

Meeting of: COLUMBIA HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL  
Date of Meeting: January 7, 2019  
Time of Meeting: 6 pm  
Location of Meeting: Conference Room #1  
Purpose of Meeting: Work Session

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL - The meeting was called to order at 6 pm

Present: Mayor Schmitt, Councilmembers Murzyn Jr, Novitsky, Williams, and Buesgens

Also present: Kelli Bourgeois; City Manager, Gary Gorman; Fire Chief, Kevin Hansen; Public Works Director, Ben Sandell; Communications Coordinator, Keith Dahl; Economic Development Manager, Mitch Forney; Community Development Intern, Elizabeth Hammond; City Planner and Katie Bruno; City Clerk.

City Hall Facility Condition Assessment

Leo Daly representatives Cindy McCleary and Riley Olson gave an overview of the detailed facility condition report of City Hall prepared and distributed to council.

The report examined not only the mechanical systems but included the building envelope and infrastructure to determine a more complete condition assessment.

McCleary reported that most of all building envelope and systems are beyond their useful life and require full replacement. This includes all windows, doors, roof, elevator, primary mechanical, restrooms, electrical, cabling and plumbing systems. These items have been categorized as Level 1 (1-2-year replacement); Level 2 (2-3-year replacement) and Level 3 (3-7-year replacement), as follows:

Level 1: Exterior Envelope & Elevator Replacement:	\$1,455,043
Level 2: HVAC / Electrical / Lighting Restroom Renewal:	\$4,761,619
Level 3: Parking Lot & Interior Finish Renewal	\$429,000
Total Cost of Deferred Maintenance / Renovation:	\$6,645,661

The assessment revealed additional inadequate qualities which may not be fully improved through renovation; including 30% of the building does not have an elevator or accessible path, and therefore does not meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). 40% of the building is underutilized or inefficiently utilized. The building envelope is comprised of brick and concrete block that forms a combination interior and exterior wall, with no insulation, no airspace and no vapor barrier. Not only does this not meet Energy Code, this results in the cracking seen across the mortar joints, the water infiltration across the windows and walls and hot and cold spots within the building offices on outside walls. The building is a split entry with floors at 4 different elevations. The stairs between floors are not consistently meeting building code for egress or ADA. Director Hansen explained the council can accept the Master Plan, and plan for a formal presentation at the City Services Expo and Town Hall meeting scheduled in March. Hansen will work with the Communication Coordinator to get the information to the public.

Mayor Schmitt expressed concern with continuing to depend on the elevator to get residents to the council chambers, and suggested looking at other venues to hold City meetings.

Councilmember Murzyn, Jr. stated the current city hall has been deteriorating over the years, and make-shift repairs were done to keep costs down.

Councilmember Novitsky questioned how \$6,000,000 is available, while repairs were delayed. Hansen suggested he address that with the finance director.

Councilmember Williams asked what the anticipated energy cost savings could be in a new building. Hansen replied that with LED lighting and high efficiency heating, savings could be 25-30%.

Mayor Schmitt requested a fact sheet be available at the City Services Expo and Town Hall meeting in March.

### Pedestrian Options-37th Ave

Director Hansen reported that there has been no opposition to putting a trail along 37<sup>th</sup> Ave NE from 5<sup>th</sup> St to Central Ave, as long as it is maintained by the city.

### Infrastructure Grant Applications Status:

Director Hansen reported on the following four infrastructure projects:

*1. 37th Avenue Reconstruction from Central Avenue to Stinson Boulevard (Regional Solicitation):*

This project scored 4th out of 15 applications. The funding request supported \$7 million of a \$9.8 million dollar (total) project. This was a joint application with the City of Minneapolis. The City previously applied unsuccessfully to two other grant programs in 2016. In the last two grant rounds, the top 16 applications were funded in 2016 and the top 8 in 2014 in this category.

*2. Central Avenue Safety Improvements from 43rd to 47th Avenues (Regional Solicitation and HSIP):*

This project scored 5th out of 12 applications. The funding request supported \$1 million of a \$1.8 million dollar (total) project (pedestrian applications are capped at \$1 million under Regional Solicitation). This application was the next segment of the identical project completed in 2017 from 47th to 51st Avenues. The HSIP application scored 20th out of 21 applications and did not receive funding. In the last two grant rounds, the top six applications were funded in 2016 and the top three in 2014 in this category.

