mr. White thought that Council should have an additional conversation prior to staff starting recruitment.

Mr. Claus said that Council had received and reviewed the job description, and Mr. White confirmed that there had been no changes made to that document. The initial position will be part-time and look for opportunities to expand that if the need arises. The zoning inspector would work 3 days a week, 24 hours in total. Ms. Crawford said that the hourly rate was $20, which was confirmed. Mr. Tapp said that the legislation would be on its second reading at tonight's meeting, so we can make sure that all pieces end up together. Mr. White said that the big push for the City is getting the inspector in place so that the people starting to call and ask questions can get certified. We don't know if we are going to get 10 a week, or 50 a week, so this gives us the flexibility. Long-term, there is hope that the inspector would be able to do proactive zone enforcement, too.

Mr. Tapp asked about the registration form relating to the legislation. Mr. Claus said that John Zimmerman had done a preliminary one. Mr. Green said that Christine has drafts of the documents, but still need the fee information for the form. Mr. Swaisgood said that the Finance Committee would make its fee recommendation at its March 5th meeting. Asked by Mr. Hagy if staff is just looking for feedback and not a decision, Mr. White said that he would like to proceed with the process of recruiting, whether it is run for 2 weeks or 30 days, to be ready to hit the ground running to enforce and register people. Mr. White stated that some people have spoken to him about the value added to their business operation by have that certification because people are more likely to rent from someone who has that. Mr. Claus confirmed that the effective date or start date wouldn't happen until at least the day after Council passes the legislation. Mr. Green said that the approval is only 2 weeks out, and it couldn't happen that fast in any event.

Everyone agreed that it was okay to move ahead with the recruitment process. Mr. Claus asked that the forms be available for review before the March 10th meeting.

New Business

2019 Taxable Note Refinancing

Mr. Swaisgood handed out bond refinancing information discussed at the Finance Committee meeting. This involves a substation note that will be refinanced or rolled over from 2018. The debt will be rolled over for the next 2-3 years, and with the interest rates being so low, the City will take care of that. The City is still on pace for this rollover when it matures in April. The reserve has been built up to be able to pay off the debt aggressively over the 5 to 7-year period from 2018. We are on a pace to mature and roll over the notes in the beginning of April. The rate was 2.6% last year, and we are hopeful to get that competitive rate again. The ordinance says no more than 4%, but we will have more information in the next 2 weeks.

Ms. Crawford asked about the AMP-T matter. Mr. White said that staff has been in conversations with outside entities that would be interested in procuring that assets for the City. The City would maintain control of the rate structure, how much is brought in for each kWh consumed would remain the same. What have in place right now is a power arrangement where we purchased supply from AMP Ohio. They have recently in 2018 expanded their footprint into transmission. The immediate benefit under this concept is that it retires millions of dollars' worth of debt, frees up some borrowing capacity, and also staves off the potential for the City to be on the hook for additional capital upgrades, most notably with Phase II at Mucci Farms. There are associated costs with the expansion of the transmission lines. As it stands right now, the cost would be the City's responsibility because it would go through FirstEnergy Ohio Edison. AMP-T does the same thing. In this relationship, which will be looked at further, you will have the opportunity to abate a significant amount of debt and eliminate another expense. The original concept we came up with for Mucci for the substation is a 60-year shelf life value, but we put together a very aggressive short-term schedule because when we were looking at the asset procurement itself, we had no defined footprint of consumption by Mucci. Going through 2019 and seeing what's going on right now, they have exceeded their forecast and Mr. White thinks that will remain true going forward. Monthly sales to Mucci through their production is significant. Additional expenses that are being consumed by the corporate park entities suffice to handle this principal interest and debt. The City would continue to maintain the assets and the benefits of that asset, including revenue. Mr. White stated that we need to make sure that there aren't other opportunities to look at, which will be more of a legal conversation. As it stands, with this note refinancing, it is mainly a calendar item. These notes are coming set to expire, so we want to make sure this gets on your upcoming agenda for approval. The interest market is very competitive right now, and the City has saved a lot of money by not converting and going long-term. The interest that you are looking at on a 12-month note is more competitive than what you are looking at when converting to long-term. That won't remain true forever, but if we could obligate a balance of debt, you might be able to pay off the obligation entirely in the next couple of years if you are able to craft some project together like that AMP-T or another provider.

