

City of Harrington
MINUTES
City Council Workshop
July 7, 2014

A workshop with the Harrington City Council was held at Harrington City Hall, 106 Dorman Street, on July 7, 2014 and was attended by the following: Mayor Anthony R. Moyer; Vice Mayor Cheryl J. Lahman; Council Member Duane E. Bivans; Council Member Fonda Coleman; Council Member Amy L. Minner; Council Member Charles W. Porter; Council Member Kenneth W. Stubbs; William Pepper, City Solicitor; Teresa Tieman, City Manager; Dean Gary, Accountant; and Kelly Blanchies, Clerk of Council.

Also present: Tom Wilkes, Remington, Vernick, and Beach, City Engineer; Christine Hayward, Library Director; John Phillos, Delaware Division of Libraries; Barbara Bullock, Charles Carr; Jim Coudriet; and Marie Cunningham.

Public Comments

Jim Coudriet suggested that there be a way that residents could monitor their water usage. Charles Carr stated that there is a meter in the pit. Mr. Coudriet stated that residents are not allowed in the meter pit. The City Manager stated that the lid can be lifted to look at the meter. Mr. Carr stated that residents have the right to turn off the supply to their house. The City Manager stated that the meter cannot be turned off by residents but the resident can turn off their valve.

Barbara Bullock stated that there should be a maximum mileage for the Public Works take home vehicles.

Mayor Moyer called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Next steps for library building

The City Manager stated that the Parks and Recreation floor improvements were approved in the State bond bill for seventy-four thousand dollars (\$74,000). The State has given the City two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) in the bond bill for the new library. The Library Needs Assessment is coming to a close; the Library Site Selection Committee has been formed.

Council Member Porter asked if the money for the Library is matching. The City Manager replied yes, the City has to match the funds from the State for the Library. John Phillos stated that any eligible expense can be used for matching

funds, including land acquisition, professional fees, site preparation. Mr. Phillos stated that the libraries had requested more money than they received in the bond bill, but all were given enough to continue on in the next steps.

Mr. Phillos stated that there are several parallel tracks in a building project: determine where the Library is going to be built, architectural work to design a library based on the needs assessment, raise funds in house or hire professionals, public relations to put the correct information out, and building and construction people brought in as soon as possible to get actual costs and work with the architect.

Mr. Phillos stated that the City does not have to follow the State purchasing procedures. It can be an advantage to use the firm that completed the Needs Assessment for the architectural work because they already are familiar with the community.

Council Member Porter asked how long the State bond money will be available for the City to use. Mr. Phillos stated that it has to be used within three years from the date of the appropriation. The City will soon apply for the remainder of the money needed to complete the library.

Mayor Moyer asked much the remainder of funding would be. Mr. Phillos stated that needs assessment came in at eighteen thousand square feet and about three million dollars (\$3,000,000) for the building. The State would supply half of the funding. It is a good idea to ask for a little bit extra as a contingency fund, which can be returned without penalty if it is not used.

Council Member Porter asked who recommends the architect. Mr. Phillos stated that a bid can be open to any firm nationwide, the City can request bids from some local firms, or the City can continue using the firm that performed the Needs Assessment. The City Council is who decides and signs the contract. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that she would like to use a firm in Delaware.

Mr. Phillos stated that he estimates about three hundred dollars (\$300) a square foot for the cost of the library. Mayor Moyer asked if donated land can be used as part of the match. Mr. Phillos replied yes with two appraisals.

Mayor Moyer thanked Mr. Phillos for his hard work.

The City Manager asked if the City Council would consider retaining Becker Morgan as the architect.

Public Works take home vehicles

The City Manager presented a written policy for take home vehicles.

Mayor Moyer stated that the IRS has previously told the City that take home vehicles are taxable income. The City was going to bill each Public Works staff member a small amount, and the staff decided that they did not want to do it. The City Solicitor stated that he believes it is the reimbursable mileage rate.

Council Member Bivans asked if there was a written policy when vehicles were taken home previously. Council Member Porter stated that it was in the employee handbook.

Council Member Bivans stated that if the Public Works Supervisor and the person on call have their City vehicles at home, he does not see the need for the other staff to take home their vehicles.

