

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
ANOKA COUNTY**

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION NOTES
AUGUST 10, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Work Session via Zoom was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Steve Feldman.

2. **Roll Call**: Present were Mayor Steve Feldman, Council members Robert Bauer, Kevin Robinson and Sarah Udvig. Joe Muehlbauer arrived at 6:03 pm. Also present were City Administrator Joe Kohlmann, Police Chief Todd Schwieger, Fire Chief Dave Schmidt, Public Works Director Jason Windingstad, and Finance Director Darcy Mulvihill.

3. **2021 Budget**

City Administrator Joe Kohlmann provided an Executive Memo - General Fund Overview for the City Council. This information was included in their Work Session packet.

a. **Police Officer**

Chief Schwieger discussed the status of the School Resource Officer (SRO) contract. St. Francis Area Schools will be deciding soon how they are going to open this fall. Currently the City is taking applications for a police officer to fill the recent vacancy created by Officer Black. Chief Schwieger state we would like to continue with the hiring process to maintain 12 officers for shift coverage and a SRO for the schools when needed and approved by the school board.

Council had some concerns whether or not we should continue to fill the vacancy if the school district should discontinue the SRO contract. The contract will be discussed again at the August 24 school board meeting. All of the council members had comments and concerns about the contract and if the school decides not to move forward with a SRO. The council also wanted some guarantee that if a SRO is in the school and there is another shut down due to COVID that we receive at least 50% of the contract fee. They are already receiving a credit from last year's shut down. The amended contract with the 50% guarantee will be on the August 17th City Council meeting.

b. **Land**

Kohlmann stated Community Development Director Kate Thunstrom is out of town but she put together a cost estimate for the acquisition of the parcels discussed at the July 14, 2020 Work Session. Staff is recommending utilizing \$243,000 in EDA funds and General fund Reserve balance of 187,000 totaling the \$430,000 in the estimated cost for the four parcels. Those numbers tie in to the Executive memo provided.

Council discussed the potential purchase of the four lots for a future site for City Hall/Fire Station. They also referenced the St. Francis Forward Plan and the redevelopment of Bridge Street. Fire Chief Schmidt said the buildings could also be used for training before demolition.

During Council discussion there were concerns are we moving too fast on things and obtain the properties? Others felt we have to prepare for the future and purchase the property now and maybe build within 3-5 years plus being fiscally responsible and prepare for the future. Could the post office and library also be part of the city hall/fire station? Discussion was for more retail along Bridge Street. Questions were raised about road access and upgrades of Bridge Street. Consensus was to bring forward to a future council meeting the land purchase discussion.

c. Buildings

Kohlmann discussed the future tax rates and tax capacity noted the spreadsheet that was part of the packet. Buildings were discussed again and saving/planning for the future. Direction from the council is to use the .0005% increase for setting the levy. Help us prepare for the future.

d. Parks

Kohlmann stated staff put together some rough estimates for the development of parks. There was other discussion on a splash pad and estimates were obtained. There was a large difference in cost for the splash pads. This was brought up after comments were received from social media. Consensus was not to move forward at this time for a splash pad due to the potential cost.

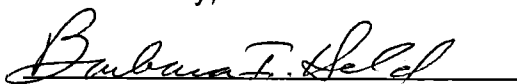
e. Liquor Store

Not sure, when is the time to expand and/or renovate the liquor store but it still should be addressed, we already have plans and specifications drawn up. Council thought maybe the city should wait to see if the pandemic has any effect on our budget. Possibly putting a cap on the amount we are spending on the expansion too. Quotes for fiber optic is moving forward and should be on a future agenda but council would like to get that done this year. Feldman stated tell John (Schmidt) and the rest of the employees they have done a great job during this pandemic. Feldman also thanked council and staff for working together and doing what's better for the city.

4. Adjournment

Mayor Feldman adjourned the work session at 8:54 pm.

Submitted by,


Barbara I. Held, City Clerk