

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS  
JULY 26, 2023

Charles City city council met in a planning session on July 26, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in council chambers. Mayor Dean Andrews presided and the following council members were present: Keith Starr, Patrick Lumley, Phoebe Pittman and Phillip Knighten. Absent was DeLaine Freeseaman. Also present were city administrator Steve Diers, city attorney Brad Sloter and city engineer John Fallis (via Zoom).

A representative from Altumint was present to review the process for installing traffic cameras in the city. He stated that a traffic study had been done on some routes in the city that have had issues with speeding. Cameras have been proven to reduce speeding and consequently, accidents. Chief Anderson commented that we have had several serious accidents on South Grand, so that would be a good place to install one of the cameras. They have identified 5 different spots to install them but may only start with three. All violations are reviewed by the police department prior to being issued. They would not be placed right at a speed limit change area, this will give people time to reduce down to the posted speed before being subject to a ticket. Also signs stating that a surveillance camera is in use will be prominently posted. A public campaign would be done, informing the public of the cameras and the procedures for processing the tickets. City attorney Sloter commented that these cameras are not unconstitutional as ruled by the supreme court. We want the emphasis to be that this is being considered for safety reasons. A 30 day warning period could be done to start, where everyone will be given a warning if they speed with information on the back of the warning ticket. With our officers having to deal with other worse situations, these cameras would help free them up for that. Council asked Chief Anderson to send out the speed study conducted by Altumint to them for further review. Consensus was to get more information before council is ready to take action on this item.

Park and rec director Tyler Mitchell was present to review the recommendations of the park board for the pool renovations. Ninja cross, floatables, zero depth entry, splash pad, play structures and more shade are the items they would like to see included in the pool renovation. A brand new pool would cost 4.2 million, so they are recommending renovating the current one and add the amenities listed. The board has not decided a location for the splash pad or if it would be a free admission or have a fee. Some concern over taking away from the pool revenues if had free admission to the splash pad but others thought it should be 100% free. This and the location would have to be determined before putting this up for a possible referendum this fall. Current attendance totals and expenses as well as projected attendance totals and expenses were presented. If we go with all of the recommended features, the admission fees will need to be increased. The hope is to have this on the ballot in November and if it passes, construction would start at the end of the 2024 pool season and be open for the 2025 season. Council thanked the park and rec board for their hard work on this item. Council was instructed to get any further thoughts or questions to city administrator Diers and he will then pass them on to the park and rec board at their next meeting. This discussion will be on the next city planning session for further review and a possible vote at the following regular meeting.

Katie Nolte, housing director, was present to discuss her department issuing their own checks utilizing their new software system. Brian Alten, a consultant, was also present via Zoom to answer any questions the council might have. The current procedure requires that both the city and housing department enter amounts into their respective system. If housing could process their own checks, those figures would then flow into their computer program and would generate the needed reports to be submitted to HUD. Much discussion on who would have ultimate responsibility in case things went wrong. It was stated that the housing board and the director would have the final responsibility for the financial operations. If there would be issues with how the housing department is operated, HUD would probably step in and have the city take over the operations until it could get straightened out. Since housing receives over \$750,000 of federal funds, they are required to do a single audit. Could this be rolled into the city's annual audit? One option was to have housing sever from the city and stand alone, this may be the cleanest and easiest option. One downside to that is that employee health insurance and other benefits would be costlier since they wouldn't be part of the city's larger group. City attorney Sloter would need to do further research on how to handle the employees if they would separate from the city. It was decided that the city attorney,

city clerk, city administrate and housing director meet to come up with proposals and bring back to the council for further consideration.

A list of top nuisance properties in town were reviewed. There were 65 vacant properties identified and those have been narrowed down to the top 10-12 for council consideration to pursue remediation.

There is a small triangle piece of property located at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Clark Street that is still in the name of the CIA. They would like to deed this to the city since it should have happened back when 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue was re-routed and went through CIA property. City attorney Slotter has estimated it will take no more than an hour of his time to prepare the necessary documents. This item will be on the next regular agenda for council consideration.

City administrator Diers reported that Omnitel is in town doing fiber installation and the new easements for them will be started at the August 7 council meeting. There are still a couple of reviews that need to be turned in for Trudy/Steve/Brad, their evaluations are scheduled for August 7. Discussion is still being held on the Summit pipeline. There is a delay on getting pavers for the Mill Race parking lot project, so work can't start just yet.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, City Clerk