The City Manager stated that City vehicles are actually safer at home than left in the lot all night and if there is an emergency, the employees would be able to respond quicker. Mayor Moyer stated that the City does have some sites that are not within the City limits as well.

Council Member Minner asked what the cost difference would be. The City Manager stated that it should not be significant but will check on it.

Council Member Minner asked about a waiver for anyone that might be riding in the vehicle. The City Manager stated that it probably would not make any difference. The City Solicitor stated that a passenger would be covered under the liability insurance.

Mayor Moyer stated that maybe a limit should be added for the distance away that the person can live and take home a vehicle.

Consent agenda

Mayor Moyer asked the City Solicitor to explain the point of the consent agenda. The City Solicitor stated that it is to efficiently take care of routine, noncontroversial items.

The City Solicitor stated that the minutes can be corrected if there is a problem, but they should not be a jumping off point for discussion. If there are specific questions, they should probably be addressed with the City Manager or Chief of Police prior to the meeting, because it is unlikely that they can be answered during a meeting.

Council Member Bivans stated that he has previously questioned having discussions during the minutes and agrees that they should be consent agenda items. The City Manager, Financial, and Public Works reports are the operations of the City and should not be consent agenda items. The City Solicitor stated that

any Council Member can remove any item from the consent agenda to be discussed.

Mayor Moyer stated that he would like to try the consent agenda.

Funding projects with unrestricted money

The City Manager stated that Council had expressed interest in discussing starting work on the inflow and infiltration (I & I) projects. The Council also needs to discuss funding from the City for the Library.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked about the reserved funds. The City Manager stated that reserves are for an emergency; there is currently no official policy.

The City Manager stated that the City can earmark some unrestricted funds for the Library building fund to show that the City is serious about the Library.

Council Member Porter asked the value of asking the constituents if they want a Library. The City is assuming that they want a Library. Mr. Phillos stated that was part of what the Needs Assessment was; the architectural firm talked to people in the community and held meetings to see what they wanted. Council Member Porter stated that taxes were just raised and now funding is being sought for a new Library.

Vice Mayor Lahman stated that she would like to fix I & I in order to save money. The City Manager stated that Quadrant I has the worst I & I, and repairing manholes and lining and repairing pipes must be done to decrease I & I.

The City Engineer stated that problems will be fixed as they are found in the pipes. A pressure test is done first. Both grouting and pipe lining are permanent repairs.

Council Member Stubbs stated that most of the manholes in Harrington are brick and allow water to seep in.

The City Manager stated that the City has applied to USDA for funding for this work and to study Quadrants III and IV. The City can now spend about five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) to fix I & I in unrestricted proprietary funds.

Mayor Moyer stated that this can be put on the agenda for the next City Council Meeting for a vote.

Mayor Moyer asked if Phase I can go out to bid before the City Council votes on it in two weeks, because the bid will take thirty days. Council Member Minner asked if bids are online only. The City Engineer stated that they have transitioned

away from paper bids but can do both; Delaware Bid is a great source that saves time and money.

The City Engineer stated that not having to use prevailing wage, which is required with Federal funding will also save money.

Discussion occurred regarding grouting versus lining of pipes.

The Accountant stated that the Library Building Fund is currently in a certificate of deposit, and he would like to change it to a money market at the same interest rate for the ability to add or withdrawal money as needed.

Amendments to Chapter 180, Municipal Fees, relating to water meter and irrigation meter fees

The City Manager stated that there have been requests to install irrigation meters, so the actual cost of the meter, meter pit, and inspection need to be considered. Mayor Moyer asked when the meter will be available. The City Manager stated that they are available now; this changes the cost to market cost.

Public Comments

Marie Cunningham stated that a consensus was asked for during the meeting, which is essentially a vote. The reports are invaluable to providing background information for the City Council to make decisions. The Library Needs Assessment had findings indicating that the current location had huge problems. The number of people that currently use the Library indicates the value of having a Library that provides the services needed.

Ms. Bullock stated that water and sewer should take priority over the Library and that more information should be available online.

There being no further business, the City Council Workshop adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Blanchies
Clerk of Council