

CITY OF FENTON COUNCIL WORK SESSION PROCEEDINGS
Monday, February 3, 2014
City Hall Conference Room
301 South LeRoy Street
7:30 PM

Mayor Sue Osborn called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM.

Present: Bland, Grossmeyer, Jacob, King, Lockwood, McDermott, Osborn.
Absent: None.
Others Present: Lynn Markland, City Manager; Brad Hissong, Building and Zoning Administrator; Bob Cairnduff, Fire Chief.

CITIZENS COMMENTS None.

FIRE TRUCK REPLACEMENT

Cairnduff stated the Fire Department is looking at replacing one of its vehicles. The current vehicle (Rescue 16) is 15 years old and is on a 15 year replacement plan within the department's truck replacement plan schedule. This truck is the primary medical response vehicle and back up rescue truck; it was the primary rescue vehicle before the heavy rescue truck was purchased in 2007. The vehicle being looked at to replace Rescue 16 is a new Ford F-550 mini-pumper, which is a change in vehicle type. The current truck responds to all medical calls in the City and Township. The new truck would continue to respond to all medical calls, but would also respond first out to all fires in Tyrone Township.

Cairnduff stated the truck would serve two purposes. The main reason the Department is looking to change the purpose of the truck is for coverage in Tyrone Township. The Department encounters many long, narrow and dirt driveways in Tyrone Township; this truck would have a pump, large hose bed and be 4-wheel drive which would allow access to these drives, which is not always possible with the current truck. The new truck would be one-third the weight of the main engine, and much smaller in size and would dramatically improve the Department's firefighting capabilities.

Cairnduff further stated the fire equipment fund will have a balance of approximately \$271,000 at the end of the current fiscal year and the estimated cost of the vehicle is in the \$200,000-\$250,000 range. He has been working with other departments to explore the option of a large multi-department group bid. This was done a few years ago and the departments received a substantial savings. He anticipates the current vehicle will sell for around \$30,000 and has already had interest from two agencies. He is requesting permission to go out for bid and possibly participate in the group bid process.

Osborn asked, percentage wise, how much would this truck be used in Tyrone Township. Cairnduff responded it would be small. The truck is designed to function as the primary medical unit used in both the City and Tyrone Township.

Osborn asked if the current fee charged to Tyrone Township is enough to cover the cost of equipment used in the Township. Cairnduff stated the flat rate charged per run (currently \$1366/call) is adequate and a typical year, the Department runs about 150 calls in Tyrone Township. The rate includes items such as payroll, equipment wear and tear, fuel, insurance, etc.

Lockwood asked what Tyrone Township budgets for fire services. Cairnduff stated services are funded by a five year, per parcel, special assessment.

Cairnduff shared pictures of properties in Tyrone Township to illustrate the problems vehicles have accessing certain properties. He stated the Department is going through their mapping system and programming points that have long driveways. The problem they run into is they can't commit the big fire trucks to go up a driveway until it is determined what is going on and it causes department personnel to exit the truck and go to the house to determine what is going on, causing a time delay.

Osborn asked if Tyrone Township has been approached about amending their ordinances. Cairnduff responded yes. A few years ago, they adopted the same street requirements as the City, which they didn't have before, but a lot of homes were built prior to that.

King referred to the pictures provided and noted that the vehicles are being damaged by trees and brush going up the driveways. She asked if that was taken into account when the contract was taken on. She stated something needs to be done to provide access and feels it is a danger to Fire Department personnel. She would like the Fire Chief and City Manager to look at the issues involved with accessibility.

Grossmeyer stated he has been down many of the driveways and feels that Councilwoman King's concerns would be addressed if the new vehicle is purchased because it can access the areas that there are problems with.

King asked what the City's liability is in instances where the Fire Department can't get to a house because the driveway was not maintained. Markland stated there would be no liability.

McDermott asked what the cost would be to replace the vehicle with a similar vehicle. Cairnduff stated the vehicle cost around \$90,000 fifteen years ago and estimates it would be around \$100,000-\$110,000 if purchased today.