Mr. Claus said that the representative said that there would be no prepayment penalty with a callable option. If we end up with a sale, some of the short-term notes had a penalty. Mr. Swaisgood said that since that meeting, we talked about it and we are not going to go with the callable option. That adds to the premium a little bit, but we are just going back to the normal note that we did last year, so it will not be callable, a little cheaper, and it give us the 2020 year to do our due diligence and present everything to Council if there is a possible purchase agreement. Mr. Swaisgood and Mr. White confirmed that there is no hurry to get this done, and there is plenty of planning time. Mr. White said that AMP-T is pretty aggressive right now, and timing shouldn't be a problem for them. Both Oberlin and Wadsworth have done this recently. We have more considerations with Phase III timing, how Phase II goes, etc. Mr. Swaisgood has asked for a meeting with the Finance Director at Oberlin to discuss the process with him.

City Hall Improvements

Mr. White said that we have had discussions about this project, which we anticipated completing this year. A few years ago, we went through an analysis of the different building components inside the envelope and we have made some project updates, most notably the roof system and HVAC. Having gone through and taken informal bids from several different local providers, we are greatly in excess of what we had anticipated. We brought Ben into the conversation and discussed doing a request for proposals, and see if we couldn't get a full-scale RFP design build tell us what we need, as opposed to us trying to tell you what we think we need. Mr. White believes that is the better way to go. We talked about having someone from Council serve on the committee, and we had also talked about a utilities committee. The Water Department is a significant entity that generates millions of dollars of financial activity in any given year, as well as storm drainage and Huron Public Power. The utility committee is something that needs to be looked at as well.

Council should take a systems-wide walkthrough of the City Hall building to start. The goal is the have a functional work group to go through the process and come back to a work session or a Council meeting where we come up with some different options for Council to take a look at. Initially, we started looking at the interior of the building, but there are exterior problems as well. The functionality of the building doesn't serve its purposes, and there are issues with the landscaping, exterior lack of appeal, but the main focus is more of a functional building. 90% of City Hall's activity Monday, Wednesday and Thursday is at the finance window, and then 50/50 on Tuesdays and Fridays when Court is in session. People are always walking around looking where to go. Mr. White said that what staff would like to do is to push everything into what will become a new focal point for the entrance at the finance window, and we would have all of our people up there and move people around so there is an attendant available whenever you come into City Hall, as opposed to right now there is a bell and a window. If someone is at lunch or somebody is out, there is no one there. Putting customer service up front, including Building and Zoning and access to the Finance Director's office, would be helpful as a starting point. There is a lot more to be looked at, and it would make the most sense to start with a working group and go from there. Mr. Green said that the two things that need to be talked about are scope of work, for which he can put together a rough budget, and a strategy to get the work done. The goal is to get design build proposals and maybe hire an architect and have him plan it out and then bid it out as a bid book. It all starts with a walk-through of the building to identify the issues. Citizens are having trouble figuring out where to go when entering City Hall, and end up wandering the halls. Mr. White said that the City budgeted funds for improvements in 2020, but does not think that we should proceed because there are too many unknowns. Ms. Crawford recommended hiring an architect so that the project could be done in phases. There was a discussion regarding the unused space in the police department where dispatch used to be located, as well as a non-working bathroom. Other problems within the police department space are acoustics when trying to separate witnesses for statements, privacy, officers share one room and sergeants share another room, the dispatch center, the training floor and the lab all need work. When a person comes into the police station, he or she is met with a phone that you pick up and it automatically rings to the County. Mr. White stated that they are looking into getting some administrative help in that space. The money spent on an architect will save money in the long run.

