

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
SEPTEMBER 27, 2023

Charles City city council met in a planning session on September 27, 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, DeLaine Freeseaman and Phillip Knighten. Also present were city administrator Steve Diers, engineer in training Brian Sullivan, police chief Hugh Anderson, code enforcement officer Michael Malena and city engineer John Fallis (via Zoom).

Change order #2 for the clear well was reviewed. One of the mains from well #8 was discovered to be leaking when the piping for the clearwell was being installed. Also, a chemical feed line that was not identified and included in the plans was damaged during excavation. There was no tracer wire on this line so it was not able to be located. Due to the unexpected work on these two items, the change order also includes an additional 3 days to be added to the completion timeline. The total of the change order is \$19,291.00. Rustin Lingbeek from SEH stated that they are currently leak testing one of the tanks. The contractor is still hoping to make the deadline for project completion but Rustin will keep in contact with them to remind them of the date. This item will be on the next regular meeting for council consideration.

A bill board located on South Grand is currently in a 10 year lease with Dave Davidson. That lease is set to expire in March of 2024 and the terms of the lease state that the billboard will be removed at the end of the lease at the expense of the lessee. Tami Vetter is currently subleasing this from Davidson and she is in the process of purchasing it. She would like to extend this lease with the city so she can continue to use this billboard. The current UDO does not allow billboards in the city but this billboard has been there a long time and is considered a legal non conforming item. Staff is not opposed to extending this lease but they would like to keep the clause on removing the billboard, if needed, with the lessee paying the cost to do so. Consensus of council was that this billboard has not been a problem all these years and are favorable to renew this lease with the removal clause included. This item will be on the next regular council meeting for council action.

Preliminary designs have been prepared by Veenstra and Kim for the 2024 Main Street rehab project. Jason Petersburg from V and K was present to review these plans with council. The realignment of the north end of Main Street was reviewed at length. Sidewalks will need to be removed if new curb and gutter is being installed. This project will run from Gilbert Street up to Lane Street and include the realignment of Main St with N. Grand Avenue. The stamped concrete at Gilbert Street will be removed and replaced with top soil. To keep the crosswalks ADA compliant, they are recommending not replacing the pavers currently on the sidewalks and replacing with cement. The old Cal's building that the city owns at the north end of Main Street will need to be demolished to allow for the realignment there. There are no parking spaces planned for in front of the old City Tap building nor in front of North Iowa Lawn and Sport building near the intersection of Main and Grand. Discussion of shifting the island at the Main/Grand intersection north to accommodate some parking spaces in front of North Iowa Lawn and Sport. The owner of that business was present and stated he really needs some spots there to unload trucks and for customer parking. Mr. Petersburg said he could change the design here for that. He needs the final changes to these plans by the end of October in order to keep in the timeline for the DOT letting. The island located at the entrance to Pure Prairie Farms at the end of Main Street is designed to have green space in it with a sloped curbing rather than square shaped. Council thought this could all be paved instead of having the green space, so that will be changed. Where the bike path is set to cross on N. Grand could cause some problems and it was discussed about having more controls here to help alleviate any issues with all of the traffic going on there (pedestrian, bike, train and cars). Phasing of this project was reviewed. There are some options for how to construct the Main Street portion. One is to do one side at a time which would allow for 2 lanes of travel but no parking on Main. The other is to totally close Main Street for each section being completed. Since there is parking on the back sides of all these businesses, that will make this project easier for the businesses to endure. The work should go very quickly, so any closures will be minimal. Mayor Andrews asked if council could think more about those options and get back with an answer and reply was yes. There are two businesses, Pure Prairie Farms and the lawn/sport business, that don't have any other access when their street section is closed. Petersburg will work on staging here to keep the road open as much as possible. The cost estimate for this project is approximately 2.1 million. There is a public meeting for the Main Street businesses on

October 3 and letters were sent out to them a couple weeks ago. The DOT bid letting on this project is set for February 20, 2024. There is a slight chance we may not be able to have the 4th of July parade, depending on how soon the construction can start. If we start adding restrictions on when the construction can start and if they have to be sure to have Main Street open for the parade, the more expensive the project will be. These plans will be revisited on the October 11 planning agenda. At that time, we should be able to make any other changes and have the plans to the DOT in time to keep the project timeline.

Abandoned/nuisance properties were reviewed. A power point was presented showing the before and after pictures of several nuisance properties that have been abated recently. Some were fixed up and others were demolished. We are working on 4 more properties right now and 3 commercial properties. This is a time consuming process and juggling 4 properties at once is about all we can do. The business nuisances are dangerous buildings and we have discovered people hanging out in them, so that is not safe. Malena reported that since March of this year, he has handled 130 nuisances for long grass, weeds, junk vehicles, etc. Council requested a list of all the nuisance properties we have identified, what the status of each is and if the owner is local or lives out of state. Rather than have a report done periodically to the entire council, it was suggested that a council committee of two people be formed and meet with code enforcement periodically to keep updated on the progress.

City administrator Diers reported that we are using the new owls tonight for the council meeting. The League of Cities conference last week in Cedar Rapids was very informative. We will be meeting in two weeks with Pat Callahan at the planning session to finalize the CIP. Diers will be gone next week to a city manager's conference in Austin, TX. The arboretum project is finishing up and the Mill Race parking lot project is moving along.

Mayor Andrews commented about trying to set up a tour for the council of the new WRRF and the clearwell project possibly.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Dean Andrews, Mayor

Attest:

Trudy O'Donnell, City Clerk