

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
FEBRUARY 15, 2023

Charles City city council met in a planning session on February 15, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in council chambers. Mayor Dean Andrews presided and the following council members were present: Keith Starr, Patrick Lumley, DeLaine Freeseaman, Phoebe Pittman and Phillip Knighten. Also present were city administrator Steve Diers and city engineer John Fallis.

Bob Ingram and Jon Vrieze, representing Sisson and Associates, were present to distribute a dividend check from the IAMU safety program in the amount of \$13,075. This program is unique to EMC insurance.

A lease for 10 parking stalls directly south of the HyVee drive thru pharmacy was presented to council. This will be used to store mulch and soil for the spring planting season. The area will be smaller than in the past since the plants and trees are now going to be located on the sidewalk in front of the building. Once the definite area is calculated, an amount will be inserted into the lease form. The lease will start April 1 and run through June 30. This will be on the next regular agenda for council action.

Josh Mack has submitted two applications for a Façade grant, one for 217 N. Main and the other for 219 N. Main. Is for renovating the upper story living area of both properties. Mark Wicks, Main Street Charles City director, was present, as well as Mack, to review this project. Wicks stated that if these two grants are approved, it would deplete the amount budgeted for Façade. But, as in the past, the funding available in the cultural and entertainment program can be utilized for Façade funding if the council so chooses. A new Façade grant request was received today would probably use up all of the funding available for the current fiscal year. The design committee met and approved the two applications from Mack for the maximum of \$10,000 for each. These two projects are for interior renovations, which are allowed under the Façade program guidelines. Some appliances were included in the costs but if those totals are removed, there is enough expense left to still qualify for the maximum \$10,000 grant. These two grants will be on the next regular agenda for council consideration. Wicks also stated that we will be receiving two Façade grants back that were previously awarded due to the properties being sold before the projects could be done.

NIACC has requested a long term lease of some of the parking lot near the planned expansion project for staging construction trailers and building materials. It would run from April 2023 to May 2024. Any damages to the area would be required to be repaired per the lease agreement. This item will be on the next regular agenda for council consideration.

Staff would like to put out for bid the sale of the house located at 302 Shaw Avenue that was purchased by the city. We tried to sell this property last year but the two bids received were incomplete. The potential buyers both had issues getting quotes to move the house back in time to meet the bid deadline. Staff will give more time to return bids this time to avoid that issue. We would hope that this house would be moved to an empty lot in the city but we can't require that. It is in very good shape. If we don't get any bids on it, we may explore the option of the city moving it to an empty lot in town that we own.

The 2022 street paving project is substantially complete with just a few very minor items yet to be done this spring. The contractor for that project, Wicks Construction, has requested a reduction in the retainage we are holding per the contract. It is a 5% retainage and staff is recommending reducing that to 1%. This would allow plenty of funds to complete the project if

that would become necessary. This item will be on the next regular agenda for council consideration.

Staff have been working on changes to Chapter 158 and 159 in the city code regarding property maintenance and rental inspections. Some of the changes are just changing dates to the international property code version we are using and other minor verbiage. The more substantial changes are being made in Chapter 159 regarding rental inspections. We added more items to the inspection checklist which include more aesthetic issues rather than just safety issues as was done previously. This has been requested several times by citizens and council recently. We will be sending a letter out to all landlords once these changes are all finalized so they know what will be coming on future inspections and can be better prepared. Mayor Andrews commented that the housing task force will be meeting with the code enforcement department next week to learn what their process is and the guidelines they use for inspections. Councilmember Starr requested that before and after pictures be taken and shared with council as nuisance properties and inspections are done.

A proposed water main looping project near Zoetis will require an easement be secured. Staff have been in negotiations with Rick and Lisa Miller concerning both a temporary and permanent easement on their property for this water main. An amount of \$34,000 has been determined for the easement. Discussion on alternate routes for this main. There are other options but they would be quite costly because they would be a longer path and also cross several properties. These two issues would make it a much more costly project if we re-routed it. There is also an existing Mid American easement that we are following with this route. This item will be on the next regular agenda for council consideration.

The state legislature has been debating a change to the rollback percentages for a few weeks now. What they are proposing would lower our tax revenues and affect our levies. Staff is waiting to get these new valuations so the levies can be recalculated. With the decrease in valuations, our original projected levy of \$16.36 for FY24 would increase to \$16.517 if we keep our dollar amount of levies the same. This still results in a \$47,000 decrease in General fund revenues. We have received word this afternoon that this bill has now passed both houses and will be signed by the governor yet this week probably. Once we get the new valuations, we will then proceed with setting the public hearing for the max levy. The state will extend the budget deadline to April 30 from March 31 to allow time for cities to get the new information and finish their budget processes.

City administrator Diers reported that there is a meeting for the stakeholders in the Mill Race parking project tomorrow at 6:00 to go over this project with them. City attorney Slotter has drafted a memo on the Summit pipeline and that will be distributed to council for their review. The final valve piece on the WRRF is being done this week.

Councilmember Starr reported that a dispatch meeting is scheduled for Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. Ambulance meeting will be later and he will bring back information from those to the council.

Mayor Andrews commented that an emergency management symposium sponsored by the state mayor's association is being held March 4 in Des Moines. He is going if anyone wants to ride with him. Let Trudy know if interested so she can get you registered. He also asked council to consider changing the time for our meetings scheduled for March on Wednesdays to an earlier time to accommodate Lenten church services. Consensus was to change those meeting times to 5:00 p.m.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, City Clerk