

Work Session

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Norfolk, Nebraska, held a work session in the Council Chambers, 309 North 5th Street, Norfolk, Nebraska, on Monday, September 27, 2021, beginning at 12:00 p.m.

Mayor Josh Moenning called the meeting to order.

Roll call found the following present: Mayor Josh Moenning and Councilmembers Frank Arens, Shane Clausen, Kory Hildebrand, Gary L. Jackson, Andrew McCarthy, Rob Merrill and Thad Murren. Absent: Corey Granquist.

Staff members present were City Administrator Andy Colvin, City Clerk Brianna Duerst, Finance Officer Randy Gates, City Attorney Danielle Myers-Noelle, Public Works Director Steven Rames, Risk Manager Lyle Lutt, Assistant City Administrator Scott Cordes, Park Superintendent Pat Mrsny and City Planner Val Grimes.

Madison County Bridge

Public Works Director Steven Rames said discussion regarding closure of the Eisenhower Avenue Bridge began in 2015. A subcommittee meeting was held on December 2, 2015, where subcommittee members voted to close the bridge. At the December 7, 2015 City Council meeting, that decision was reversed and on a split vote and the Resolution recommending closure of the bridge failed. With this recommendation, Madison County has moved forward with replacing the existing bridge structure at an estimated cost of \$1.7 million that will be funded by 80% federal funds and 20% state funds with no cost to Madison County or the City of Norfolk.

Rames received a letter from Mainelli Wagner dated September 20, 2021 asking for a design exception as the design standards cannot be met. Rames said typically, a bridge of this nature is designed for a 100-year event. The design request exception states *“the best we can do in terms of overtopping frequency is a little less than five years.”*

The question that needs answered is; do we want to allow the bridge to be reconstructed in a way that will be flooded on a regular basis? If the desire is for something greater, the cost increases substantially to \$10 million or more as properties would need to be purchased and the bridge would need to be raised 5-6 feet.

Currently, there has been approximately \$100,000 in design work done. This was funded with 80% federal funds and 20% state funds. If the county were to back away from the project, there is potential the County will be asked to reimburse the design costs. If the City is not acceptable to the 5-year design, the project goes back into the funding request but the state may question how critical the project is if the estimated cost were to increase to \$10 million.

Councilmembers discussed allowable tonnage and the effect on emergency services.

Councilmember Clausen said the county is expecting the project to happen and elected officials should move forward with the proposed project.

Rames noted it will not be infrequent that the bridge is closed due to high water. The bridge is directly north of the levy and will become a city bridge at some point.

Moenning asked about the city's role in the project. Rames explained there is no cost to the city but as the bridge is within our jurisdiction, they must comply with the city's design guidance.

Councilmember Clausen recommended moving the design exception request forward to a Council meeting for action.

American Rescue Plan Act Spending

Finance Officer Randy Gates said the city received the first half of ARPA funding in July 2021 totaling \$2,163,000. The second half of the funding is expected to be received in July 2022 for a total of approximately \$4.3 million. Gates discussed what can be done with the funds including water and sewer infrastructure and revenue replacement.

Gates discussed the bond issue for the Transfer Station Master Plan, which includes a new maintenance building, scale, scale house, extensive concrete resurfacing and site security at an estimated cost of \$5.3 million. Also being constructed is a new grit facility at an estimated cost of \$1.25 million. The grit facility construction could potentially be funded with ARPA funds. If ARPA funds were used for the grit facility, the bond issue would be lower resulting in lower debt service payments and reducing the need for future sewer rate increases.

If ARPA funds are not used for the grit facility, those dollars would remain in the ARP Fund. We have until the December 31, 2024 to have the money committed and until December 31, 2026 to have the money spent.

Closed Session

Mayor Moenning requested a motion to go into closed session for the protection of the public interest to discuss potential litigation.

Councilmember Merrill moved, seconded by Councilmember Arens to adjourn from regular session and convene into closed session at 12:39 p.m. to discuss potential litigation.

Roll call: Ayes: Councilmembers Arens, Merrill, McCarthy, Murren, Jackson, Clausen and Hildebrand. Nays: None. Absent: Granquist. Motion carried.

Mayor Moenning stated the only item discussed during the closed session was potential litigation.

Councilmember Merrill moved, seconded by Councilmember Jackson to adjourn from closed session at 1:33 p.m. and reconvene into regular session.

Roll call: Ayes: Councilmembers Arens, Merrill, McCarthy, Murren, Jackson, Clausen and Hildebrand. Nays: None. Absent: Granquist. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 1:34 p.m.

Josh Moenning
Mayor

ATTEST:

Brianna Duerst
City Clerk

(S E A L)