

Council Workshop

May 31, 2023

Village hall

Present: Anderson, Pardun, Nyenhuis, Miller, Ward (zoom)

Citizens present: Mary Burke (zoom), Jim Maher (zoom), Mike Tibbetts, Dave Snyder

Mayor Nyenhuis opened the workshop at 7:30am for the purpose of discussing Council expectations and decorum during meetings and outside of meetings.

The main items Council believes needs to be addressed are:

- Transparency
- Trust
- Communication
- More face time between Council members

Pardun believes one action that could help with transparency would be to have Council committee members submit written notes of actions and/or meetings that have occurred since the previous Council meeting. If the committee held a meeting, he would like the report to include who was in attendance and a synopsis of the discussion. Clerk Peterson stated this is common practice in many other cities. She suggested the Council submit their written committee report to the City office the week prior to the Council meeting and those reports will be distributed the Thursday before the regular meeting with the final agenda. The consensus was this idea would be good practice and everyone agreed to proceed beginning with the June Council meeting.

Miller requested any Council member working on a grant application present all of the grant information to Council in advance as to give the group a chance to discuss any budget concerns or additional requirements that may be a part of the grant criteria.

Anderson believes all members of Council should conduct themselves in the same manner outside of the Council chambers as they do inside chambers. He also requested the Mayor be more authoritative with keeping order at a meeting if things begin to get out of line.

Discussion was held as to how to handle comments or questions to a Council member about another Council member's actions. The suggestion was made to be objective in their response and tell the resident they will discuss the issue with the Council member in question and then get back to the resident with an answer.

Dave Snyder, City Attorney, discussed the role of a Council member and the issue of transparency. He believes the goal of each Council member is to be on the same plane of understanding on all issues prior to each Council meeting. That means sending communication on all items that will be on the agenda so at the Council meeting, the Council is focused on

executive decision making. He also believes the goal of each member of Council is to make everyone look good and not do or say things that may embarrass or put another person in bad position. Snyder also believes the Council should empower the committee member and/or City staff to move forward on issues and that it should always be the Council members who facilitate citizen committee meetings and not the citizens.

Clerk Peterson commented on the rules and order of Council actions. Last year the Council, by motion, approved the removal of a pine tree in Flag Pole park and a request to replace that pine tree with a new tree as a memorial tribute to a resident who had passed away. Instead, the pine tree was never removed and the new memorial tree was planted in the Gazebo park. Clerk Peterson stated that no City staff member was given any information about the new location or date of the installation, and because the original request was approved by motion, any change from the original request should have also been approved by Council.

Miller would like to see the Planning Commission involved more with land issues per Chapter 2 of the City Code. Anderson would like more thought on that issue and believes the Commission should have the same conversation that is happening today as well. Dave Snyder stated the role of the Planning Commission is typically only long-term land use decisions and zoning applications.

Dave Snyder also addressed the Red Bridge issue from the May Council meeting. He has spoken with a few Council members individually and believes there were items that could have been handled differently and options for moving forward. He has spoken with Council member Ward about drafting an official request to Council to have the City Engineer present different options and pricing for a more detailed bridge inspection. This request will be presented at the June meeting for Council discussion.

Clerk Peterson also reminded the Council that any/all electronic communication, whether it be email or text, between Council members or staff could become public information with a data practices request.

Pardun moved and Miller seconded to adjourn at 8:45am. All in favor, motion passed.