McDermott asked how many runs is the vehicle used for primary runs. Cairnduff responded out of roughly 500 calls, approximately 165 medicals calls and factoring in accidents, about 180-200 calls.

Bland asked how this purchase would affect the purchase of other replacement vehicles. Cairnduff responded this is in the scheduled replacement plan. At the end of the current fiscal year, there should be \$271,000 in the fire equipment fund. There is one more payment for the ladder truck in the next fiscal year, which is approximately \$76,000 and there are three more payments on the tanker truck, which are about \$32,000 a year. He stated the last ten years there has been an average annual contribution of \$100,000-\$130,000 to the truck fund. As long as that is maintained, there will be adequate funding for future purchases.

Jacob asked if the \$30,000 estimated selling price of the current vehicle will go back into the fire equipment fund. Cairnduff responded yes. Jacob stated he is in favor of this if it helps solves the current problems.

Cairnduff stated that by participating in the group bid process, he is hoping to save \$10,000-\$15,000 on this purchase.

King asked if there would be a time in the future if costs keep rising, that the City should ask Tyrone Township to make a lump sum contribution to the Fire Department for equipment.

Cairnduff stated that could be language put into the next contract. Markland stated he will look at the numbers when it is time to renew the contract.

Council consensus was to go out for bid.

AMENDMENT TO WHISPERING PINES PRELIMINARY PUD

Hissong stated the proposed PUD reflects 37 single family units versus 52 duplex units. The total number of units would be 50, with a 28 foot width. The infrastructure is already in place so the developer tried to keep the proposed new units in relatively the same place so new engineering, inspections or infrastructure is not necessary. The previous units had a setback of fifteen and a half feet; the new ones are set at eleven feet. The Fire Chief has reviewed the plans and indicated there is plenty of room for access. With the reduced setback, there was a concern with fences so a condition of the plan is to only allow four foot tall decorative fences on the side yard and no front yard fences. Hissong stated the developer has indicated he may not allow any fences as he has developments with the same size lots and units in Clarkston that do not have fences and feels it is an attractive development.

Hissong stated the units already constructed have been sold and those units have been removed from this agreement. He stated the Preliminary PUD has already gone to the Planning Commission and they are recommending approval by City Council with conditions as indicated in Carmine Avantini's letter dated January 14, 2014. Four different house models are proposed and this project will have to come back for full site plan approval at a later date that would include any changes in elevations, setbacks, location, etc.

Osborn asked what the projected cost of the new homes would be. Craig McAra, Attorney for JRDC Land Company, responded it would be south of \$150,000.

Bland stated he is glad this project is progressing as it has been inactive for a while. He doesn't think the changes are major and is in favor of moving the project forward.

Grossmeyer stated at the Planning Commission meeting, a neighbor of the development expressed concern with standing water in the area and the developer indicated he was in favor of working with her to take care of the problem. He stated a member of the Planning Commission visited the developer's other developments in Clarkston and spoke very highly of the quality of the development.

Markland stated he has concerns with a one car garage shown on some of the proposed models; he would like to see two car garages. He asked if the homes would have basements or crawl spaces. McAra responded the developer indicated the expectation would be to have walkout basements. Osborn asked if all the units would have walkout basements. McAra responded it would be an option.

McAra stated four plans, with different elevations, were submitted – Plan A, B, C and D. Plan A calls for a one car garage. Osborn stated she likes the look of Plan A, but would prefer a two car garage as most single family homes do not have one car garages.

Bland asked if the Planning Commission had any concerns with some of the units having one car garages.

Hissong stated there were no concerns with single car garages, but before it was known whether or not the homes would have basements, there was a concern if there weren't basements the garage would be used for storage and the cars would be parked in the driveway and not the garage. The developer indicated he added the option as he thought there may be people interested in them that only have one vehicle and would want more floor space in the house.

Bland confirmed that the one car garage is an option and most units will have a two car garage. McAra responded that is correct.

Osborn asked if Plan A could be altered to add a two car garage. McAra responded the plans, as submitted, could not be altered to include a two car garage.

