

**WORTHINGTON CITY COUNCIL/NOBLES COUNTY COMMISSION
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING - WORK SESSION, FEBRUARY 23, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 Noon in City Hall Council Chambers by Mayor Mike Kuhle and Nobles County Commission Chair Gene Metz, with the following Council Members present: Scott Nelson, Diane Graber, Larry Janssen, Mike Harmon, Rod Sankey, and Honorary Council Member, Jason Gerdes; and with the following Nobles County Commissioners present: Marv Zylstra, Bob Demuth Jr., Don Linssen. Commissioners absent; Matt Widboom.

Staff members present: Steve Robinson, City Administrator; Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director; Janice Oberloh, City Clerk; Tom Johnson, Nobles County Administrator; Sue Luing, Nobles County HR Director, Deputy County Administrator,

Others present: Justine Wettschreck, KWOA; Julie Buntjer, Daily Globe.

JOINT DISCUSSION

Prairie Justice Center Lease - Tom Johnson, Nobles County Administrator, said that he and Steve Robinson, City Administrator, have been working on the Prairie Justice Center Lease for some time now. Mr. Johnson said they decided it would be easier to write a new document, which will be a 99 year document as was the old lease. Mr. Robinson said one of the items they are trying to define better is the shared costs of capital expenses, with the City's use of 12.72% of the facility and how that would apply. Mr Johnson asked if there were any comments or concerns regarding the draft document that had been included with the agenda for the meeting. Once the City and County Attorneys complete their review of the proposed lease, it will go back to the Joint Committee, then brought before the respective boards for approval.

Prairie Justice Center Garage - Steve Robinson said the Operations Committee is looking at increasing the size of the garage at the Prairie Justice Center to hold more than the six vehicles it currently holds. They are working with SEH on the project to increase the size of the garage to 18 to 20 vehicles because the electronics in most of the cars now require that they are continually running to keep them either cooled or warmed up. Three different plans have been created, with some different exit strategies. A cost estimate obtained in 2013 was just under \$600,000, not including engineering fees or architect fees, but estimates now range from \$1.1 million to \$1.7 million which is inclusive of all of the soft costs. The Joint Operations Committee will be scheduled to meet within the next week or two. If they are able to come to a recommendation it will be passed on to Council. There are five or six years left on the bond payment that the City pays to the County for our share of the Prairie Justice Center, at about \$190,000 a year. The discussion has been that the County would initially fund the entire project - we would continue to budget the amount that we're contributing for the bond once that first bond is retired in 2022, then that money would apply to our share of the garage, which would be 50%. Mr. Robinson said rather than the payment going down to \$1 per year after it is paid off, as specified in the lease, he suggested the City continue to budget the funds for any capital improvements that may arise. Tom Johnson said that because of the significant cost of the project they would want some type of agreement before both the Board and the Council that stated how it was going to get paid for. Council Member Harmon suggested that

the County would probably want some kind of interest also.

Mall Demolition - Steve Robinson reported that bids had been solicited for demolition of the mall building, and the low bid received was \$424,000, which did not include asbestos removal. The property owner is asking for up-front assistance with the demolition costs. Mr. Robinson said because the City already has over \$2 million invested in the project already, we are asking that the County fund the entire demo, which would then be refundable through TIF.

Mayor Kuhle said he would appreciate the County's participation. County Board Chair Gene Metz responded that initially we first talked about sharing costs - now you want us to pay all - we'll have to talk about it. Marv Zylstra asked if there was any agreement in place regarding the demolition costs, to which Mr. Robinson responded there was not. Nobles County Administrator Tom Johnson said they won't address the request at their March 1st meeting but will look at it after that if they are ready. Commissioner Demuth suggested that it be added to the next work session. Mr. Johnson responded that their next work session was already scheduled for Monday so it was too late to add it to that agenda.

Trail Maintenance and Features - Mr. Johnson said the County had no discussion points on this issue. Mr. Robinson asked Todd Wietzema, the City's Public Works Director, to provide some information. Mr. Wietzema said it was a smooth transition when the City took over the trail maintenance last summer - no negative comments have been received. A ship grant had been received last year for bench installation along the trail. There will also be trash containers installed, and perhaps some trees and lighting. Mr. Robinson said of the 17 benches installed last year, 15 were through the SHIP grant, but donations of benches as memorials has also become popular.

The meeting was paused for approximately eight minutes for lunch delivery.

Administrators' Reports - Steve Robinson noted that, regarding the County Road 57 area annexation, no request had yet been received for the annexation. We are working on being ready to respond when it comes in - it will be a three to four month process. It is proposed that the zoning will be light industrial with commercial along the frontage area. They are currently only looking at the west side of 57, with the east side at some time in the future.

Tom Johnson reported that, regarding the BAC, a Blandin grant had been received for installation of fiber throughout the facility. There is still \$215,000 available for completion of the Lab. The estimate for completion six months ago was \$350, - the additional funds are to come from the private sector. Steve Robinson added they are working with AURI for their expertise on what their clients would want in the facility.

Mr. Robinson also reported on the Lewis and Clark project, noting that funding has brought the project to Adrian, and it will be an additional \$18.27 million to bring it to Worthington. They are

looking for it to be in bonding bill, and are not sure what the federal contribution will be. The water will arrive here in 2018.

The legislature has a short session this year - 8 weeks. Staff will be meeting with legislators in the next couple of weeks, and will let them carry it. Legislators will also be looking at local government aid, which is a small portion of the County's budget, but is approximately 50% of the City's budget.

Mayor Kuhle asked if there was anything on the housing front. Mr. Johnson replied the Nobles Home Initiative applications were coming in slowly, at last count they had 34 since the program started.

Commissioner Demuth and Council Member Nelson left the meeting at 12:55 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Council Member Janssen, seconded by Council Member Sankey and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 12:56 p.m.

The motion was made by Commissioner Linssen, seconded by Commissioner Zylstra and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 12:56 p.m.

Janice Oberloh, MCMC
City Clerk