

MINUTES
CITY OF DELANO
City Council/Economic Development Authority
Tuesday, November 26, 2019
7:00 PM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Graunke called the special workshop of Tuesday, November 26, 2019, to order at 7:00pm.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Dale Graunke, Mayor; Councilmembers Betsy Moran, Holly Schrupp, Jason Franzen, and Jon Sutherland

Also Present: Phil Kern, City Administrator; Brian Bloch, Finance Director; Paula Bauman, Administrative Services Coordinator; Nick Neaton, Delano Senior Center; Linda Van Lith, Delano Senior Center; Scott Dornfeld, Building Official

3. Special Order of Business

A. Interview and appoint applicant for Spirit of Community Commission

Motion by Betsy Moran, seconded by Holly Schrupp to appoint Janell Gildemeister to the Spirit of Community Commission with an expiration of February 27, 2023; motion carried.

B. Discuss Delano Senior Center lunch program

Nick Neaton and Linda Van Lith announced Catholic Charities has discontinued the dining program for the City of Delano. The reason behind the changes was due to funding cuts and the requirement to reduce the program with 20,000 meals. The City of Buffalo was also cut from the program. The Delano Senior Center has been fortunate to partner with Catholic Charities offering its dining program and meals on wheels since 1982.

Surrounding communities have seen similar cuts and have responded by local restaurants preparing meals. Nick Neaton has met with a few restaurant owners and have had positive conversations. The goal is to have a different restaurant partner each day with the Center continuing to provide meals five times per week. The goal is to serve a meal within the \$4-\$5 range with the Senior Center covering break, deserts and drinks. Currently, the Senior Center is serving, on average, 20-25 people per day.

The Meals on Wheels program will stay in place. Those meals will be prepared at a kitchen in Maple Lake and will continue to be distributed by our drivers.

Council discussed the existing equipment within the kitchen. Linda Van Lith discussed the equipment that is owned by Catholic Charities and the City. Nick Neaton stated he felt keeping the equipment within the kitchen could possibly offer additional rental opportunities. Discussions will need to be held with the State Health Department prior to any decision on

rentals.

Staff will continually update Council as more information becomes available.

C. Discuss Building Department

Phil Kern discussed the current work load within the Building Department stating the department is behind on issuance of permits and inspections. The quality of service provided within the department is excellent. The responsiveness is a problem. Staff has spent time looking into the issue and where the problem is.

Kern reviewed the current workload and time involved for plan review and inspections. The average number of inspections done per year is 4,640; which results in 2,710 inspection hours annually. The average hours for plan review are 5,766 annually. The department currently has two full-time staff whose total hours available are 3,496 annually.

Ideally, a new single-family home permit should be issued within a ten-day time period. This summer the average turnaround was twenty days. The Department is currently at a forty-day turnaround time for new single-family home. There are currently sixteen new single-family home permits waiting to be reviewed. In addition to plan review, non-urgent items are not being completed. These items include people who have pulled permits but have not called to finalize. Examples include temporary certificate of occupancy, deck and fence permits. There is a back load of several years of follow up inspections.

The Council discussed lot availability for Delano and Watertown combined. Staff has had a working agreement with the City of Independence Building Official, Bruce Satek. Staff has met with Mr. Satek and has agreed to do inspections in the afternoon to help with the workload. Because this isn't a permanent answer; staff is recommending proceeding with posting a Building Official position. The person would be able to do inspections and plan review.

Jon Sutherland discussed the issue and gave his opinion. Councilmember Sutherland stated he was against hiring a permanent full-time position and felt hiring a qualified consultant to do plan review to catch up on the workload. In addition, surrounding communities have seen a benefit by hiring an intern to train and complete inspections. Dale Graunke stated he likes having Scott do plan review. Councilmember Sutherland stated he agreed and having a consultant complete plan review would be helpful.

Councilmember Moran stated she believes after looking at the workload worksheet a full-time employee is beneficial.

Phil Kern stated because the Department is drastically behind, action should be done immediately. Staff is recommending the ability to advertise for a full-time position and continue consulting services with the City of Independence. Kern stated he understands Councilmember Sutherland's hesitance on hiring full-time, but after personally digging into this for the past six weeks; Kern believes there isn't a better solution.

Motion by Betsy Moran, seconded by Holly Schrupp to authorize staff to advertise for a full-time Building Official position within the Delano Building Department; motion carried.

Motion by Jon Sutherland to amend the previous motion adding the ability to hire a consultant on projects where needed; motion failed due to lack of second.

Scott Dornfeld, Building Official, discussed the need to amend the current fee schedule as the City of Watertown is currently working on adopting a fee increase. Dornfeld discussed the proposed changes. If Council agrees, this will be brought to a meeting in December for formal approval.

D. Discuss 2020 Preliminary Budget, Tax Levy, and 2020-2025 Capital Improvement Plan

Brian Bloch stated as part of the State's "Truth-in-Taxation" requirements, the public has been notified of the opportunity to speak regarding the budget and tax levy at the Council meeting on Tuesday, December 3, 2019. At that meeting, Bloch will be presenting the General Fund budget along with the 2020 tax levy. Bloch stated this is Council's final review of the budget and tax levy before the December 3rd presentation.

The original budget reviewed in August showed an estimated tax capacity of \$6,925,00. The most recent estimate from the County is \$7,048,568. This equates to a preliminary tax rate of 52.885% for 2020 compared to 2019's final tax rate of 53.399% - over a half percentage drop.

After Council discussion, no requested changes were made. Council will further review at the December 3, 2019, meeting.

E. Consider changing to an "Open Book" format in place of the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization for 2020

Brian Bloch stated after the regular meeting, he spoke with the County regarding the open book format. The County Assessor stated he felt the people in the districts that went to open book have more flexibility with the timing of their appeals (not having to prepare and go to a meeting on a specified date). None of the districts that decided to go to Open Book have decided to go back to the way it was before, citizens have not asked the districts to go back to the Local Board of Appeal, to his knowledge. The County has not heard complaints in regard to this process from property owners. He has, on the other hand, have received complaints regarding the Local Board of Appeal meetings. Roughly 1/3 of the county is now Open Book and is working well. The County Assessor felt it is a better format for property owners.

Motion by Betsy Moran, seconded by Jason Franzen to adopt Resolution R-19-36 to switch from the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization format to an Open Book meeting format for property owners to appeal their property classification and/or valuation in 2020; motion carried 5-0 by roll call vote.

F. Discuss Granite Works Redevelopment

This item was removed from the agenda.

4. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the special workshop of Tuesday, November 26, 2019, was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Signed:

Dale Graunke, Mayor

Attest: Paula Bauman, Administrative Services Coordinator