

CITY OF NORTON SHORES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
March 25, 2014

A regular work session of the Norton Shores City Council was held on Tuesday, March 25, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. at the Norton Shores City Hall, 4814 Henry Street.

Present: Mayor Nelund, Council Members Beecham, Dolack, Flanders, Jurkas, Kinney, Martines, Moulatsiotis and Ostrom; also Mark Meyers, Carrie Larks, Mike Huston, Jerry Bartoszek, Dan Shaw, Bob Gagnon, Lynne Fuller and Doug Hughes

1. Lake Harbor Park Rules and Enforcement

Police Chief Dan Shaw summarized a meeting held in August of 2013 with residents living near Lake Harbor Park. Of the 125 residents who were invited to attend, approximately 25 were present at the meeting. Representing the City were Mayor Nelund, City Administrator Mark Meyers, Chief Shaw, Finance/Parks Director Mike Huston and Officer Jared Passchier. Concerns expressed included UTV and police radio noise at night and the prohibition of alcohol and dogs running off-leash in the park, specifically on the beach. In response to the concerns operation of the UTV was discontinued immediately in the northern part of the park during late evening hours and cadets were instructed to reduce the volume of their police radios. The department will also issue in-ear speakers to cadets to eliminate the noise of radio traffic.

State law prohibits dogs running off leash therefore the only possible remedy to the dog issue would be to construct a fenced area somewhere in the park to create a "dog park". Council Member Ostrom asked what how the cadets handle people allowing their dogs to run loose. Chief Shaw said they begin by presenting the information that it's not allowed and if the dog owner refuses to comply they are cited. Council Member Kinney suggested the cadets begin by saying "according to State law" which may have more impact. Mr. Meyers stated that local ordinances are posted as well. Mayor Nelund and Mr. Meyers have discussed the possibility of creating a dog park at Hidden Cove Park or Black Lake Park as an option as well. Council Member Martines stated there is a dog park at the end of Sherman Boulevard and he does not believe it's necessary to establish one in Norton Shores.

In addition, Chief Shaw does not recommend adoption of an ordinance to allow alcohol consumption within parks due to concerns related to disorderly persons, trash, etc. Mr. Meyers said that it is unusual to have alcohol permitted on government owned property. Mayor Nelund also pointed out that the Norton Hills Association does not allow alcohol on their property either.

It was the consensus of Council that the ordinances not be amended but Council Member Kinney would like staff to explore the possibility of a dog park at Hidden Cove Park.

2. Fiscal Year 2015 Capital Improvement Budget

City Administrator Mark Meyers introduced the proposed FY 2015 Capital Improvement budget. Finance Director Mike Huston then reviewed the proposed budget. For FY 2015 it is anticipated that the 2-mill levy for capital improvement will generate \$1,610,790. This amount, combined with other revenue sources, will provide approximately \$1,864,290 for capital projects. This year's capital requests totaled \$3,586,088, a difference of \$1,405,665. Mr. Huston also noted that the City has previously committed approximately \$500,656 for fixed vehicle replacements, equipment and administrative reimbursement on an annual basis. This reduces the available funds for new equipment and capital improvement projects to approximately \$1,363,634. The proposed capital improvement budget is a balanced budget, using \$396,543 in unreserved fund balance. This is primarily to provide continued capital improvement assistance to the Local Street Improvement Program and the Street Fund in the form of street resurfacing and sidewalk repair and construction. Mr. Huston noted that Fiscal Year 2014 includes using \$444,447 in unreserved fund balance, but staff is proposing a mid-year adjustment to add \$266,722 to unreserved fund balance. This is largely due to combining the Major and Local Street Funds into one Street Fund which provided sufficient fund balance to reduce a transfer from the Capital Improvement Fund by \$490,000. Also, street resurfacing came in under budget by \$93,000 and there were fewer tax appeals than anticipated.

Highlights of the proposed budget include Taser replacements, ballistic kits (plates and helmets) and radios for the Police Department and replacement of turnout gear, AEDs and dive team equipment for the Fire Department. Parks and Recreation projects include lighting ball fields #1 and #2 at Ross Park, Phase 1 of the Black Lake Park Trail Development/Waterfront Boardwalk project and installation of electrical power outlets in the festival area of Ross Park. Also included are appropriations for sidewalk repairs, street resurfacing, regravelling Wood and Judson Roads as well as matching funds in the amount of \$62,910 for the Black Lake Park expansion and a Wayfinding program for installation of improved signage for people visiting the community.

The proposed capital improvement budget also includes an appropriation for construction of a garage at the west end of City Hall for City vehicles, specifically police cruisers and equipment. This project has been requested for the past several years but Mr. Meyers said the timing is right because other large projects are planned in the future such as renovation of the children's area at the library in conjunction with the District Library's Storyville project. The building would also include an evidence processing area where vehicles could be brought inside and processed as opposed to having to do it off site at a less secure facility. Council Member Flanders asked about the cost of heating such a large building. Mr. Meyers explained that it would be heated but only to the extent necessary to maintain electronic equipment and melt snow from the vehicles.

Council Member Flanders asked if any corporate sponsors have been approached about the Ross Park lighting project. Mr. Huston said sponsors have only been purchasing the banners but have not been approached about the lights. Mr. Meyers noted that Meijer provided the scoreboards for the fields. Council Member Moulatsiotis inquired about the value of Tasers that are being replaced. Chief Shaw explained that the warranty on the units is actually on the battery and the batteries have been discontinued. He also said the units may be sold to another jurisdiction that already has the batteries but they are not available for sale to the public.

Council Member Kinney asked that a fishing pier be considered as part of the Black Lake Park trail development project. Mr. Meyers explained that the boardwalk would also serve that purpose. Council Member Martines asked about reconfiguring Getty Street to provide paved shoulder/bike lanes to prevent pedestrians from having to walk in the street during the winter. Mr. Meyers and Public Works Director Jerry Bartoszek explained that there are other priorities but that it may be possible to restripe Getty Street to reconfigure traffic lanes in the future.

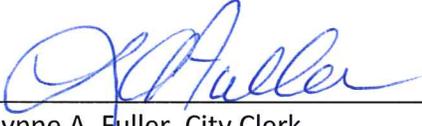
Council Member Ostrom said that given the improving quality of Mona Lake he wants to revitalize discussions about a boat launch and improvements to the beach at Ross Park. Mr. Meyers replied that staff could, at Council's direction, commission a study of the property for location of the ramp, etc.

3. Comments

Mayor Nelund invited City Attorney Doug Hughes to update the Council on the Storyville project. Mr. Hughes reported that on March 26 the campaign cabinet will formally present the proposed project which will begin the processing of raising funds.

Council Member Martines expressed his concern about work sessions, the purpose of which is to obtain Council's consensus to move projects forward. He said that the work session is the forum that should be used to ask questions and express concerns about proposals presented by staff and if the consensus is to move an item forward the support for the item should not be reversed at the final vote. Mayor Nelund suggested that the consensus is simply to move the item forward, not necessarily to approve it. He also stressed that opinions can change between meetings and each member is entitled to change their mind. Council Member Beecham stressed that Council members represent the entire city, not just a few people who may express their opinion on a specific issue at a public meeting. Council Member Moulatsiotis asked how he would request an amendment to a proposed project/resolution and Mr. Hughes explained that specific questions or concerns may result in the item being postponed or tabled.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.



Lynne A. Fuller, City Clerk