

Regular City Council Meeting
City Council Chambers

September 3, 2013
7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor –	Joyce Hudson	Absent – Council member Jeff Whiting
Council members	Jeff Kennedy	
	Duane Oliver	
	Tim Strauser	
City Administrator	Bruce Clymer	
City Attorney	Mike Bacon	
City Clerk / Treasurer	Connie L. Dalrymple	

Press: *Gothenburg Times* - Beth Barrett

Also present: Jennifer Wolf of DAD, Shane Gruber, George Prince, Nancy Fisher

Mayor Hudson opened the meeting and public hearing at 7:00 p.m. Advance notice and a copy of the agenda were given to the Council and members of the press. City Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, a copy of which is available for public inspection on the north wall of the Council Chambers.

The purpose of the public hearing was to consider an application of \$275,000 Community Development Block Grant reuse funds for Gary Mrozcek to renovate and expand Pony Express Chevrolet. According to Jennifer Wolf, all funds on hand were not used in the loan criteria in case the applicant decided to scale back the renovations, which he did. Originally, the project was intended in excess of \$1 million to be completed by January 2014 but has been put on hold because the construction bids were very high. He still wants the loan and even if the project is scaled back, it will be enough to qualify for the loan. Funding will be from Gothenburg's existing CDBG reuse funds. Mrozcek will create new jobs and will repay the loan to Dawson Area Development over ten years at 1.625% interest. Monthly payments will be about \$2400. If another request for funds comes in before he moves forward, the loan can be changed.

Kennedy moved, Oliver seconded, to close the public hearing at 7:07 p.m. Roll call vote: Yea – Strauser, Oliver, Kennedy. Nay – none. Absent and not voting – Whiting.

Kennedy moved, Strauser seconded, to approve the request from Gary Mrozcek of Pony Express Chevrolet for \$275,000 CDBG Reuse Funds as requested by Jennifer Wolf of Dawson Area Development. Roll call vote: Yea – Oliver, Strauser, Kennedy. Nay – none. Absent and not voting – Whiting.

Strauser moved, Oliver seconded, approving the consent agenda that included:

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Roll call vote: Yea – Kennedy, Oliver, Strauser. Nay - none. Absent and not voting – Whiting.

Kennedy moved, Strauser seconded, allowing payment of claims against the City, \$233,321.18; Public Works Division \$139,770.00; and the August 29 payroll of \$36,900.00. Roll Call vote: Yea – Oliver, Strauser, Kennedy. Nay - none. Absent and not voting – Whiting.

Community Comments:

- Line Foreman Mike Libich is facing some serious health issues. We expect to know more soon.
- Atty. Bacon's office distributed three purchase agreements for spec housing lots in the RDA Subdivision last week.
- Nancy Fisher questioned the status of the Game & Parks Commission permit for the Lake Helen rehabilitation. The lake is weedy and never completely dry so it is a mosquito haven. She also asked if there is any indication of a need to reinforce the dam.

Administrator Clymer said the project has been forwarded by the City engineer to the Army Corps of Engineers and is a process we cannot control. The permit could be issued tomorrow or in several months. All the necessary funding is in place and the lake was drained in anticipation of it drying out to prohibit goose and duck migration. We are ready for bidding as soon as the permit is approved by the Corps. Clymer contacted Mike Linder about two weeks ago and asked if he could push the Corps office in Omaha to speed up the process. Clymer will try to find out the status of the permit. There is no indication the dam needs to be reinforced. We have put out chemical nuggets and sprayed for mosquitos.

Oliver moved, Strauser seconded, to authorize Mayor Hudson to enter into a \$1500 contract with Dawson Area Development to administer the Downtown Revitalization Planning grant. Roll call vote: Yea – Kennedy, Oliver, Strauser. Nay – none. Absent and not voting – Whiting.

Oliver moved, Strauser seconded, to approve and authorize signature of all special conditions certifications relative to the 2013 Downtown Revitalization Project. They include:

- Grantee Information Sheet
- Environmental Review
- Authorization to Request Funds
- Financial Management
- Procurement Standards and Code of Conduct
- Excessive Force Certification
- Fair Housing
- Implementation Schedule

Roll call vote: Yea – Kennedy, Strauser, Oliver. Nay – none. Absent and not voting – Whiting.

According to Jennifer Wolf, some public procurement process is required for the project but instead of hiring a planning firm like we did in 2009 we will look at the needs determined during that process and decide which haven't been met, talk to property owners, and possibly do some façade renderings to help owners visualize what can be done. Perhaps a need is for a downtown building that can be adapted and used for incubator businesses. Applications for the second phase of the grant are due in February / March of 2014 and funding will be announced in July.

Ms. Wolf also provided a power point presentation on past year activities and accomplishments of the Dawson Area Development office as well as some insight on upcoming activities. Along with individual community projects, their office received over \$1 million dollars in grants last

year and over \$10 million since 2006 which equates to \$11 in grant awards for every \$1 dues paid. Dawson County's valuation has increased 60% in the last ten years. The unemployment rate is 3.9% while the state unemployment rate is 3.8%. The rate for those who don't / won't work is 3.5%. The cost of living in Dawson County is 16.5% lower than the U.S. average. Gothenburg is moving forward with a spec housing program for single family dwellings and there is a need for duplex units similar to those in Jefferson Square.

DAD dues were increased for Lexington and Dawson County last year and this year they are asking Gothenburg and Cozad for \$24,000 membership dues for fiscal year 2013-14. 1989 dues were \$15,000 and are currently \$19,000. Through the years, DAD has expanded their scope of services to include grant procurement and administration and has increased staff while absorbing inflation costs. They have hosted Department of Economic Development staff as well as representatives from the Dep't of Agriculture, UNL, and Ag Builders, and have received statewide recognition for what they've accomplished.

Council member Oliver thanked DAD for the great return Gothenburg has received from their office.

Kennedy moved, Oliver seconded, to approve Mayor Hudson's recommended appoint of Joni Birnie to the Housing Authority Board until 2015 to complete the remaining term of Victoria Haveriland who recently resigned. Roll call vote: Yea – Strauser, Oliver, Kennedy. Nay – none. Absent and not voting – Whiting.

In the past, Council has discussed transferring residential electrical inspections to the State. At the present time Mike Libich is 'grandfathered' to handle residential inspections and the State does the commercial inspections. We currently have ten active permits to finish and the upcoming spec homes. We need to either ask the State to take over inspections or hire a licensed electrician that can become state certified within six months if Mike can no longer do the inspections. Local electricians have been notified of the situation. A change to State inspections will remove all liability from the City but will require modification of the Municipal Code regarding inspections.

According to Randy Anderson at the Nebraska State Electrical Board, his office can do the inspections temporarily or permanently. They will finish the permits already in process at no charge. New projects will be charged the State's usual fee.

Other than allowing the State to do residential inspections temporarily, no action was taken.

Kennedy moved, Strauser seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Roll call vote: Yea - Oliver, Strauser, Kennedy. Nay - none. Absent and not voting – Whiting. The next regular meeting will be September 17, 2013.

Joyce Hudson, Mayor

Connie L. Dalrymple, City Clerk

