

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
MARCH 30, 2022

Charles City city council met in a planning session on March 30, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in council chambers. Mayor Dean Andrews presided and the following council members were present: Keith Starr, Patrick Lumley, DeLaine Freeseman, Phoebe Pittman and Phillip Knighten. Also present were city administrator Steve Diers and city engineer John Fallis.

Mayor Andrews commented he had learned at a recent mayor's meeting that if a council member is attending a council meeting remotely, that the mayor should announce the reason why he/she is not attending in person.

Jessica Gintz was present to discuss a request from Rotary for the Santa's Shining Light display for 2022. The lighting event will take place the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Participants will start putting up their displays November 15 and will start taking them down the week of New Year's Day. They will get timers to shut the lights off during the day, this was not done this past year. They have talked to park and rec director Tyler Mitchell and have said they would pay toward electricity and he is fine with that. This item will be on the next regular agenda for council approval.

With RAGBRAI coming to town this summer, Main Street Charles City has approached the council about sprucing up the Main Street bridge by painting the light poles and railings. Quotes have been received with Johnson Painting being low at \$12,850. The railings will be scraped, rust proofed and painting leaving them in place. Since this project wasn't budgeted for this year, the LED replacement project will be put off another year and use those funds for this. Question on if there is any warranty on the paint that will be used and this will be researched and answered back to council for the meeting on Monday.

Staff is looking into doing another phase of lighting on the Corporate Drive water tower. They are recommending adding lights for the city logo and more of the tower itself. This will also allow more colors to be utilized for lighting up the tower. MUSCO lighting will again be doing this work. Two quotes were received, one for adding two lights (\$27,600) and another for adding four (\$32,600). Council consensus was to go with four, so this item will be on the next regular agenda for council action.

A request for implementing a fuel surcharge has been received from Jendro. They have calculated that the first month charge for this would be approximately \$557. They would like to implement this added charge until the price of fuel comes back down to \$3.50. Staff is recommending that the city absorb this fee rather than increase the charges to the residents, at least for 9 to 12 months. If the prices don't decline by then, we could then look at increasing the resident's fees to help cover the fuel surcharge. Much discussion on how to handle it if Jendro asks for a rate increase due to the CPI in September. If the higher price of fuel is included in an increase in the CPI, then this fuel surcharge should be eliminated. City administrator Diers commented that if we see the expected decrease in the spring clean up fees by going to a drop off event, we may keep the total cost increases to a minimum. Discussion on if we should make this fuel surcharge for a finite period of time, for example 6 months, and reevaluate at that time. This will be on the next regular agenda and if staff receives any new information, they will pass it on to council.

Mayor Andrews left the meeting and mayor protem Freeseman took over chairing the meeting.

Speed study on South Grand was discussed. Council had previously requested that city staff contact the DOT about conducting a speed study on South Grand. Concern was that the speed limit coming into town near Molstead Motors was too high and council would like to reduce the speed limit there for safety reasons. The DOT did their study, basing it on number of accidents and traveling speed. There have been 15 accidents in this stretch which is below the state average. Looking at the speed, their recommendation is actually to raise the 35 mph speed limit area to 40 mph. Council consensus was to leave these speed zones alone and not to raise any. Chief Anderson commented that most of the accidents that occur in this area involve personal injury so he will be coming to council in the near future to discuss speed cameras. Council member Freeseman asked if there was data for how many speeding tickets are written in this stretch of S. Grand. Chief Anderson replied that he can get that information and

will get it out to council. The last two years have made it difficult to be proactive in doing traffic stops due to being short staffed. He also commented that there has been an increase nationwide in speeding.

With more dumpsters being placed in city right of way lately, staff would like to implement a dumpster permit process to help regulate this. They are recommending that the provider of the dumpsters put reflective signs or tape on each one to make more visible at night and regulate where and when these can be placed in city right of way. In order to enforce these regulations, they need to be in an ordinance. There would be no cost for this permit and it would be the responsibility of the business, not the citizen, to get this permit. Any haulers who currently have a license with us would get the information on this new ordinance once it is passed by council. This ordinance would pertain only to dumpsters in city right of way, not on private property. This will be on the next regular agenda for council consideration.

An overnight town agreement for RAGBRAI has been submitted by the Des Moines RAGBRAI organization. It outlines what is expected from the town and from the organization for this event. City attorney Slotter and insurance agent Bob Ingram have both looked at the agreement and think it is okay. This will be on the next regular agenda for council action.

After much discussion at several meetings, a final right of way agreement with Omnitel has been drafted. Omnitel has requested that this agreement cover the entire city, not just the areas they have specified in the next three phases of their buildout. Staff has stated that they still need to come in to city hall to get a right of way permit each time they will be working in the city's right of way, so we will have some authority in where they place it. So, they have included the entire city in this agreement. Now we just need to decide on a one time fee for this. Last fall, we charged \$250 for their connection to Chautauqua. We really want to encourage fiber installation in the city, so staff is thinking that \$350 should cover the staff time involved in this process. We will continue to work with them to encourage building out as much as possible in the city. Some discussion on a possible franchise agreement with Omnitel. Diers commented that a franchise agreement would give more authority to Omnitel, so we should probably steer away from that. Consensus of council was that we need to get some reliable fiber in the city to remain viable.

We have been awarded a Water Quality Initiative grant for the edible arboretum pathways of \$100,000. City attorney Slotter will review the agreement for this award, it's the same as the previous one. Total cost of the project is \$220,000 and our share will come from sponsored project funds and donations. This will be on the next regular agenda for council action and the project needs to be completed by 12/31/23.

The 2020 Sanitary Sewer project is ready for acceptance. This was actually done in November 2020 but the contract required that videos of the lined sewer be provided along with a written report. Due to loss of key staff, this took longer to get completed. We have received all of this info, so we are ready to relinquish the retainage and accept the project. This will be on the next regular agenda for council consideration.

City administrator Diers reported that a new way to fill pot holes has been explored recently. It consists of little bags, with a build in binder agent, that get put into a pothole. When cars drive over this, it causes them to fill in the hole and bind together. We will be conducting the annual spring clean up in a new way by doing a drop off event at Shaw Avenue dump site. This is being done due to increasing costs and shortage of labor to conduct the curbside process. We are working on ways to help those who can't get their items to Shaw Avenue. The dump site will be monitored to keep illegal dumping from happening. The flag committee has narrowed down the new city flag design to 4 options. They have released a survey for the public to participate in through April 8 to help choose which one will be the new city flag. The city of Manly is requesting to join our safety group. Staff took a tour of the Pure Prairie Farms facility today. They would like to expand, there is a bottleneck with storage. The city could allow use of the section of Main Street in front of their facility while they are adding on.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, City Clerk