*3. 53rd Avenue Traffic Improvements from Central Avenue to Medtronic/Target west entrances (HSIP):*

This project scored 8th out of 21 applications and has been recommended for 2023 funding. The funding request supported \$730,000 of an \$812,000 dollar project. This was a joint application with the City of Fridley. The City previously applied unsuccessfully to two other grant programs in 2016.

*4. Silver Lake Boat Landing Storm Water Pond Reconstruction (DNR PSIG):*

Staff was informed in July of this year that this project received funding:

On June 28, 2018, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) certified Columbia Height's Silver Lake Boat Landing Pond Improvement project to the Public Facilities Authority (PFA) for eligibility for funding through the Point Source Implementation Grant (PSIG) program. Based on the project's priority on the MPCA priority list and the certification date, your project is in fundable range for a PSIG grant from funds appropriated for the PSIG program by the 2018 Legislature. However, rather than using state general obligation bonds as the source of funds, the Legislature authorized the sale of appropriation bonds to be repaid from the Environmental Trust Fund. Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) has informed us that, due to complications related to selling these bonds, they do not expect to be able to sell the appropriation bonds until sometime this fall. MMB's bond sale must occur so the PFA has funds for the Columbia Heights PSIG grant. At this time the PFA recommends that the City wait to proceed with bidding and construction of the project until the funding situation is clarified. In October this update was provided:

The PFA has been informed by Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) that the anticipated bond sale has been delayed in light of the lawsuit that has been brought against the state challenging the constitutionality of using the Environmental Trust Fund to support appropriation bonds. Per MMB, plans to conduct a bond sale are delayed for the time being and until the litigation is resolved.

When available, this grant will support \$260,000 of the \$325,000 project cost. The City has previously applied unsuccessfully to three other grant programs since 2014.

Brewery Ordinance – Amendment to Allow Additional Barrels of Beer Production

City Planner Elizabeth Hammond reported that staff is proposing to change the definition of “Brew Pub”, which is identified in the City’s Zoning Ordinance. The proposed change would remove the barrel production limits currently called out in the definition. In addition, a Specific Development Standard is proposed to be added to the existing standards, which guide the operation of Brewer Taprooms and Brew Pubs. The new standard would require that the facility adheres to all building and fire codes, and that the facility is licensed as required by the State of Minnesota and Anoka County.

Staff is proposing to remove the barrel production limits, which are currently imposed on Brewer Taprooms. A Brewer Taproom is currently permitted in the General Business District with a limit of 3,500 barrels of malt liquor a year. Removing this limit could make it easier for a brewery to locate and continue operating in the City. Staff is proposing to remove Brewer Taprooms and Brew Pubs as a permitted use in the Central Business District. Due to the nature of the uses, and the fact that the Central Business District is a relatively small area with smaller lot sizes, and adjacent to residential areas, staff proposes to require a Conditional Use Permit to mitigate any potential impacts to the surrounding area.

Discussion of Banquet Halls, Recreation Facilities and Community Centers in Commercial Zoning Districts

City Planner Elizabeth Hammond reported that staff proposes to add two definitions to the zoning Ordinance, defining Banquet Halls and Recreational Facilities. In addition, a Specific Development Standard is proposed to be added, which would guide the operation of Banquet Halls.

Unless further changes to the proposed Ordinance are requested by the City Council, staff will bring Ordinance No. 1653 for formal consideration back to the council in February.

2020 Census Update

City Planner Elizabeth Hammond reported that the Census Bureau is asking for local government to assist with strategies for public engagement to raise awareness, and increase participation in the 2020 Census, particularly in areas that are identified as undercounted. Census tract 515.01 in Columbia Heights has been identified by the U.S. Census Bureau as a low response area. Staff will be working with the U.S. Census Bureau, the Minnesota State Demographic Center, and community stakeholders to encourage participation. The next step is to form a Complete Count Committee, which will help organize a public campaign.

Hammond requested input from the council on the formation of a Complete Count Committee, and to identify individuals they would like staff to reach out to. Councilmember Buesgens suggested reaching out to the ministerial group, Manager Bourgeois suggested contacting the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee.

