

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Work Session – January 11, 2010

Pursuant to due call and notice, a work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, January 11, 2010, at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

The following Councilmembers were present: Lehmann, Johnson, Downs, Meuers, Waldhausen, Hellquist Absent: Negard

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, City Clerk Kay Murphy

Jim Brimeyer, Skyehill Governance Consulting, stated that the intent of the work session was to develop results that meet expectations.

The consensus of the Council was that the Council needs to agree on long-term and short-term goals for the City. In addition, establish tangible goals, identify funding and how the city will accomplish those goals.

Chattin reviewed the status of the July 2008 council retreat priorities. He noted the following:

- Extending sewer around Lake Bemidji – this is a long-term goal. Staff have made funding requests through Senator Klobuchar, Congressman Oberstar and Congressman Peterson's offices. Until funds for a feasibility study are secured (approximately \$500,000) this project will likely not move forward.
- New Facility for Headwaters Science Center – The City has supported the HSC's bonding request and offered free land for the facility. Little more can be done, from the city's perspective.
- City-owned property – Staff presented a map detailing all vacant city parcels. Staff has cleaned up parcels and identified land for sale.
- Fire Substation – Short term solution of renting space is working well. Chattin will work with the new fire chief in this regard.
- Downtown Marketing/Redevelopment – RDG Central City Plan has been completed. Implementation of the plan will require appropriation of adequate funds by the council or grants.
- Analyze and prepare for Annexation – Staff has prepared a comprehensive analysis of the impact of annexation for the Council. Additional issues may impede the process but, for now, the council is still focused on moving forward with orderly annexation.
- Maintenance of Existing Infrastructure – Public Works Department has a plan but funding is not adequate to implement.
- Maximum Public Access Channel Use – A request for a public access channel has been made and legal is working on this.
- Facilitate additional low, moderate and homeless housing and develop Rako Street Property – The HHDC is working to construct a homeless housing facility as well as low income housing north of BiCAP. The City is assisting with both projects. Development of the Rako Street property by HHDC is on hold and other offers for the property may be forthcoming.
- Paul Bunyan Trail Bridge over HWY 197 – The Council has set this as a bonding priority. Requests for funding have been submitted to various agencies and every available avenue has been explored. There may be stimulus money available.

Mr. Brimeyer reviewed the governance model. He discussed leadership tools and considered strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in Bemidji.

The Council developed a list of twenty-two issues facing the city and then from that list narrowed it down to the top five issues. Those issues are:

- Finish redevelopment of south shore – sell lots/build
- Possible loss of LGA
- Annexation – consider more aggressive annexation of other areas
- Quality Neighborhood Initiative Study – complete and implement ordinances; improve housing stock
- Promotion and marketing of the BREC

Hellquist stated that he was disappointed that public safety did not receive more interest by other councilmembers.

Johnson commented that perhaps the QNI study may develop better ordinances for enforcement.

Mr. Brimeyer stated that there is only so much time and resources that the council can dedicate.

Mr. Brimeyer then led the Council on an exercise using an implementation model and action plan on two of their top five issues. He will provide a written report from the meeting for the Council and Chattin.

ADJOURN

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk