



MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
August 3, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

The work session meeting was called to order by Mayor Gilbert at 5:30 pm.

Present: Mayor: Randy Gilbert; Council: Sam Rettinger, Sharon Henderson, Brian Carpenter, and Liz Olson

Staff Present: City Administrator: Terrance Post; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: None

APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Henderson, seconded by Carpenter, to approve the Agenda as presented.

Ayes: all.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Further Discussion of Police RFP Proposals

Mayor Gilbert explained how the public comment and question portion of the meeting would be conducted, and stressed that no decision making would be taking place.

Mayor Gilbert polled individual Council members to ask whether they had any questions about the three proposals received from Orono Police Department, Wayzata Police Department, and the Hennepin County Sheriff's Department.

Council member Rettinger stated he felt pretty clear on the proposals but still had some questions regarding the County's service level.

Council member Henderson agreed, and then confirmed that if selected Wayzata would be hiring two more officers without an increase in the contract price as listed in their proposal.

Council member Henderson was most interested in hearing from the public so that the Council would not be making a decision in a vacuum. He commented that the assessment of value is a hard thing, and hoped the Council would receive a lot of public questions and comments.

Council member Olson thought everything had been well presented to the Council and voiced that she does not think it is a question of money but of who will provide the best service for the City. Of the comments she had received personally, some were in favor of the County's service, some were concerned with arrival at calls in a timely manner. She also indicated a desire to hear from the public.

Mayor Gilbert commented that he was aware there have been many conversations going on out in the public but the Council could only discuss as a group in a meeting setting, and encouraged everyone with information for the Council to share their comments.

Mayor Gilbert opened the floor to the public. Council members heard input from the following individuals and responded to questions received:

Tim Hultmann, 280 Lakeview Avenue

Mr. Hultmann was happy to hear from Council member Olson and Administrator Post that price is not the issue. Whatever decision is made, he wouldn't want to hear it said that the City went with a choice because it was cheaper. He said the idea is for the City to be comfortable with its Police service. Mr. Hultmann personally became a Police reservist after he completed his time on the City Council. With the rapport that's developed in recent years he believes the City currently has the most harmonious situation ever had between the Orono Police and Long Lake Fire Departments. Mr. Hultmann would like to see the City have good Police coverage and really questioned what kind of presence Hennepin County could provide. He asked if Wayzata were selected, then the contract not renewed in three years, would Long Lake be responsible for any unemployment expenses. His position was that he would love to see the Council vote for keeping the Orono Police Department.

Mike Personius, 2220 Daniels Street (Chunk's Garage)

Mr. Personius has been in Long Lake for 18 years. He hopes part of the Police services RFP process is not old feelings between Long Lake and Orono over the failed consolidation effort coming up again. He is also concerned about the County service. He stated at the previous meeting he had not heard Wayzata mention how often an officer would be in Long Lake. He personally likes the Orono PD as a service provider, and noted they walk around and check on doors in the business park. The OPD's assets include a school liaison officer as well.

Bob Hardin, 238 Greenhill Lane

Mr. Hardin said his interest is in response time as far as Police services are concerned. He had recently had three different issues at his home. The response time from Orono PD was fast and they had great professionalism. He noted he certainly would feel comfortable with Wayzata PD if the money factor was too much for the Council to accept and is familiar with some of the officers there. As far as the County Sheriff's Department is concerned, he said he has no faith in the County at all. He stated Orono has done an excellent job, and if the City can stay with them it would be 'fine and dandy', but if not he would like to see Wayzata PD as second best.

Mike Bash, 1680 Bollum Lane

Mr. Bash stated that what he is expecting from the City for Police services is protection from his wife, his daughters, and his property. He referred to a letter he had sent a few weeks ago regarding the issue and said that unfortunately the Council was in a tough position in trying to evaluate the RFP responses because it is difficult to evaluate how each of the organizations would do. Clearly all were excellent law enforcement organizations. The challenge is that while there's a price difference there's also a service difference. As a resident, to protect his family and home, he believes the service level the City currently has is appropriate and adequate. He doesn't think the City wants to cut this service or current level of service – there are other city services that could be cut. Wayzata and County would be a different level of service, as you don't receive the same level of service with such different pricing. Mr. Bash indicated he likes the level of service the City has today and the City receives good service from Orono. He doesn't want the service level to be cut of this vital essential service the City provides. Though the Wayzata proposal from a service standpoint is pretty similar, he believes the County Sheriff's proposal is different.