Tax Comparison of the remnant public safety parcel

Mitch Forney, Community Development Intern, reviewed a tax comparison of multiple residential options for the remnant parcel north of the public safety building. The following information was shared:

Unit Type	Acres	# of units	Overall Property Taxes	City Taxes Received	Taxes/Acre
Low Density	1.53	11	\$21,307.03	\$9,495.70	\$9,497.22
Medium Density	1.58	22	\$68,560.80	\$29,575.92	\$18,718.94
High Density	1.58	55	\$171,402.00	\$73,939.80	\$ 46,797.34

Mayor Schmitt suggested waiting to list the property until a location for a new city hall is determined.

*Mayor Schmitt called for a 10 minute recess at 7:33 pm*

*The meeting reconvened at 7:46 pm*

Discuss Appointment of Council Liaisons and Staff Assignments to City Boards & Commissions, & External Boards

Mayor Schmitt reviewed the recommended assignments to the city board & commissions, all members were in agreement. Councilmember Buesgens had sent an email requesting to be on the School Board and the Rice Creek Watershed District Board. Councilmember Novitsky requested to remain on the school board. Buesgens said she thinks it is important for all of the councilmembers to serve on a variety of committees. Novitsky said that because he has a child in the district he is qualified, as he has connections. Buesgens shared she has a background in education. Councilmember Novitsky suggested Councilmember Buesgens serve as the alternate to the school district. Councilmember Buesgens suggested a rotation system be implemented in the future.

a. School Board letter regarding liaison

Councilmember Novitsky stated that he does not feel at fault for an incident addressed in a recent letter from the school board members. The letter suggested the city liaison to the school board identified themselves as the city council liaison while attending a discipline meetings between parents and school officials.

Novitsky stated he was asked if he was the liaison from the city, and he answered that he was, stating he did offer that information before he was asked the question. Novitsky said he will continue to attend these meetings if a parent request him to, clarifying that he does not give an opinion, he is there for support.

Councilmember Buesgens suggested Novitsky clarify his purpose for attending. Manager Bourgeois explained that a liaison represents the entire council. Councilmember Murzyn, Jr. said as long as Novitsky makes it clear that he is attending as a friend/parent, he has no issue. Mayor Schmitt stated that there is not a final city council policy handbook, only a draft version. Councilmember Buesgens suggested the rules are looked at, and made clear. Schmitt suggested sending the League of Minnesota guidelines to members.

Councilmember Buesgens suggested that Councilmember Novitsky's presence could influence the discussion. Councilmember Williams commented that is important to maintain a good relationship with the school district and suggested meeting with the Superintendent. Novitsky said that none of the six members who signed the letter have spoken directly to him.

Monique Sauer, a parent who requested Nick attend her meeting with the school, stated that Nick was helpful when she was unable to get results from the school staff.

KT Jacobs said that the school board has been known to overpower parents.

Mayor Schmitt requested Manager Bourgeois coordinate a joint meeting with the council and school board.

Discuss Appointment to Columbia Heights Volunteer Firefighters Relief Assn Board of Trustees -2019

Mayor Schmitt asked how often this group meets. Gary Gorman stated the meetings are quarterly, with an occasional additional meeting. The council agreed to appoint Councilmember Murzyn, Jr.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus purchase

Fire Chief Gary Gorman reported that the current equipment is fifteen years old, and the air cylinders have met their maximum life. Due to age, other parts of the air packs are starting to fail and repairs are on the rise. Staff recommends the purchase of the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus with the additional accessories.

Discuss the Advisory Commission Appointment process

City Clerk Katie Bruno asked the council for direction on the spring appointment process. The council requested advertising openings, and interviewing all applicants.

Discuss Appointment of Council President

Mayor Schmitt suggested Councilmember Buesgens serve as Council President for 2019.

Discuss Legal Newspaper for 2019

City Clerk Katie Bruno reported the Sun Focus sent a proposal; there were no changes to the fees from 2018.

Discussion Regarding Tentative Union Agreements

City Manager Kelli Bourgeois reported that Police Officers, 49ers, and AFSCME have accepted three year contracts. Bourgeois has met with the other employee groups, and is waiting for agreements.

Administration Department Staffing

City Manager Kelli Bourgeois proposed hiring a Human Resource Manager instead of a Human Resource Director/Assistant City Manager. This would allow the administration department to hire a Special Events Coordinator, while keeping within the budget. Bourgeois would anticipate filling the Assistant City Manager in house.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:59 PM

Respectively Submitted,



Katie Bruno, Council Secretary/City Clerk