Council members discussed the advisability of forming a utilities commission, considering the amount of revenue generated. Mr. Swaisgood suggested making the facilities committee more of a capital improvement committee. Mr. Green, Mr. Spafford and Mr. Swaisgood currently meet every Monday with Russ Critelli to go over the capital improvement plan. Mr. White said that this action at City Hall is also relevant at the Wall Street, garage, boat basin, Faben's Park, the Water Plant and the street garage, where we have a salt bin on Lake Erie. Staff has ideas on some of things and Mr. White thinks more conversation should be had even if nothing will get done in the next six months. Ms. Crawford stated that the budget book projected capital improvement needs, and this fits right into that. Asked if there should be two committees, Mr. Green suggested that the committee initially focus on City Hall, and then start looking at other capital projects. Mr. White stated that we should strive to improve every property we own using an

objective plan. The Wall Street property, which was a gift from the Coast Guard, needs a new skin, the garage should be removed, and take a look at the property adjacent to it. Long-term, this is prime real estate and if the City desires to have a downtown footprint, Wall Street serves as a utility in the form of additional parking expansion without coming up with a ton of money. If that garage isn't there, there is also a lot behind the building for public domain space, and everyone could be moved out to Faben's Park. In the summer, the tractors are going back and forth on Route 6, and a lot of our programming is at Faben's Park. It is better to have an overall plan instead of doing it piecemeal. The conference room here at City Hall was remodeled, and it stands out from the hallway, which is circa 1970. Mr. White asked if there was interest from anyone in particular. Ms. Crawford volunteered, but asked if there was someone else with more professional expertise in that area. Mr. Claus suggested maybe there should be two on that committee. Mr. Tapp suggested that each department have input, and Mr. White said that each department has already provided some information and would be involved in the process. Ms. Crawford suggested that we start with a meeting of department heads to obtain their wish lists. Mr. White said that staff would obtain some dates for the calendar.

Phase 2 of US 6 Project

Mr. White said that we need 30 days' notice to have the public meeting. Mr. White said that he has received some feedback specific to the concerns that have been expressed by numerous people about the Center Street intersection and the light, which issue won't be solved tonight. That will be a continuing conversation and would expect Council to receive feedback as well. Mr. Critelli said that we are moving forward with the designs as proposed, which included meetings with ODOT regarding the timeline for the project and commitments to planned development, which plan set is due to ODOT in March. Mr. Critelli said that it is his due diligence to look at the design as we are proceeding with this, and the project is proposed as it has been accepted by Council previously. Functionally, we will review it because there are always going to be concerns with a change in the condition, but we will look at that as we go forward. Ms. Crawford stated that the study says the light is not warranted, and we have hard data on that. Mr. Critelli confirmed that information, and said that there is a comfort level to communicate and message in the public information meeting. This would be an informational meeting, not a community input meeting that would result in changes to the design, due to timeline milestones and funding associated with those deadlines. This will be a public outreach meeting, and OHM will be prepared to share how the design functions. There can be changes made, but that part of the work must be done prior to September to conform with environmental deadlines. Mr. White said that the first phase of the project would begin in the spring of 2020, while we are concurrently planning for 2021, which is the process we are submitting in September to begin in the spring of 20201. There must be 30 days' notice before the meeting, with a 30-day comment period. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 7, 2020 from 6-8pm. This is a local project, which will be run by the City and Mr. Critelli. Mr. White said that the biggest concern we have internally is that the modifications proposed at these intersections are tied directly to the traffic warrant system, and failure to adhere to the recommendations that come from that compromises all of the funding and presents additional liability to the City going forward. The removal of the light is out of our control, but the general citizenry maybe doesn't know that. Mr. Critelli stated that the environmental clearance document cannot be closed until the comments are collected and resolved. Each comment must be responded to. If there is some determination that there is no closure, that can hold off the document.

