

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS  
MAY 25, 2022

Charles City city council met in a planning session on May 25, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in council chambers. Mayor 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.

Mayor comments - Date was set for cleaning the city hall parking lots for May 31 at 5:00.

**A façade application has been received for 413 N. Main Street. Two windows in the back of the building** are being replaced and the total cost of the project is \$11,894.33 and they are requesting 50% of that, which is \$5,946. The design committee has reviewed this application and are recommending approval. This will be on the next council agenda for consideration.

Staffing of the fire department was discussed. We have had two retirements recently and one more possibly coming fairly soon. We have had 4 full time positions for quite awhile and with funding getting tighter and tighter, we may want to consider going strictly volunteer. This topic will take much more discussion but we wanted to start the discussion. The operations of the ambulance may come into play on this decision. Question on if our police officers have had any firefighter training, as that was discussed at some point a few years ago. Response was not really, that training is pretty expensive so we haven't done it. Our police officers have all trained on the CAF system. If we change to strictly volunteer, it is unclear how this would affect our agreement with St. Charles township. Chief Whipple will discuss this with them. The surrounding cities of New Hampton and Waverly are both strictly volunteer. **Comment made that we may have to look at all of the programs we fund currently (such as Façade) and possibly make cuts to those to free up funding.** Mayor Andrews stated he would like to see options on 2 full time fire, 4 full time fire, etc. with costs for each so council can make an informed decision.

Possible driveway regulation changes were discussed. Current maximum width allowed is 30' at the property line with a flare up to 40' at the street. Staff is suggesting increasing those widths to 40' and 50' respectively. These lengths can't exceed 50% of the total lot width. With lots being larger than in the past, there have been several instances where these new requirements would make sense, so staff wanted to bring it up to council for consideration. Some concern voiced over taking away too much on street parking, this may be affected more than we think. Citizen Jeff Marty was present via Zoom and expressed appreciation to the council for considering this change. He is one of those instances where this would make sense. City engineer Fallis will work with the city attorney to get an ordinance drafted for council consideration.

Short term borrowing was discussed. We do this annually to include items such as tree removal, police/fire equipment, uniforms, etc. Some of these are essential corporate purpose items and others are general corporate purpose items. The four local banks were contacted to submit a quote for a transaction fee for this issuance and we will review those at the June 6 regular meeting.

The possible vacation of a section of North Main Street by the chicken plant was reviewed. Planning and zoning has reviewed this and is recommending approval. Staff has done a traffic count in this area for three different time frames and it averages 120/hour on N. Grand and 100/hour on Main Street. City engineer Fallis has drafted three different options to handle the traffic flow for this change. One is to install curbs to direct flow on a curve to Main Street, another is to put in a roundabout. Temporary pavement markings would be used in the interim. The temporary markings would allow us to see how this will all flow without doing actual revamping of the street there. This vacating of that section will help Pure Prairie Farms, the new owner of the chicken facility, quite a bit for their traffic flow and also allow them to do their expansion to the plant. We plan to re-do Main Street from Gilbert Street to Lane in 2024 through NIACOG program and we could get some economies of scale if we do both of these projects at the same time. Question on if a traffic control signal would be installed at the intersection of N. Grand and Lane Street. Reply was that a traffic analysis would have to be done and show that a signal there is justified. It was also stated that we would just be vacating that section of Main Street, not conveying it. If for some reasons we wanted to reopen that section of Main Street in the future, we can reinstate the right of way.

Would Pure Prairie Farms be required to put Main Street back to the way it was if they cease operation and reply was that we could put that language in an agreement with them.

City administrator Diers reported that ADC has been talking to the carbon pipeline people and wanted to know if we are supportive of this project or not. Maybe council needs to do a vote on their position on this topic. City staff is working on a 28E with soil and water conservation district and we would use our sponsored project allotted dollars on some of this. The League conference is September 28-30, so if anyone is interested in going, let Trudy know. Council member Lumley reported that the airport will be receiving bids for their runway project and are trying to figure out how to spend their ARPA funds. Council member Pittman reported that park and rec is looking at pool proposals in the coming few weeks.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, City Clerk