

**WORTHINGTON CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 20, 2017**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 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. Council Members absent: Mike Harmon (excused).

Staff present: Steve Robinson, City Administrator; Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director; Janice Oberloh, City Clerk; Dwayne Haffield, Director of Engineering (5:12 p.m.).

Others present: Justine Wettschreck, KWOA; Karl Evers-Hallstrom, The Globe; Marty Siefert, CGMC; Bill Wattering and Abraham Algadi, WREDC; Mark Shepherd, City Attorney (4:34 p.m.)

CGMC UPDATE/PRESENTATION

Marty Seifert, representing the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC) was present at the meeting to provide an update to Council regarding the CGMC and the legislative year. Mr. Siefert reviewed the Coalition's legislative priorities including LGA, and how they fared through the legislative session and into the final bill.

Mr. Seifert also noted the upcoming CGMC Fall Conference scheduled for November 16-17 in Alexandria, adding they will include a discussion regarding day care concerns. Council Members responded with information on day care shortage issues here in Worthington.

Council thanked Mr. Seifert for his time and information.

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-09-15 ADOPTED REGARDING CONFLICT OF INTEREST - CITY ADMINISTRATOR STEVE ROBINSON

At their August 28, 2017 meeting, Council tabled action on a resolution regarding a conflict of interest that existed with City Administrator, Steve Robinson, in the election and contracting with the engineering/architecture firm of SEH, Inc. The item was tabled to the September 20th special meeting to allow Council Members time to visit with the City Attorney regarding any questions they may have.

Mr. Shepherd was present at the meeting and noted that the concerns he had received from Council Members were not from a legal standpoint but from an employment/policy standpoint, and Council would need to deal with that.

Following discussion, the motion was made by Council Member Cummings and seconded by Council Member Ernst to adopt the resolution, with the following Council Members voting in favor of the resolution: Ernst, Cummings; and the following Council Members voting against the resolution: Oberloh, Janssen. Mayor Kuhle declared the vote a tie and cast his vote in favor of the motion - motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-09-15

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THAT CITY ADMINISTRATOR STEVEN ROBINSON IS NOT AUTHORIZED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MAKING IN ANY MANNER AS TO CERTAIN CONTRACTS

(Refer to Resolution File for complete copy of Resolution)

DUST CONTROL - NORTH FREDRICK AVENUE

Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director, noted City currently only does dust control out on 27th Street, and the majority of that dust is from City trucks. Control is through use of a soybean product applied to the road. Council Member Oberloh said we also need to talk about improving North Fredrick at some point, not just using dust control as a long term measure.

Mr. Wietzema estimated it would be slightly less than \$4,000 for the entire street from Oxford to Stower using the soybean product, however the truck traffic is greater there than on 27th Street. Council Member Oberloh suggested meeting with the business owner to see what could be done. Mr. Robinson said he would visit with each of the businesses there and perhaps look at putting some pavement down.

10TH AVENUE BRIDGE

Council discussed the 10th Avenue bridge and where the funding would come from if it is identified as a priority for them. Council Member Cummings suggested rebuilding the walk bridge that is closer to the lake and seek funding for the 10th Avenue bridge. Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director, said they discussed that at the Community Growth meeting - there are grants available for the walk bridge, but we also need to address the permitting. Mr. Wietzema estimated the walk bridge project cost at \$65,000. Dwayne Haffield, Director of Engineering, noted we would work with the Corps of Engineers for the permitting but the DNR and FEMA would be involved for standards.

FUNDING - WREDC

Council reviewed a history of the City's annual funding to WREDC. Abraham Algadi and Bill Wetering were at the meeting to discuss the City's possible intent to cut their funding. Mr. Algadi said they run a lean operation - using the operating budget to keep the lights on - their 2017 budget was \$235,000. Mr. Algadi said Chairman Wetering had sent a letter to the City a couple of months ago as part of the budgeting process, asking to maintain City funding at rate of \$86,000, the same amount as the City's Economic Development levy. Mayor Kuhle stated that Council needs to talk about future funding and Economic Development and how it's handled within the city of

Worthington and surrounding areas. There's been a proposal from amongst the funding partners to move away from WREDC as being our prime economic development and bring it back in-house. The proposal was to cut 25% for three years and get back to a base amount. He added that between the City, the County and WPU we're spending \$180,000 per year, and need to be accountable to the tax payers - what are we getting for job growth. He was troubled by being invited to be at this meeting now as this is the first he's heard of this suggestion, that you're moving in that direction. Council Member Oberloh noted he had not heard of the proposed cuts either. Mr. Wattering added perhaps it would have been a courtesy to have a discussion with their Board or himself as the Chairman.

Council Member Oberloh said his agenda only stated establish the 2018 budget for Worthington Regional Economic Development Corporation - it says nothing about people meeting about going in a different direction. He asked Mr. Wattering if they had come here to request the \$86,000 or did you know that this was happening. Mr. Wattering responded they were here to ask for the funding, and that Mr. Robinson suggested he be here for this discussion as there's a possibility the funding to some degree could be in jeopardy. Mr. Wattering said Council is certainly free to have their own discussion about what direction you're going to move, and if you'd like to base that decision on information he would like to be invited to make a presentation at some point. This is a very unfortunate place and time to have this discussion. Council Member Oberloh agreed, stating he was all for leaving the 2018 funding at what it is, and then let's be transparent and let everybody else know what's going on.

The motion was made by Council Member Oberloh to continue the 2018 funding to WREDC at what it was last year, and that Council meets with the Board of Directors of WREDC and get their concerns answered.

Mayor Kuhle said this was talked about at the planning session in March, and he didn't think it was appropriate to establish the funding tonight - to give WREDC a chance to provide information to full Council. Discussion continued.

Mayor Kuhle called for a second on the motion - motion died for lack of a second.

Mayor Kuhle said this item had been placed on an agenda for a special meeting - there was no recommendation written to Council but it's good that we start this discussion. The economic development levy is already in place for next year, or it will be passed, so the money is there - we need to have some discussions with all partners.

Mr. Wattering responded the discussion is fine, but this is a fumble on how to start it. Council Member Oberloh suggested the City also look at the funding for the SRDC.

Mr. Robinson noted this item was on the agenda as WREDC was in their budget process, but he had

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not yet seen a proposed budget. Mr. Wettering responded that it was essentially the same as last year. The proposed budget is in the packet for the WREDC Board meeting tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Council Member Oberloh, seconded by Council Member Cummings and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Janice Oberloh, MCMC
City Clerk