Nickel Plate Beach – KS Associates Study

Mr. White said that the City received a draft summary report from KS Associates with their findings. The City will proceed by calling a meeting of the Safety Committee. The most notable item is designation of a specific swim area that would be marked by buoys at a point east of the breakwall and west of the drainage ditch. Per the report, it appears there is some wave action that occurs on either side of this designated area that should be avoided. You can't get too far from the breakwall before you get into another pattern. Parks & Recreation and safety services have been working to prepare for the upcoming season. Council will have to come up with some recreations because spring is approaching, which only gives the City a few meetings

before you get to Memorial Day. The pace is going to move a little bit quicker as we try to get ready because staff wants to be able to promote the beach as a safe haven to practice recreation. Coordination between departments will be most important along with having a system-wide understanding between police and fire, in particular, when there is a condition that we have deemed to be unsafe based on the recommendation that have come back from this report. If the wind out of then northeast goes over a certain speed, the strobe light will be lit, a siren will be sounded, the flag will go up, and swimming will be prohibited. We cannot rely upon one of our Parks & Rec part-time employees to get people out of the water. There is going to have to be an added level of coordination because that is a police function, which will be worked out. Mr. Green said that he had sent a few questions back to KS Associates, but was still waiting on the information for the Parks Department to get buoys ordered, anchors ordered and other things we know that we will need regardless of the discussions to be had. Mr. Spafford will have discussions with police and fire as to how that framework of responsibility would work, and we would look at having a Safety Committee meeting, a work session and a Council meeting, all of which will be attended by KA Associates, including a formal presentation of their findings and recommendations at the Council meeting. Mr. White said that a process must be instituted so that when a situation arises and a comes, that the determine be made by the City Manager's office. When staff was trying to figure this out in a very quick span of time last year, it was all-consuming. Five members of staff were monitoring weather patterns to make the call, which was impractical. When this happens, the call will go out and everyone is alerted. There will be a coordinated process in place if we have to had safety personnel ready to get people out, or safety enforcement personnel to keep people from going in. The conduit and cabling will be ready to go to provide a webcam. Parks & Rec has done a great job pulling everything together with the signage, with a big change by the end of last summer. A lot of our beach patrons travel some distance to the beach, and it would be quite a disappointment to arrive at a closed beach when it is 95 degrees outside and they want to get into the water to cool off. Allowing people to see what the actual conditions are from outside the are via the website is the goal. Mr. Tapp said that his worry is enforcement of the swim area or no swimming alert. Mr. White said that it is hopeful that the bed tax revenue will be sufficient to provide dedicated officers for this purpose, whether it be school resource officer, or the marine patrol. The logical choice would be expansion of the marine patrol. The school resource officer is in the school 9 months out of the year, and could be used at Nickel Plate Beach the reminder of that time. A sentry at the gate may not be required every day of the summer, but Council might want to look at beefing up the road patrol so that there is a third officer, especially on the weekends and holidays. Once people start getting ticketed for trespassing, the message will be a lot clearer. The final KS Associates report will be available by the next meeting. The Safety Committee will meet sometime after April 17th.

Council Town Hall Meeting Schedule

Mark Claus said that he had the Clerk put together a schedule for Council members to sign up for the four contemplated Town Hall Meetings. Joel Hagy will sponsor the first Town Hall meeting on April 2, 2020, to be held at First Presbyterian Church at 6:30pm. The Town Halls will be held quarterly, at different times and on different days of the week. If nobody shows up to these meetings, Council will try something different next year. A maximum of three Council members can be in attendance at each Town Hall Meeting with an invitation to City staff as well. Mr. Spafford has agreed to attend the first Town Hall Meeting, and will fill in the attendees depending upon the hot topics that are going on at that time. The Clerk will advertise the meetings in the Sandusky Register and on the website. Mayor Artino and Christine Crawford are tentative scheduled to attend the first Town Hall Meeting.

Adjournment

At 6:18 pm, Mr. Tapp adjourned the meeting.

Terri S. Welkener, Clerk of Council

Adopted: 3 1 MAR 2020

Upon approval by the City Council, the official written summary of the meeting minutes will become a permanent record, and the official minutes shall also consist of a permanent audio recording, excluding executive sessions, in accordance with Section 121.01(III) of the Administrative Code.