

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Work Session – Monday, February 11, 2019

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, February 11, 2019, at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of City Hall, Mayor Pro Tem Erickson presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Beard, Johnson, Rivera, Erickson, Thompson. Absent: Albrecht

Staff Present: City Manager Nate Mathews, City Attorney Al Felix, Finance Director Ron Eischens, Public Works Director/City Engineer Craig Gray, Parks & Recreation Director Marcia Larson, City Clerk Michelle Miller

Mayor Pro Tem Erickson stated the purpose of the work session was to discuss snow removal ordinance process, community visioning and VisitBemidji.

Snow Removal/Sidewalks

Mathews stated that due to the amount of snow fall, the issue of non-compliance of snow removal on sidewalks is causing a safety hazard for pedestrians by forcing them to walk on the streets. Staff provided information including the current code as well as examples from other cities on how they handle snow removal on sidewalks. Mathews stated that there are three options available: 1) enforce existing ordinance based on complaints; 2) amend the current ordinance; or 3) the city can take a proactive approach to removal of snow.

Larson stated that the parks department removes snow from approximately eight miles of trails and sidewalks that are adjacent to City property. A proactive approach could mean clearing approximately 57 miles of sidewalks; or, designated priority routes could be established. The City would need to hire designated seasonal staff and purchase appropriate equipment; or, hire a contractor to complete the work. Staff is seeking direction regarding 2020 budget discussions.

After discussion, council directed staff to provide cost options for both hiring staff and contracting the work for review during the annual budget discussions.

Community Visioning/Engagement

Mathews recapped the priorities that came from the strategic planning conversations held with Jim Brimeyer as follows:

1. Wastewater Treatment Capacity
2. City Wells/Water Quality
3. Growth Management
4. Liquor Store Project
5. Community Visioning and Engagement Process
6. Rental Housing Code – Review
7. Rail Corridor

As a follow up to those conversations Mathews reached out to several cities and provided a summary of actions taken by other cities regarding strategic planning. Council would need to consider what degree of strategic planning the city would like to be involved in and what cost it would be willing to pay.

VisitBemidji

Erickson stated that VisitBemidji will be meeting regarding a proposed resolution with Bemidji Alliance. Felix has sent a letter to the VisitBemidji Board with a copy to council members. The letter addresses a partnership agreement proposed by Bemidji Alliance and the potential impact it could have between the City and VisitBemidji and its visitor and convention agreement.

Adjourn

There being no further business, motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Rivera, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle R. Miller
City Clerk