Hissong stated this was approved by the Planning Commission with the condition that no more than three out of every five units have the same building design so there is no monotony in design.

Lockwood asked for clarification on the fence issue. She asked if this is just being discussed at this point and there is a possibility of no fences because that's what was done at the development in Clarkston. McAra responded that is correct, but that the Planning Commission indicated there was to be no fencing in the front yard.

Grossmeyer commented that the fencing indicated in the plan is less than what the ordinance allows. He was pleased that the developer stated he likely will not allow fences at all.

Lockwood asked what the time frame would be for work to start if the approval process keeps moving forward. McAra stated he hopes construction will begin this year.

Markland stated that the backyards do not look very deep. McAra responded it will vary widely lot to lot. Some lots will have short driveways, some longer, etc. Markland asked if outbuildings would be allowed. McAra responded that is not part of the proposal.

Hissong stated if it is not specified in the PUD agreement, they would be allowed 30% rear yard coverage with accessory buildings provided they meet all the setbacks.

McAra stated the one car garage is an option; there are no plans to build every third unit with a one car garage.

King stated she likes Plan D. She wants to make sure what is built is something that can resell and thinks there should be two car garages for every unit. She thinks a two car garage looks better and provides more storage.

Grossmeyer stated the actual buildings could change between now and the final site plan and that the Planning Commission addressed concerns with porches, garages, etc. Markland stated it depends on what is put in the PUD agreement.

Hissong stated the way the PUD is set up, it requires the applicant to show City Council elevations as part of the approval. The applicant could come back with something different and if it is minor in nature that does not disrupt or change the intent of the PUD, staff can approve it. If staff is not comfortable with it, they can send it to the Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission can choose to send it to City Council.

Bland thinks the garage option should be left up to whoever buys the home, they know they are getting a one car garage and that is their choice.

Hissong stated the site plan approval process still has to be completed. Part of that process will include reviews and inspections from the Planner and Engineer.

McDermott stated it does not matter to him if there are one or two car garages. He is glad a subdivision is being worked on and is happy to hear the home prices will be below \$150,000.

Jacob stated he likes the diversity in the design of the structures and is glad to see there are choices.

Hissong stated the structures that will have a single car garage will have a basement.

Consensus was to set a public hearing date at the next City Council meeting.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

King stated she is not happy with the wireless carrier the City has. She thinks the service could be better and is not very user friendly. She also commented a lot of cars are parked on the streets overnight and thinks something should be put in the local paper to let people know there is no overnight street parking in the winter months.

Lockwood stated she had issues accessing emails but after software updates were done, she has not had any issues. Lockwood thanked Councilman Grossmeyer for his comments on the Whispering Pines PUD agenda item as he represents the Council on the Planning Commission and she appreciates the feedback. She stated the Mayor and herself will be attending the National League of Cities (NLC) conference in March and asked if the March City Council meeting date could be changed. She commented Genesee County had a meeting regarding emergency plans and Commissioner Clack will send a recap of the meeting.

Markland stated a few years ago there was quite a debate whether or not to keep dispatch local and thinks the recent circumstances with storms and power outages demonstrates that the right decision was made to have a local dispatch center. He thinks it made a huge difference on how issues were responded to.

Osborn thanked the Fire Department, Police Department and D.P.W. for their work this past month during the storms and power outages. She toured the Loose Senior Center and commented it is very nice. She stated Fenton is hosting a watershed meeting for Friends of the Shiawassee River and Michigan State University and it will be held March 13th at the Community Center from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. She will check to see if her flight can be changed for the NLC conference and will report to Council on Monday regarding possibly changing the date of the first City Council meeting in March.

CALL TO THE AUDIENCE – Doug Tebo, 409 Bent Oak, commented regarding the work the D.P.W. does at Oakwood Cemetery for burials in the winter. He stated they plow a route to the section the grave is located a day or two before the burial and then come back the day of the funeral to make sure everything is clear. He stated they do a fantastic job.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:52 P.M.

Mayor Sue Osborn

City Clerk, Renee Wilson

Date approved: February 24, 2014