

City Council Proceedings

Special Work Session

July 10, 2007

Pursuant to due call and notice, a regular meeting/work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Tuesday, July 10, 2006, at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Lehmann, Markeson, Hellquist, Johnson, Downs, Erickson, Meuers.

Others Present: Paul Richards (WSN), Cliff Tweedale (HRDC), John Chattin, Kay Murphy, Brian Freeberg, Craig Gray, Rita Albrecht.

Mayor Lehmann stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss what role the HRDC could provide in the events center process.

Hellquist responded that what he understood is that the Council wanted the HRDC to facilitate a discussion with BSU, getting them to the table with firm and finite numbers.

Johnson stated that overall the project needs full-time attention, a project manager.

Downs suggested that MnSCU should be invested as a partner and that this was bigger than the Council.

Erickson commented that it is not the City's obligation to go to MnSCU but that it was BSU's. She would like HRDC to facilitate the negotiation process with BSU. However, the "buck" stops with the City Council and she does not want the HRDC to take on more responsibility than the Council is willing to give them.

Cliff Tweedale, HRDC, stated that the Council has made good progress and the HRDC is happy to help. If HRDC manages the process, it means to help partner the process and govern making decisions at the right time with appropriate information. He agreed that the "buck" does stop with the City Council. If there is a need to blame someone, it would be the HRDC but the policy comes from the City Council.

Downs stated he has concerns regarding operations and maintenance of the events center and who will take care of it. He asked at what point does the Council decide that the event center is not reasonable for the City.

Markeson commented that BSU and the City have conflicting ideas in regards to what is in the events center and felt that this needed to be resolved.

Meuers asked about the committees and what role they would play as the process continues.

Lehmann responded that there is still a need for some of the committees to continue.

Erickson stated that it is important that the Council as a whole know what all the committees are doing and be aware of the project in total.

Chattin stated that the Task Force has been operating independently and making recommendations to the Council. He stated that it is time for the committees to get their direction from the Council.

Tweedale stated that this is a complicated process and the Council needs someone that can "broker the conversation". In the end the Council will get a package that they can responsibly say yes to and lives within the parameters set by the Council.

Discussion continued on the need for a study by CSL. Tweedale suggested that if the HRDC takes on the role of facilitator, they would determine the best time for CSL to do that study.

Discussion continued on the desires of the community and the reality of what will be built.

Lehmann recognized the efforts of staff and stated that it is time to let staff step back from the project. He noted that there are very qualified individuals on the committees and the HRDC is now willing to help tie up the loose ends and recommended that the Council work with HRDC in that regard.

Erickson commented that the City needs to have a clear understanding of BSU's commitment as an anchor tenant. She then asked Tweedale what "steering" the project meant.

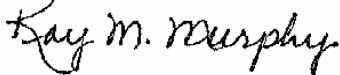
Tweedale responded that the HRDC could provide the following: 1) the heavy lifting primarily would be done by Dave Hengel who has a good understanding of the project; 2) as an office, the HRDC is committed to work on the customer's agenda; and 3) the HRDC would be leading or championing the process. However, the final outcome is up to the Council. He stated that the process is labor intensive.

Tweedale will provide a formal proposal for the Council's consideration at their next meeting with a not to exceed cost estimate.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Johnson, second by Downs, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk