

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Finance Committee of the City of Norfolk, Nebraska met in the City's Conference Room, 309 West Madison Avenue, Norfolk, Nebraska, on Monday, April 14, 2008, beginning at 7:00 a.m.

Mayor Gordon D. Adams called the meeting to order.

Roll call found the following Committee members present: Mayor Gordon Adams and Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke and Wilson. Absent: None.

Staff members present were City Administrator Mike Nolan, Public Works Director Dennis Smith, City Attorney Clint Schukei, City Clerk Beth Deck, Police Captain Steve Hecker, Park Superintendent Pat Mrsny and Property/Operations Manager Gary Miller.

The media was represented by Jim Curry, WJAG/KEXL; Greg Wees, Norfolk Daily News; and Bill Seifert, 94Rock/US92.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Norfolk Daily News, and notice of the meeting was given to the Mayor and all members of the Council prior to the meeting.

The Mayor presided and the City Clerk recorded the proceedings.

The Mayor informed the public about the location of the current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room and accessible to members of the public.

The first item discussed was a request for elected officials to waive the \$2.00 bicycle licensing fee for the Landon Bos Memorial **Bike** Rodeo on May 31, 2008. Police Captain Steve Hecker requested the waiver. The event is being sponsored by Faith Regional Health Services (FRHS), US 92, 94 Rock, KEXL, Life Net, AAA of Nebraska, the Elkhorn Valley Cycling Club and the Norfolk Police and Fire Divisions. Landon Bos was killed in a car/pedestrian accident in August 2007. Landon's mother is an emergency room nurse at FRHS and Landon's father is an investigator for the Norfolk Police Division. Event organizers hope to have 500 participants at the rodeo and AAA of Nebraska has agreed to provide all participants with free helmets. As part of the Landon Bos Memorial Bike Rodeo, Hecker requests a waiver of the \$2.00 bicycle licensing fee to participants on the day of the event only.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Saunders to approve waiving the \$2.00 bicycle licensing fee for the Landon Bos Memorial Bike Rodeo planned for May 31, 2008. Roll call: Ayes: Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

The next item discussed was a suggestion that **pictures** and **email addresses** of the Mayor and Councilpersons be published to the City's web site.

City Administrator Mike Nolan said pictures and email addresses have not previously been published at the request of Councilpersons several years ago. Nolan stated a downside to having email addresses published is the possibility of more junk and/or spam email.

Councilperson Saunders is opposed to publishing email addresses to the web.

Councilperson Reeder stated the local radio stations and newspaper have already published elected officials email addresses.

Councilperson Coy feels it would be beneficial for citizens to be able to “put a name to a face” for elected officials.

Councilperson Van Dyke stated email is a quick way to respond to citizens’ requests.

Councilperson Lange stated email is now a common form of communication and the issue probably hasn’t been reviewed for many years.

Councilperson Wilson stated email is a good way to communicate/respond to constituents at any time of day.

Councilperson Wilson moved, seconded by Councilperson Coy to approve publishing pictures of the Mayor and Councilpersons to the City’s web page. Roll call: Ayes: Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Brenneman to approve publishing email addresses of the Mayor and Councilpersons to the City’s web page. Roll call: Ayes: Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

The final item discussed was a request for construction of a permanent **stage** and power at **Skyview Park**. Representatives of Big Bang Boom and Christian Cross Festival brought the request forward.

In a memo dated April 7, 2008, City Administrator Mike Nolan, Public Works Director Dennis Smith, Property/Operations Manager Gary Miller and Park Superintendent Pat Mrsny outline concerns with the request. The original vision of Skyview Park is an area in the community to enjoy the outdoors in a relatively quiet residential setting. One concern is that the park master plan did not include any active group recreation areas; and, therefore, ingress and egress to the park is not designed to handle large events. Another concern is access for emergency vehicles. Staff supports Big Bang Boom and Christian Cross Festival activities with appropriate insurance coverage. However, City staff does not think it is wise to install a permanent structure that would encourage the expansion of these types of activities at Skyview Park. Staff feels Big Bang Boom and Christian Cross Festival should continue to meet stage needs with the use of portable facilities.

Councilperson Van Dyke questioned who would be responsible for any damage sustained on a stage if the request moves forward.

Smith doesn’t know who or which group would be responsible for maintenance and repair of the stage but generally the City would be responsible if a structure is located on municipally-owned property. Smith stated those types of questions need to be addressed prior to a final decision.

City Administrator Mike Nolan questioned whether the engineering drawings for a stage would need approval of an architect.

Smith stated the weight limit of the stage would probably be the deciding factor as to whether the project falls under the Engineers & Architects Act. Smith suggested that if elected officials move forward with the project the stage be construction between 24" and 30" high to alleviate the need for handrails.

