

Council Chambers  
Ely, Minnesota  
Tuesday, April 28, 2009  
6:00 p.m. Ely City Council  
Monthly Study Session

Mayor Skraba called the regular study session to order at 6 p.m. on April 28, 2009.

PRESENT: Council members Debeltz, Omerza, Salerno, Sheddy, Zupec, and Mayor Skraba (6)

ABSENT: Council member Nikkola (1)

#### OLD BUSINESS

Hidden Valley/Nordic Ski Club Sublease Agreement:

Mayor Skraba reviewed the Hidden Valley/Nordic Ski Club Sublease Agreement that was presented at the meeting. He felt that a 5 year lease was too long and would prefer the lease be written for 2 years with a 3 year renewal instead.

Council member Omerza stated the club has put well over \$100,000 into the building and they are working on the second phase of a capital improvement plan and she felt that it would be counter active to shorten the lease period.

Council member Zupec was concerned about the structure of the rent and the club renting the property out and retaining 6all the rent. He would like a 2 year lease also.

Council member Sheddy reviewed the utility costs on page 2 of the lease and stated it is a good faith effort on the City's part to agree to a 5 year lease. The club members have been excellent stewards in respect to the work they have put into this property.

Scott Quick from the Ely Nordic Ski Club stated the club had reviewed the lease and there have been changes made prior to this draft. The club is amicable to reviewing the lease and the costs after 2 – 2 ½ years to make sure they are able to cover the pro-rated costs as written. This lease was written to coincide with the DNR's lease terms with the city. Rent for non-profit group would be \$150 for the exclusive use for an evening. The fee for a private parties or for-profit groups would be \$200.

The committee will schedule another meeting with Attorney Klun and the Ski Club representatives to review and change language regarding the length of the lease with an extension after a 2 year review.

## Version 2-Buildings Assessment:

Public Works Director Langowski presented version 2 of the buildings assessment as prepared by Eric Danberg of dsgw. There would a reduction in space of approximately 34% from the current space the city is utilizing between the city hall and the community center. He stated that the roofs, mechanical systems and ADA accessibility are concerns with both of the current buildings. No location for a new building has been determined yet. The estimate received in 2002 was \$4.2 million for ADA and improvements that would be required for the Community Center.

Council member Zupec questioned if there was space to add onto the Joint Maintenance Facility. Director Langowski stated that at this time adding to that building is not an option.

Mayor Skraba stated that potentially a group of people could take over the Community Center building and the city would put a minimal amount into the building for heat, etc.

Council member Salerno requested actual costs so the council can react and stated there needs to be discussion on what happens to the City Hall and Community Center buildings once a new building is constructed.

Council member Omerza stated that the decision to close the buildings should be made by the taxpayers.

Director Langowski asked for direction from the council on what if any changes or additions to the plan the council would like to see so he can give the additional info to the architect. Once the architect has the additional information they can start working on the costs.

Mayor Skraba requested that the dual purpose community center with the basketball court be included in the estimate.

Librarian Rachel Heinrich stated an additional space for young child play could be added to the plans.

Cost estimates may be available by the end of May and could be presented by Eric Danberg of dsgw.

Duane Whalen stated he was concerned about the downtown area if the City Hall and the Community Center were closed.

## Propane Bids:

Public Works Director Langowski requested authorization from the council to reopen the propane bid contract to negotiate a lower price than the current cost of \$1.963/gal. The current contract is through 7/31/09 and included the HRA. Currently the price of propane

is below \$1/gal. The council authorized Langowski to renegotiate the contract with Ferrell Gas.

#### Hydrant Usage & Maintenance:

Public Works Director Langowski presented a draft of the Hydrant Usage & Maintenance policy for council review. The policy will be reviewed by the EUC on 4/29/09. Morse and Fall Lake Fire Protection Associate would like to use these hydrants to fight fires in the townships. Director Langowski stated there needs to be a policy setup which would include fees for use of the hydrants. The townships would need to buy a backflow preventer and meter when using the hydrants.

#### Morse-Fall Lake Fire Protection Association request for Mutual Aid:

Mayor Skraba read the letter received from Morse-Fall Lake Rural First Responder/Fire Protection Association requesting development of a mutual aid agreement between the Ely Fire Department and the Morse Fall Lake Fire Dept.

Council member Salerno stated the city should meet with the township officials and address topics of concern.

Mayor Skraba feels the city and township should be one fire department.

A meeting will be scheduled with the townships, Mayor Skraba and Council member Zupec.

Council member Zupec requested the City Attorney be tasked to review the council's authority to zone outside the city limits by statute. He would like a list of the pro's and con's related to this issue and what ability the city has to annex city owned property.

Mayor Skraba and Council member Zupec will meet on Friday with the township representative about the Forest Service building annexation.

Mayor Skraba suggested that Ely, Morse and Fall Lake representatives look into potentially meeting with a Blandin representative through one of the Blandin leadership programs.

#### NEW BUSINESS

The Ely Community Garden clean up day will be May 2<sup>nd</sup> 10 am and council members were invited to help with the clean up.

Director Langowski is meeting with the garden group on Wednesday to discuss watering options for the site.

Mayor Skraba thanked the public for the clean up that was done on the Trezona Trail.

Director Langowski reminded the public that pets on the Trezona Trail must be leashed and owners must pick up and properly dispose of waste left by their pets.

Moved by Salerno supported by Omerza to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Terri Boese  
Clerk/Treasurer