

**WORTHINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING, JUNE 19, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers by Mayor Mike Kuhle with the following Council Members present: Larry Janssen, Alan Oberloh, Chad Cummings, Amy Ernst, Mike Harmon.

Staff present: Steve Robinson, City Administrator, Jason Brisson, Director of Community Development, Planning, Zoning and Building Services; Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director; Janice Oberloh, City Clerk.

Others present: Leah Ward, The Globe; John Landgaard; Tom Johnson; Marjorie Ferguson; Jorge Lopez (3:57 p.m.)

**APPLICATION FOR DOCK PERMIT APPROVED**

Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director, said the following additional application to install a private dock on public property had been received:

Herman Kramer                      Across the street from 625 Lake Avenue

The applicant had a permit in 2018 and meets all the City Dock Policy requirements.

The motion was made by Council Member Cummings, seconded by Council Member Harmon and unanimously carried to approve the application for a dock permit.

**WELL PROJECT DISCUSSION**

ISD 518 Superintendent John Landgaard and Nobles County Administrator Tom Johnson were at the meeting to discuss the Welcome, Education, Library and Livability Resource Center (WELL) project with Council. A completed feasibility study identified the former Campbell Soup site as the preferred location, and concluded that a new 83,800 square foot multi-story building was needed to house the proposed partnering entities. The WELL facility includes ISD 518's Community Education and Nobles County Library, and potential tenants include Nobles County Integration Collaborative, the Chamber of Commerce, Nobles County Art center, a Welcome Center and administrative spaces for the City's recreation facility.

Nobles County Administrator Tom Johnson said it appears all three Boards are committee to moving forward but he wanted to ask if the City still supported providing the site of the former Campbell Soup property for the project.

Jason Brisson, Director of Community Development, Planning, Zoning and Building Services, noted with the size of the facility there will be max building coverage and parking and some zoning issues. We will need a site plan to see if it's feasible. Mr. Brisson said the City's Comp Plan identified that

location as a site for a community center.

Superintendent John Landgaard said the School District is on board with the project and has committed \$12.5 million for it. If bonding comes through that could be expanded. He was asking if the City and County had committed to the project. Mr. Johnson said the County has not committed 100% yet as they are waiting to on their bonding request to the legislature. Mr. Landgaard said the District would hold off until next April to see whether the bonding is successful or if the County will pull out.

Steve Robinson, City Administrator, stated that a more detailed planning study is needed that would include the facility, parking, storm water, etc. - we don't even know if the planned facility would fit that space. Mayor Kuhle suggested that a join meeting of the three entities be planned for sometime in July.

#### **FORM OF CONTRACT APPROVED - CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

Earlier this year, the City Council and Water and Light Commission voted to remove the City Administrator and the General Manager of Worthington Public Utilities from the City's wage and compensation plan and to instead develop a contract for those positions. The City's Compensation Committee worked with City Attorney Jesse Flynn and Labor Attorney Brandon Fitzimmons to develop a general form of the contracts for those positions to be submitted to City Council and Water and Light Commission for approval, with any subsequent modifications of either contract to be the responsibility of the respective governing body. The contract would begin January 1, 2019 and terminate when such employment is terminated, but would establish a gross annualized salary for the years 2019, 2020, and 2021, in addition to addressing pension, leave, insurance and other benefits.

The motion was made by Council Member Oberloh, seconded by Council Member Ernst and unanimously carried to approve the form of contract for the City Administrator position.

#### **UPDATE / DISCUSSION - THOMPSON APARTMENTS**

Jason Brisson, Director of Community Development, Planning, Zoning and Building Services, provided a recap of the Thompson Hotel issue and the roofing situation, and requested that Council provide Staff with direction regarding the facility and the roofing. Steve Robinson, City Administrator, said if we proceed with the roofing the City will have approximately \$300,000 invested in the facility, and that we should have no false hope of any of that money being recovered. If Council should choose to not follow through with roofing project there, we have two City-owned facilities that those supplies could be used for since we've paid for them.

Mr. Brisson said an offer for a redevelopment project had been accepted by the property's receiver

and was being reviewed by the City's financial consultant to determine whether the requested participation by the City would be permitted under state law. Jorge Lopez, representing APEX, the developer, was present at the meeting to provide an overview of their proposed project. In response to a question from Mayor Kuhle on what this developer was looking for from the City, Mr. Lopez said they were looking for City assistance through establishment of a TIF, acquiring the location for the parking garage, and to be able to work together with the City to see what the costs are going to be in creating the project and if there are any other types of gaps that are not huge, to find a way to make it happen. They would need a signed agreement that the City would work with them. Staff noted that any TIF would be pay-as-you-go and not up-front dollars.

Following discussion, Mr. Robinson said anything the City might agree to would need to be open to anyone else interested in pursuing a development agreement with the receiver. We would essentially be agreeing to pledging \$91,000 in materials for the roof, or cash reimbursement; TIF; gap financing - based on the numbers; and the parking lot - still to be investigated. Some Council Members stated that they still have concerns over the health and safety of the tenants in the facility, which is what they based a previous decision on regarding the roof replacement.

Mr. Robinson noted that we will find out Monday about the roofer's schedule for availability, which may be mid-August or September. That would be the deadline for any developer proposals to come forward to the City and for the City to decide whether they will put a new roof on the Thompson or walk away.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The motion was made by Council Member Janssen, seconded by Council Member Ernst and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

Janice Oberloh, MCMC  
City Clerk