

Ely City Council Study Session April 26, 2011

The Ely City Council study session was called to order by Mayor Skraba at 6:00 p.m. on April 26, 2011 at the Ely City Hall.

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

ABSENT: Council member Zupec, (1)

Addition to agenda:

New Business: Joint Powers Ambulance

Moved by Salerno supported by Debeltz to approve the additions to the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

REQUESTS TO APPEAR

Charter Commission members present: Chairman Pucel, Kotzian, Niemela, and Boyles.

The Council asked for clarification on the changes that the Commission was recommending to the Charter.

Recommended changes are:

- a. Section 2.02 Council Composition and Election – to reduce the number of city councilors from six to four, with two seats initially serving for two years and two seats serving for four years. Two councilors and a mayor will be elected every two years thereafter.
- b. Section 2.04 Vacancies – remove the word “it” and replace it with “said special election”.
- c. Section 6.01 Administrative, Officers & General Provisions – delete the words “city assessor and superintendent of public works”. Delete “a general manager for the Ely Utilities Commission” and replace with “an Operations Director”.
- d. Section 6.02 City Clerk-Treasurer; Powers & Duties – changed the wording for the duties of the Clerk-Treasurer to more concise language following State Statute.
- e. Section 6.04 City Assessor, Powers & Duties – This section deleted entirely.

In discussion, Attorney Klun felt the language on “c” needed to be clarified since the operations director position is a union position so instead of “appoint for a two year term” it should read “for the duration of his contract”.

Chair Pucel stated that with all the budget cuts across the city that cuts should start at the top and not the bottom. By going to 5 council members instead of 7, it would save the City \$9,600 a year. Mayor Skraba stated that getting votes on certain controversial issues would be easier if they needed only 3 rather than with 4 which is not a good thing. The council did not agree with this recommendation and it will have to be added as a referendum question at the next election.

Nikkola posed the option of going to a Statutory City instead of a Charter City. The standard plan could then be modified by council action to go to 7 members. Pros and cons to becoming a Statutory City were discussed briefly.

Debeltz questioned the procedure for appointing people to the Charter Commission. Mr Pucel stated that historically the Council would advertise for applicants and then submit those names to the Charter Commission who would review them and then send back to the council as notification of who was selected. The Charter Commission would then forward the names to the District Judge for appointment.

The Council thanked the Charter Commission for their input and attendance at the meeting.

Meeting recessed at 6:58pm and reconvened at 7:02pm.

Ely City Council Study Session April 26, 2011 Continued

Gerald Tyler from the American Legion Post 248 appealed to the Council to reverse an earlier vote regarding free use of the Community Center kitchen. Salerno suggested they use the Veterans on the Lake facility which is a much nicer facility and they would allow them free use of their kitchen and dining room. Mr. Tyler agreed it would be something to consider. Tyler then proceeded with his review of past documentation which allowed the American Legion to use the Community Center kitchen free of charge. He has requested to appear at the next council meeting to ask the Council to vote again on this request. Attorney Klun reiterated again that the document or "lease" in question does not talk about fees but it states they have free use of the room. The issue that is unstated is cost, so it needs to be determined what the costs for maintaining the facility are.

Marty Breaker, member of the American Legion, also spoke on their behalf. His opinion was that if the Council had entered into an agreement in the past with the American Legion on using the Community Center kitchen free of charge then the council should still honor that agreement.

OLD BUSINESS

Attorney Klun spoke on Annexation. The West area covered by 1973 Agreement is the area the City is looking to Annex. The 1973 Agreement is very similar to the current statutes in regard to annexation. Some provisions include: must prepare to build or at least construct utilities within a 5 year period; need at least 51% of the property owner's approval. In order to put a request through, the City needs a plan on how they will develop this lot. The 1973 Agreement states the land does not have to abut the City.

It was decided that the Council would meet as a group with Attorney Klun to go over in depth the Annexation process and to come up with a decision on which piece of property the City would like to annex.

NEW BUSINESS

Major Skraba spoke on the Joint Powers Agreement for ambulance services. The Ambulance Committee will be meeting tomorrow and will be voting on this Agreement. The council recommended Major Skraba attend the meeting and bring back information from the meeting for Council.

Moved by Nikkola supported by Salerno to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Terri Boese
Clerk/Treasurer