

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
MARCH 19, 2019**

The workshop meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Mayor Gunderson at 5:30 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Heidi Gunderson, Council Members: Craig Johnson, Greg Urban, Patricia Youker and Bob Morse. The following member was absent: None.

Also present were: City Administrator Kevin Watson, Assistant City Administrator Tim Sandvik, Planning/Community Development Director Nolan Wall, Fire Chief Ed Leier, Public Works Director Jesse Farrell, City Attorney Erich Hartmann and Deputy City Clerk Peggy Aho.

Others present were:

1. Complete Count Committee(s) – 2020 Census Bureau:

Assistant City Administrator Sandvik reviewed that staff are looking for direction as far as direction from the Council for the next census. City staff have attended a few different Complete Count Committee (CCC) meetings. These CCCs have been County, City and State based. Sandvik said that the goal of a CCC is to put together a complete count census. Staff are looking for feedback from the Council on how they would like staff to proceed. Sandvik reviewed various options for conducting a Complete Count Census.

Mayor Gunderson asked if Sandvik has a preference or a logical path forward and asked if the City knows what the City's participation level has been in the past. Sandvik replied that they are putting together maps on where participation in the Census has been good within the City. Sandvik said that the City may be able to partner with neighboring cities because they may have similar obstacles which Vadnais Heights has experienced and the cities could combine efforts such as messaging so we aren't duplicating efforts.

Gunderson said that she would defer to Sandvik on what he thinks might be best for the City. Council Member Johnson said that he is not sure how much we as a City can do and that we will not be going door-to-door. He said that the City could put reminders in billings and newsletters. Johnson asked if Sandvik was thinking about spending money to do things such as targeted fliers or newsletters. Sandvik replied that that could be, and then additional pieces could get out using social media tools. Council Member Youker said that it may be beneficial to put up posters in certain areas. Sandvik reiterated that it may be more cost effective to work with other cities when developing a strategy and a message.

Council Member Urban said that he would prefer if the City could keep cost and staff time on this to a minimum. He said that he believes that overall the City won't pick up that many people and he's not sure the City should make a monetary commitment.

Council Member Morse asked if there were any other communities that have reached out to partner with us. Sandvik replied that he has been meeting with other organizations that may want to partner up with the City.

Morse said that he might be interested in exploring what the options are. Gunderson said that it seems the consensus of the Council is that we don't want to put a lot of resources into it, but if it makes sense to attend some of these meetings to at least look at what others are doing.

2. PUD Amendments:

Planning/Community Development Director Wall reviewed proposed code amendments to the Planned Unit Development standards and procedures. He said that he would like to move forward with making changes to the PUD process with direction from the Council to bring the proposed amendments before the Planning Commission and then the Council. He said that any decision on changes would have to go through the formal process (the Planning Commission, a public hearing and City Council).

Wall reviewed the proposed amendments. He said that the Planning Commission is normally supposed to conduct a Public Hearing for zoning amendments, however, the publishing deadline has passed to schedule a Public Hearing for the March 26 Planning Commission meeting and he is asking the Council to consider streamlining the process and having the Public Hearing at the April 16th Council meeting instead.

Council Member Urban thinks it would work to have the Council hold the Public Hearing. Mayor Gunderson said that she thinks it might not be a good idea to streamline the process and that we should follow the current process and not deviate. Wall said that there is not a requirement to hold a public hearing in front of the Council and, in this case, City staff are instead proposing to have the public hearing at the City Council instead of the Planning Commission due to time constraints. Gunderson asked if the Planning Commission will give a recommendation to the Council. Wall responded yes. He also said that if the Council doesn't want to make an exception in this case to move things through quicker, they don't have to. The Council decided not to deviate from the process already in place.

Council Member Johnson said that the City needs to point out why and how things are being proposed to be amended. Wall said that the Planning Commission will review the amendments at its March 26th meeting and then go through the formal process with a public hearing a month later during the Council meeting. Johnson asked that Wall review, one more time, the use of 'shalls, musts and mays' in the Planned Unit District language.

3. **Goals Session Proposal:**

City Administrator Watson noted that Mayor Gunderson has been talking about having a goal session for some time. She thought that having a facilitator might be the best way to help guide the Council through conversations and identify short term goals. Gunderson said that her and staff met with Phil Kern, City Administrator of the City of Delano, about having Kern facilitate/guide the Council and department heads through a collaborative discussion on short term goals. Watson said that the cost is about \$1,600. Staff and Council would do a SWOT analysis and work on a new work plan.

Council Member Johnson said that he has looked at the estimated cost of the goals session and it seems reasonable to him. Council Member Youker said that she would be interested in participating in a goals session. Council Member Urban asked why the City would consider this and asked if there is a need for it at this time. Johnson said that there are two new Council Members and a lot of new staff that might benefit from a goals session. Council Member Morse said that he too would be interested. City Administrator Watson asked if anyone has dates in mind and suggested that Deputy City Clerk Aho send out a doodle poll.

4. **Garceau Corner Task Force Facilitator:**

Planner/Community Development Director Wall noted that he and Council Members Johnson and Youker met with two facilitators whom provided proposals to provide Garceau Corner Task Force facilitator services to the City.

Council Member Johnson said that this is going to be a very public decision that the Council will make on the Garceau property and it is important to have someone come in as a neutral party and keep staff and members from leading the discussion. He said that he thinks Ms. Bennett will make more of a personal connection and she offers better interpersonal skills. Council Member Youker agreed with Johnson that Ms. Bennett seems to be the best person. Youker said that she thinks Ms. Bennet is the best qualified.

Mayor Gunderson thanked them for doing the interviews. Wall said that this is also on the Council March 19th meeting agenda for approval. Wall said that they will come back at a future meeting to finalize the Task Force. Wall thinks we may have to redefine the area (neighborhood). Wall thanked the Council for their support. Council Member Morse asked if Ms. Bennett will have the history of the land so that she is well versed as to what the City knows and what will be introduced to the Task Force. Wall said that it is his intent to provide that information to everyone on the Task Force.

5. **S.E.H. Koehler Road Task Force Alternatives Analysis:**

Assistant City Administrator Sandvik gave some background on the development of the Koehler Road Task Force. He said that staff met with SEH staff to talk about what they know to date, and then SEH prepared a proposal to develop an Alternatives Analysis (A/A). Sandvik said that Ramsey County has indicated that they can contribute another

\$5,000 towards the cost of the study. Sandvik said that staff are recommending that the Council approve contracting with SEH for the A/A.

Public Works Director Farrell said that he thinks it is encouraging that the County is interested in participating in partnering on funding the A/A. Council Member Johnson asked if staff are considering the option of going in behind the houses near the swamp. Johnson said that he doesn't think people would use it and that it may perhaps be a security risk. Council Member Urban said that he doesn't think we should spend money on it if we don't think it's a good idea. Farrell said that this A/A is pretty high level and will focus on specific things (costs, challenges and pros and cons).

6. Other Staff Items:

City Administrator Watson gave an update on the Comcast negotiations. The update included a quick overview of the background / history of the agreement with Comcast and the Cable Commission.

7. Future City Council Requests:

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.