Brett Simonsen, Christian Cross Festival, provided a summary of current problems with portable stages and a map of the proposed staging area in Skyview Park. Current problems with stages include: uneven ground that causes trouble getting semi-trailers level for a smooth stage floor; uneven ground that causes trailers to be jacked up off the ground a few feet to get level; soft ground that causes trucks to get stuck which tears up the ground when pulling out the trucks; and uneven surfaces around the stage that causes trip hazards. The groups propose two phases for the project with a request that the first phase be completed by June 1, 2008. The second phase would be a great addition to the park but can be brought back at a later date.

Phase 1

- *Build a hardened flat surface that would provide enough room to put four (4) semi trailers or a temporary professional stage on and also enough room for a back stage area.

- *Build an access road coming in from the east to be able to back up trailers and trucks to the stage. (Heavy sound equipment comes in on the trucks.)

Phase 2

- *Build a permanent stage for the park for Big Bang Boom, Christian Cross Festival and other events such as performing arts.

- *Have power from 18th Street to the stage (three phase power)

- *Enclose the stage with a permanent canopy or shell

Don Wisnieski, Big Bang Boom, stated the request is for approval of Phase 1 at this time. Wisnieski stated the Christian Cross Festival brings in high dollar entertainment and needs a professional stage and Big Bang Boom feels it would be nice to have a flat area for the semi trucks to park on for the July 4 celebrations. Wisnieski stated Big Bang Boom has never requested improvements to Skyview Park in the past. Wisnieski stated the hardened flat surface could be slag and not cement.

Councilperson Reeder feels the improvements requested might save time and repair of damage to the park that may occur after the events.

Councilperson Fauss doesn't have a problem with Phase 1 improvements but does have some concerns with the proposed stage. Fauss feels staff and elected officials need to further review the stage proposal before making a decision.

City Administrator Mike Nolan stated area citizens have requested the road in Skyview Park be paved for many years but the City doesn't have funds available for the project.

Mayor Adams stated if dirt work is necessary the project costs increase.

Councilperson Brenneman has concerned with the physical size (40x60) of the proposed stage.

Wisnieski stated the rough size of the stage is 32 x 54 feet.

Simonsen stated Christian Cross would like a 50 x 70 foot stage for the future.

Councilperson Coy feels the use of slag would be good for the parking area and the stage could be utilized by other groups/festivals in the future.

Smith stated the City would want to keep vehicles confined to the parking area instead of on the grass. Smith questioned the funding source(s) for the project.

Pat Mrsny, Park Superintendent, stated the area should be chained off like other areas in the park.

Councilperson Wilson has concerns that the area “will look like a big parking lot in the middle of a park.”

Wisnieski doesn't know where the funding will come from and the groups are requesting the City do the project.

Nolan questioned whether the City, Big Bang Boom and Christian Cross Festival could partner on the project with the groups raising their entrance fees to offset the costs.

Wisnieski agreed with Nolan's suggestion and said entrance fees could be raised to help cover the cost of the project(s). Wisnieski “wanted to hear what the City can do” to help with the proposed project(s). Wisnieski said two trees will need to be moved or replaced to locate the hardened flat surface in the proposed location.

Councilperson Van Dyke questioned whether the project could be completed by June 1 and how slag is controlled so it doesn't get on the grass.

Councilperson Wilson stated the slag will need to be contained by a border.

Nolan stated that if the group agreed to a “handshake agreement” for funding, Phase 1 of the project can probably be completed by June 1, 2008, as requested.

Councilperson Van Dyke supports the project but would like more information prior to making a decision.

Mayor Adams would like elected officials to look at the proposed sites over the next week prior to making a decision. The Mayor said elected officials could then make a decision on April 21.

Smith requested Wisnieski and Simonsen mark the entire area for reference purposes so elected officials and staff can see where the proposed parking area and stage would be located.

Councilperson Fauss suggested talking to Nucor about donating the slag for the parking area.

Wisnieski will talk to Nucor representatives about donating the slag for the parking area in Skyview Park.

Councilperson Lange stated slag is a good sub-base but would need gravel on the top.

Smith stated gravel with screening helps keep the dust down.

No further discussion was had on the subject.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Fauss to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 a.m. and convene into executive session to discuss litigation. Roll call: Ayes: Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion carried.

Councilperson Wilson left the meeting at 7:51 a.m.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Fauss to adjourn from executive session and reconvene into regular session at 7:52 a.m. Roll call: Ayes: Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: Wilson. Motion carried.

Mayor Adams restated for the record that the only item discussed in executive session was litigation.

Councilperson Lange moved, seconded by Councilperson Van Dyke to approve the settlement for the Oak Street sewer backup as outlined by the City Attorney. Roll call: Ayes: Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: Wilson. Motion carried.

Councilperson Fauss moved, seconded by Councilperson Van Dyke to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 a.m. Roll call: Ayes: Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, and Mayor Adams. Nays: None. Absent: Wilson. Motion carried.

Elizabeth A. Deck
City Clerk