

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 26, 2021

Charles City city council met in a budget session on January 26, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor Dean Andrews presided and the following council members were present: Keith Starr, Jerry Joerger, DeLaine Freeseaman, Phoebe Pittman and Phillip Knighten. Also present were city administrator Steve Diers and city engineer John Fallis.

Funding request from the Floyd County Historical Museum was presented by director Jennifer Thiele. Their request for FY22 is \$4440 and will go toward improving visitor experience. They are working on more interactive elements and plan to paint, purchase portable speakers and photo ledges among other items. They would also like to hire a graphic designer to design a new logo.

Charles City Arts Center has submitted a request for \$6000 for FY22 to be used for general operating funds. They struggle to cover expenses each year. Would like to use the funds for painting, an online gallery store and the director's salary.

Mary Ingham from Crisis Intervention reviewed their request for funding of \$1500 for FY22. They operate an office here in Charles City and serve victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault as well as individuals and families impacted by homicide. With the pandemic, they are doing more of their work via online interviews or meeting in person in a large area so they can social distance. This funding amount is the same that they have requested the last few years.

Janet Tull, representing the Charles City Cultural Equity Board, presented a funding request of \$1000 for FY22. This is a new organization here in Charles City. They would like to use this funding to purchase promotional materials to help introduce their group to the community. They are working on promoting Black History Month for the month of February. They are under the umbrella of the Arts Center.

Robert Moen, Brett Van Ausdall and Ralph Smith presented the funding request from the Save the Depot committee. They are asking for \$25000 which will be used toward the moving of the depot from it's current location to about a block south to save it from being demolished by the Canadian Pacific Railroad. They will put the building on a permanent foundation and then will start raising funds to renovate it to be used as a railroad museum, community meeting facilities and as a trail head for a possible extension of the current Charley Western bike trail in town. They also plan to have public restrooms in the building. They have raised approximately \$186000 so far and in order to meet the recent \$100000 match pledged by local resident Jim Smith, they have about \$57000 left. They want to raise \$300000 and with in-kind donations, that will be enough to move the depot and place it on a permanent foundation. They have been informed that there are several grants available for restoring the depot but none of them will help with the moving costs. So moving it is the first step in saving this historic structure and is the most time sensitive since the railroad has given them until March 31 to secure the funding for the move. If funding is successful, the structure will actually be moved in July or August. Some concern was raised over future costs, such as operating costs, renovation costs and costs to extend the bike trail to the depot. Mr. Moen replied that they will not be asking for any operating costs in the future. Mr. Smith commented that this museum would probably only operate during the warm weather months and will be closed during the winter months. Mark Wicks stated that the north end of the bike trail could use some work and being able to use some of the land Mr. Moen owns near the planned museum would help facilitate expanding the bike trail to this area. Council member Freeseaman commented that there are other areas along the trail, such as the whitewater park area, that could use restrooms as well so we need to keep that in mind.

Cable Fund budget was reviewed. Revenues for this fund come from the cable franchise fees paid by Mediacom and \$3000 payment from the county for the taping of their board meetings. Expenses include payment to the school of approximately \$41000 for services of the PAN director in training students to tape and placing the meeting videos on the PAN system, \$3900 to the Chamber for administration of the local access Channel 4, \$10000 to the Chamber for overseeing the operation of the broadband commission and about \$3000 to pay for the people recording the events. Mark Wicks commented that the studio equipment is about 25 years old and patching it together when there is issues is getting harder to do. Council member Pittman asked if we can get statistics on what the viewership is for Channel 4 and Wicks stated that info is in their annual report and he will get a copy of that out to us. Mayor Andrews commented about the need of putting \$80000 into new studio equipment in order to broadcast on Channel 4 if the viewership is very low, as it is thought to be. Maybe we should focus on using another medium of getting our items broadcasted, such as Facebook. Diers stated that the 28E is in the process of being updated and the broadband commission is finally without vacancies so they are working on it.

Fiber to the Home fund budget was reviewed. Expenses here are for design costs for the project and these expenses will be covered by a transfer in from the General fund. The telecom trustees are still working on the construction

details and the financing details so nothing has been inputted here for revenue/expenses for FY21 or FY22. We have heard that there may be some state and federal funds available for broadband projects, so we are hoping that is true and that we can take advantage of that. Council member Freeseaman asked if the city will be fronting any more funds to this project. Diers replied that there have been discussions on that and it could be the case. Also, some guaranteeing of some financing may also be asked of the city. Any future commitment for the city to finance would be subject to a referendum of the voters. We will just have to wait and see what happens.

Diers commented that some final details on the general fund and transfers are being worked on and will hopefully have an initial draft of the full budget ready for the February 4 budget session.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, City Clerk