

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Special Meeting/Work Session – March 28, 2011

Pursuant to due call and notice, a special meeting/work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, March 28, 2011, at 5:30 p.m. in the Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Larson presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Larson, Waldhausen, Johnson, Hellquist, Albrecht, Negard, Thompson

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, City Attorney Alan Felix, Public Works Director/City Engineer Craig Gray, City Clerk Kay Murphy

Others Present: Mel Milender - JPB Administrator, Phil Carlson & Paul Bilotta - Bonestroo Engineering, Dr. Lisa Erwin – BSU, Tim Flathers – HRDC, Geri Hickerson, Cindy Serratore – QNI Steering Committee Members

Mayor Larson stated that the purpose of the special work session was to review the QNI Study with Bonestroo Engineering.

Phil Carlson, Bonestroo, addressed Councilmembers concerns about BSU's involvement stating that BSU has participated in most of the meetings that have been held in Bemidji. He commented that the study has identified a wide array of issues and Bonestroo has recommendations for the Council to consider. He stated that the QNI Study identifies a quality neighborhood as one that has active resident involvement, a safe environment, sound buildings, well maintained yards and public spaces. Carlson stated that there are significant neighborhood problems which are not just university-related but due to economics and demographics. Bemidji is experiencing what many cities are experiencing nationwide.

Council discussed the following:

- Parking issues, including how to limit vehicles from parking in front yards or unpaved surfaces. Milender stated that paving off street parking was discussed by the Joint Planning Board and was voted down after public "outcry". The question then becomes does the City Council have the political will to require paving of off-street parking in urban neighborhoods.
- On street parking permits including type of permits and enforcement.
- Neighborhood involvement. Waldhausen stated that some neighborhoods are 80% rentals and it could be difficult to get those neighbors involved. Bilotta suggested that neighborhoods could be broadened to include areas with more ownership and not use geographic areas.
- Enforcement. Mayor Larson would like it defined which staff enforce the current City code. Felix stated that parking on yards is under the JPB.

Bilotta commented that a person should be able to drive or walk down a Bemidji street and not be able to tell which are owner-occupied versus rental.

Dr. Erwin, BSU, stated that Bemidji State University is in the process of commissioning a parking study on campus utilizing the QNI Study which should be completed this spring.

Councilor Thompson left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Milender stated that the Joint Planning Board (JPB) will be considering extending the rental ordinance to the entire JPB area at their next regular meeting.

Johnson commented that he was hoping to restore neighborhoods to homeowner occupied. He suggested that there be a cost to convert a home to a rental.

Discussion continued on the next phase and HRDC's involvement. Albrecht observed that the City does not have a contract with HRDC at this time.

Felix recommended that the Council list their top two or three priorities from the QNI Study and then discuss that at another work session. Consensus of the Council was to provide

staff with their top priorities for discussion at a special work session on Wednesday, April 27, 2011 at 5:30 p.m.

Carlson will provide the City with the QNI Study final report and set of recommendations for the Council.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Hellquist, seconded by Negard, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk