

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

City Hall – Council Chambers

July 15, 2019

The Committee of the Whole met in the Council Chambers at 5:45 p.m. on July 15, 2019, with the following Committee persons in attendance: Mayor Jim Brown, Tom Blanford, Frank Darrah, Susan deBuhr, Rob Green, Mark Miller, and David Wieland. Daryl Kruse was absent. Staff members attended from all City Departments. Jason McVay and Jon Nania from USGS also attended as well as members of the community.

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order and introduced the first item on the agenda, River Gauge Update. Chase Schrage Principal Engineer stated they have met with USGS on June 3, 2019 to review a stage only river gauge placement. He said there are many challenges in placement of the stage only river gauge; first placement will need to be far enough up stream and at necessary height to stay out of the way of ice jams. Second, FEMA will need to review placement of a gauge in the floodplain, based on the deed restrictions to the land. He explained Iowa Homeland Security will review initially and the federal government will review, which can take 90 days. Mr. Schrage stated the third challenge in a stage only river gauge is the datum will have different elevation up stream. He stated the location upstream will be approximately 11 feet difference in elevation. He stated the installation cost for the stage only river gauge will be \$22,000, with \$5,500 for annual maintenance. He stated both of these costs will be funded 100% by the City. He stated FEMA approval will be necessary to review the location at the end of Cottage Row for the stage only river gauge.

Mayor Brown opened it up for discussion. Councilmember deBuhr commented about the new river gauge will have limited benefits for the residents. Jason McVay with the USGS stated the gauge will have an accurate reading within .02-.04 feet and stated the readings will be different than the full gauge located down stream, which may say 80 feet and the new stage only gauge may say 91 feet. Councilmember Miller commented the cost is a deterrent for the limited benefits the residents may gain. Mr. Schrage stated the ice jams may affect the readings. He also explained the residents may sign up for an automated notification on river levels through “notify me” on the City’s website. Jon Nania, with the USGS stated residents may sign up through USGS WaterAlert and they can set the river level they are interested in. Based on City Council consensus a stage only river gauge will not be placed at the end of Cottage Row.

The Mayor introduced the second item on the agenda Snow Removal requests on sidewalks/trails. Mark Ripplinger Public Works Director reviewed the current City policy to remove the snow adjacent to city owned property, bridges or areas with higher pedestrian usage such as by schools. He stated this was set through the Council goal setting process. Brian Heath Public Works and Parks Manager reviewed the operating procedures for snow removal for a snow event. He explained streets are done first then certain personnel will break away to clear snow at public buildings and then some sidewalks/trails are cleared. He explained there are 7.3 miles of sidewalks/trails currently being cleared, which is estimated to cost \$30,000 on average annually. He reviewed the request, which is for an additional 9.5 miles of sidewalks/trails to be cleared. He stated this would be an additional 51 man hours and cost an estimated

\$38,000 annually. Mr. Heath said additional equipment will be needed, which may cost between \$80,000 – \$100,000. He reviewed a map of the additional sidewalk/trails requested. He explained these would provide benefits to runners and bicyclist, but there would also be challenges. He stated there will be blowing and drifting issues, updating the equipment more often, high cost for a low number of users, and concern for users safety with thawing and re-freezing. Mr. Ripplinger stated recreation trails are for winter users. He reviewed a map of staff recommendation of clearing 1 mile of additional sidewalk/trails. He stated this could be reviewed at goal setting which can include discussion for staffing and the additional costs. Mayor opened it for discussion. Mr. Ripplinger explained with the addition of 1 mile, no additional equipment will be needed. Mr. Heath confirmed the current cost is \$30,000 annually for 7.3 miles of sidewalks/trails. Tom Blanford motioned for the staff recommendation of clearing the additional 1 mile of sidewalks/trails in addition to the current clearing of 7.3 miles of sidewalks/trails. Rob Green seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Brown introduced the final item on the agenda, bills and payroll. Mark Miller moved to approve the bills as presented, Rob Green seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Brown adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Minutes by Lisa Roeding, Controller/City Treasurer