Council members commented on the positive feedback they'd received from other communities currently served by the County Sheriff's Department. It was noted the County as a provider should not be dismissed, and that there is a lot of information circulating around that is not necessarily correct.

Richard Kozak, 155 Harrington Drive

Mr. Kozak asked why the cost of Police services hadn't gone down over the years considering the City lost many families when the highway project came through town.

Mayor and Council discussed the background circumstances and rationale which led to the Council's decision to issue the RFP for Police services.

At the Council's request, Inspector Storms of the Hennepin County Sheriff's Department provided information relative to basic service levels, patrol hours and structure, and how the different types of vehicles – marked squads, patrol, warrant cars, and civil cars – would respond to calls if Long Lake were part of their Department's coverage area. He stated their response time would be comparable to his fellow providers and residents need to know the County can respond in a short timeframe. He also discussed medical calls and noted that Fire, Police and Medical personnel all usually respond to those calls.

Chief Correy Farniok, Orono Police Department, discussed communication efforts that had taken place at the Police Advisory subcommittee and city administrator levels prior to development of the contract initially proposed by the City of Orono for Police services. He expressed concern that the Long Lake Council may not have received all the information that they were intended to receive throughout the process. Chief Farniok stated that his department does provide a service to Long Lake residents, bonds have been forged over the 43 years the OPD has served Long Lake, and his department believes they're the niche for Long Lake.

Mayor Gilbert emphasized that the initial Orono contract for Police services, to which the cities could not reach agreement, was not Chief Farniok's responsibility and he wanted to be sure negative comment is not directed unfairly to the Chief. In no way was there an issue of Long Lake versus the Orono PD – rather, it was a contract negotiation between the Cities of Long Lake and Orono. Mayor Gilbert further noted that had the consolidation vote passed years ago and the two cities merged, based on the formula Orono uses to calculate Police services costs for its residents, the cost to cover the Long Lake area would have been \$184,000 versus the amount proposed. If the City of Orono contract changes were intended to treat the whole coverage area as more of a service district, taking into account the way Orono residents are being charged versus the proposal to Long Lake, the community approach seems to end when it gets to the finance side.

Council member Carpenter commented that he would not vote for the County Sheriff's Department at the three hours of patrol coverage currently included in the contract. Additional hours would add to the contract amount for consideration.

Anita Secord, 114 Brown Road N

Ms. Secord recently became a member of the Orono PD reserve unit to serve her community and discussed her experience with public safety departments as a volunteer firefighter and former EMT. She stated she is a single parent and long time resident of Long Lake. Having lived previously in Robbinsdale, the Orono PD had made her feel safe. Ms. Secord presented statistics she'd received from Wayzata PD Chief Risvold and Orono PD Chief Farniok, and described the services provided by Orono PD in detail. She stressed the importance of maintaining a good neighbor status with Orono; and stated her choice for the City's Police services provider would be the Orono PD because of the relationship built with their department for 40 years, and in her experiences with calls to her home, they'd always been kind, courteous, respectful, offered her a sense of security, and took her issues seriously. She feels the collective years of service and the knowledge the Orono PD has cannot be

matched by the other candidates. Looking at logistics, visibility, and response times, she is willing to pay the extra dollars for her security.

Due to National Night Out conflicting with the evening's work session date, Mayor Gilbert and Council agreed an additional work session to allow public comment should be scheduled for Wednesday, August 11, 2010 prior to the Planning Commission meeting and beginning at 5:30 pm.

Council member Olson noted it is important the Council make their decision at the regularly scheduled August 17 meeting so all involved parties will have the time needed for budget preparation.

Mayor Gilbert commented that regardless of the decision made, the Council will be better informed for having gone through the RFP process.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Gilbert adjourned the work session meeting by general consent at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Moeller
City Clerk