

Mayor Edwards called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were: Mayor Connie Edwards, Matt Schutte, Cheryl Sanden, Kevin Knutson and Tony Schultz. Also present were: Chris Peterson, Randy Thesing, Ellyn Baumann, Margie Frutiger, Roger Meyer, Terry Jergenson, Sarah Wexler-Mann, and Police Officer Isaiah Bunke.

Lawn Chair Concert Series Update: Margie Frutiger reported on the success of the Concert Series. When they started in 2011 there were seven concerts totaling approximately 600 in attendance. In 2015 there were eight concerts, and in just two concerts almost 600 in attendance. The Lions Club is the fiscal agent for the Concert Series. Sponsors for 2016 include the Houston Lions, Houston Hoedown, AcenTek, Bremer Bank, LAX Printing, and the City of Houston. She voiced concerns for this year which include the parking and pedestrian traffic for the busiest concerts and also the bee hives. Margie wondered if she should make an announcement at concerts that a bee hive exists on the site. Roger Meyer was in attendance and noted that due to the foliage outside the building it is not possible to get up close to the bee hive. It was suggested that an information sign be placed at the nature center notifying of the bees. Roger Meyer volunteered to install a sign.

Friends of the Nature Center Pond and Path Project: Roger Meyer was present to explain the proposed project for the pond at Trailhead Park. The plans include a path around the pond and two docks for bird watching. Roger has contacted the MN DNR and the Corps of Engineers for water permit requirements. For wetland permit, projects less than 400 SF are exempt. Roger is waiting for a response from Dana Werner regarding the Corps of Engineer approval process for Flood Levee system. He proposes to use Black Locust logs for the docks with treated wood decking. This project would be at no cost to the city and they will be pursuing grants and donated material. MOTION BY SCHULTZ, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE TO APPROVE THE POND AND PATH PROJECT FOR TRAILHEAD PARK; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2016 Election Timeline/Judges: Peterson shared the timeline for the upcoming election and filing period. Seats that are up for re-election include Schutte, Schultz, and Mayor Edwards. A resolution to hire election judges was presented. MOTION BY KNUTSON, SECONDED BY SANDEN TO APPROVE THE ELECTION JUDGE RESOLUTION; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

201 Westgate Drive Parcel: Peterson gave a recap of the Public Hearing and meeting held in June. She noted that she checked with the League of MN Cities and the City Attorney regarding one of the concerns, the permitted use. The Zoning Code for industrial lists eight or nine uses. Trucking company is not labeled specifically, but the City Attorney felt it met the intent of the district since the proposed use includes storage and office which are permitted uses in Industrial. Peterson explained, it is typical of Industry to have trucks. Peterson noted that she did not want to spend more time investigating other concerns until she received further direction from the Council. She noted that when we started the process, we did not know the adjacent property owner objected. She asked if she should get a formal legal opinion, find out exactly what the other concerns were, or deny or table this application and look for another proposal in the future, possibly a smaller building. Mayor Edwards noted the height of building is part of the concern. Schultz noted that it is a large setback variance, and if the adjacent owner has an issue, he would propose to not move forward with this building proposal. MOTION BY SCHULTZ, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE TO DENY THE VARIANCE PROPOSAL; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chicken Regulations: Peterson read the current ordinance on farm animals which includes chickens. She also pointed out information from the League of MN Cities on creating regulations on chickens. She heard that one city residence has chickens, and two others called to inquire. Peterson asked if she should pursue drafting an ordinance. Schultz noted that we already have an ordinance, and he does not believe there is a huge demand. Randy Thesing mentioned that an ordinance could specify distances from property lines. Mayor Edwards questioned how we would inspect and make sure that the coops are kept neat. Peterson acknowledged with current staff levels it would be difficult to keep up on one more thing. Mayor Edwards asked police officer Bunke to research how other cities deal with complaints and compliance. Table until further information.

Ellsworth Street Project Pay Application #1. The contractor is approximately 25% finished with the project. They have done an extensive amount of soil replacement in the utility trenches. MOTION BY SCHUTTE, SECONDED BY SCHULTZ, TO APPROVE PAY APPLICATION #1; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Gambling Application – St. Mary’s Catholic Church: MOTION BY SCHULTZ, SECONDED BY KNUTSON TO APPROVE GAMBLING APPLICATION; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Minutes: MOTION BY SANDEN, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE TO APPROVE THE JUNE 13, 2016 COUNCIL MINUTES AS PRESENTED; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Report / Bills: MOTION BY SCHULTZ, SECONDED BY SCHUTTE TO PAY THE BILLS; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Department Reports:

Maintenance: Thesing reported that he has a price to re-label the street signs. 26 signs at \$25 each and he will order. Thesing also gave an update on the watermain break that occurred in Jefferson Street. Thesing also requested approval to have a pedestrian ramp installed on one corner of Ellsworth Street where the curb is already removed. Mayor Edwards said the policy is to replace as work is being done.

Chamber/Marketing: Sarah Wexler-Mann reported that the Chamber is looking at getting the Farmer’s Market going again. She will be attending a regional EDA meeting and a SE MN Tourism meeting in Lake City.

Administrator: Advertisement is out for the staff at the Nature Center, both a manager and staffing positions. Peterson noted that the Friends of the Nature Center have an interest in the hiring of the manager for the Nature Center. She asked if it would be appropriate to have a representative of the Friends included in the interview process. Mayor Edwards said we could leave that up to the Personnel Committee. It was suggested we hire the manager first and consider the additional staffing afterward.

MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 7:12 PM MADE BY SANDEN, SECONDED BY SCHULTZ; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Minutes by Chris Peterson