

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

City Hall – Council Chambers

August 17, 2020

The City Council held a special work session at City Hall via teleconference at 6:00 p.m. on August 17, 2020, with the following persons in attendance: Mayor Robert M. Green, Frank Darrah, Susan deBuhr, Kelly Dunn, Simon Harding, Daryl Kruse, Mark Miller, and Dave Sires. Staff members attended from all City Departments. Andrew Wind with the *Waterloo Courier*, as well as members of the community teleconferenced in.

The Mayor introduced the first item on the agenda City Council Committee Structure. Ron Gaines City Administrator stated this was a referral from Councilmember deBuhr. He reviewed the history of committee meetings. Previous committees had five of the seven council members assigned to them. He explained the current Committee of the Whole structure was changed with Ordinance #2605 and Administrative Policy #7 was updated to reflect the ordinance change in 2014, having all seven members assigned to this committee. He also stated in 2014 Council Referral was added to the Council agenda as an item. He stated the change to have all seven council members on the Committee of the Whole allowed the Mayor to chair the committee; the Mayor was left out of the discussion with previous committee structure, because a council member was the chair of the sub-committee. City Administrator Gaines stated another reason for the change was an item may pass in sub-committee, but fail on the council agenda. This created extra work for staff. He reviewed what other cities have for committee structure. He stated most cities do not have standing committees.

Mayor Green opened it up for discussion. Councilmember deBuhr stated sub-committee's would provide better communication and provide a better dialog on topics. She stated the current structure is very formal, televising doesn't allow council to discuss candidly. Councilmember Miller stated he doesn't want to create more work for city staff. Councilmember Sires reviewed the prior sub-structure provided by Stan Smith. He stated there was better discussion between council with the sub-committee structure. Councilmember Kruse stated he sees it as a pre-screening of a topic. Councilmember Harding stated this may allow for more time on a topic, rather than receiving information on Friday and reviewing over the weekend prior to the Monday Committee of the Whole meeting. Councilmember Darrah stated this sounds like a topic for goal setting, stating he wants the change to make sense and be purposeful. He said this change will be extra work for staff. Councilmember deBuhr stated the residents aren't comfortable with televised meetings. Councilmember Miller stated there are a lot of questions to be answered in order for this to make sense. Kevin Rogers City Attorney stated an ordinance change would be necessary if we changed the committee structure and if four or more council members were assigned to a sub-committee, it must follow the public meeting rules. City Administrator Gaines stated the seven committee structure (pre-1986) was when the City had more departments, stating we currently have four departments. Councilmember Sires stated this is a way for council to direct staff rather than staff directing us, and added a better way for us to be involved. Councilmember Darrah stated we work with the recommendations from city staff, and rely on their professional training for these recommendations.

Councilmember Miller stated we have the opportunity to call and ask questions from city staff and if we don't do it, it's our fault. He stated he doesn't want to have meetings to have meetings. Mayor Green gathered from the discussion another work session will be needed to discuss an outline of a sample sub-committee structure.

There being no further discussion, Frank Darrah moved for adjournment. Daryl Kruse seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Mayor Green adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Minutes by Lisa Roeding, Controller/City Treasurer