



**FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION SUB-COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, June 14, 2017 - 7:30 AM  
West Des Moines City Hall – 4200 Mills Civic Parkway  
Training Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

Present: Councilmember Russ Trimble, Councilmember Jim Sandager, City Manager Tom Hadden, Deputy City Manager Jamie Letzring, City Attorney Dick Scieszinski, Community and Economic Development Director Clyde Evans, Human Resources Director Jane Dodge, Business Development Coordinator Katie Hernandez, Housing Planner Christine Gordon, Communication Specialist Lucinda Stephenson, Finance Director Tim Stiles, Budget Analyst Chris Hamlett, Public Services Director Bret Hodne, Public Services Superintendent Kevin Hensley, Interim City Engineer Brian Hemesath, Principal Engineer Jason Schlickbernd, and Secretary Katie Johnson

Guests:

Forrest Ridgway, Manager of Ridgway Properties LLC - Items #1 & #2  
Sister City Commission Member Phyllis Staplin, Sister City Commission Member John Norwood- Item #3

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 AM

**1. Property Tax Rebate Program – amendment of the Eligible Areas**

The City has received an application for assistance under the Property Tax Rebate Program from Ridgway Properties, LLC for renovation of the former Dahl's site at 5003 EP True Parkway. Upon review of the application and the map of eligible areas, staff discovered that the property was not included in the area covered by the program.

Mr. Evans and Ms. Hernandez recommended that that the three commercial areas at the intersection of EP True Parkway and 50th Street now be covered under the program. Councilmember Trimble suggested that the City add all commercial areas to the program. The Councilmembers supported staff's recommendation to add the Dahl's areas to the existing rebate program and asked staff to prepare an item for approval at a future City Council meeting.

**2. Ridgway Properties LLC Application Review and Approval for the Property Tax Rebate Program**

Ridgway Properties, LLC, has filed an application with the City to be considered for the Property Tax Rebate Pilot Program. Review of the application indicates that they are renovating the former Dahl's grocery store site. The applicant is proposing to occupy about half of the building with a bicycle business and as part of this business they will retain 20 full-time and 20 part-time positions. The balance of the space would be occupied by two other users (TBD). The property owner is proposing to undertake \$3,000,000 of renovations to the site.

Mr. Evans and Ms. Hernandez presented the following recommendations:

- Approve Ridgway Properties, LLC's application for assistance under the Property Tax Rebate Program;
- Give direction to staff on the creation of a new Urban Renewal Plan and Tax Increment District; and
- That the City and the company enter into a development agreement that would include a minimum assessment agreement to guarantee payment, to guarantee a minimum valuation for ten years, and to guarantee the retention/creation of at least five FTE's.

The Councilmembers supported the proposed recommendations and directed them to continue with next steps.

**3. Sister Cities Commission Programming Requests**

Ms. Staplin and Mr. Norwood from the Sister Cities Commission presented two requests for consideration.

The first request was for a marketing budget line item of \$25,000 to develop general marketing materials. This would include an infographic to raise awareness with potential businesses which have an interest in market expansion and are willing to consider West Des Moines. They would also use the funds to produce a short video or series of video clips. The video clips could be housed on the city's website.

The second request was for an extension of Mr. Norwood's contract. Mr. Norwood was previously capped at \$2,000 per month and they are asking that the contract allow for up to \$3,000 per month at the agreed rate of \$125/hr.

The Councilmembers supported the contract extension for Mr. Norwood, however they did not support the request for funding of the marketing materials and instead suggested that the Sister Cities Commission work request the funding from the West Des Moines Chamber.

#### **4. Iowa Clinic Expansion – Discussion for Assistance**

Mr. Evans advised that The Iowa Clinic is looking to expand upon their existing campus at 60<sup>th</sup> Street and University Avenue with the addition of a four-story medical office building and a 560 vehicle parking structure. They would likely be seeking some state and local funding assistance but the exact request is unknown.

This item was presented as information only and no action is needed at this time.

#### **5. Feasibility Study for Ice Hockey Complex**

Mr. Hadden and Ms. Letzring presented a request from a local non-profit organization which is seeking City assistance with funding a feasibility study for a new ice arena. The non-profit organization is asking the city to cover 75% of the total cost of the \$24,000 study.

The Councilmembers were generally supportive but recommended that the City offer to pay 50% of the cost. They instructed staff to continue discussion and negotiations with the organization.

#### **6. Study on Enhancing Fiber Optic**

Ms. Letzring provided background and indicated that staff would like to enlist the services of a consultant to assist in the enhancement of fiber optic services within the city. Mr. Dave Lyons has previous contractual experience with the City and has unique expertise in this area.

Exploring fiber utility expansion will support a major initiatives suggested by the 2036 Visioning Plan. Councilmembers were supportive of the process and it is expected that staff will present a negotiated contact to Council at a future meeting.

#### **7. Housing Needs Assessment – Request for Proposal (RFP)**

Ms. Gordon presented a draft RFP for Professional Consulting Services Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment. The Councilmembers approved the draft RFP and gave the ok to proceed with the process and staff will ultimately present an agreement with the preferred proposer to Council at a future meeting for approval.

#### **8. Employee Tuition Reimbursement Policy – Update**

Mrs. Dodge presented proposed changes to the City's Employee Tuition Reimbursement Policy. The current policy has not been updated for more than 18 years and staff feels it has not kept up with the tuition increases that have taken place since that time. Following are the proposed changes:

- The City will pay for one undergraduate and one graduate degree per employee
- The city will pay 50% of an Associate's Degree and 75% of a Bachelor's or Master's Degree (which is not a change in policy). This will include tuition, books, and fees. There will be no reimbursements for doctorate degrees.
- Upon completion of the degree program, the employee will be required to stay employed with the City for 1 year. If not, they will have to reimburse the City for payments the City made on behalf of that employee for the twelve months prior to separation.
- The maximum amount of reimbursement will be \$3,200 per employee per year.



- Those that are eligible will be non-union employees, AFSCME, Library, and IUOE. Fire, Police, Westcom, and EMS unions will fall under the language contained in their current union contracts.

Total cost of the changes to the program will depend on the number of individuals using this benefit but it is estimated that the increased can be absorbed during the FY 1718 budget through the use of FFRP funds that are not used. The Councilmembers supported the recommended changes and instructed staff to bring the revised policy forward at a future Council meeting for approval.

**9. Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges**

Mr. Stiles brought forward multiple rate changes in regards to Development Services, EMS, Fire, and Water Works. The Councilmembers supported the recommendation to present the changes to City Council at the meeting of June 26, 2017.

**10. Thornwood and Ashworth Sewer Grinder Pumps**

Mr. Hemesath and Mr. Schlickbernd gave a review of where we've been and which solution is the current staff recommendation. Mr. Trimble discussed that for future planning, the City should only consider grinder pumps if a gravity system was not possible.

The Councilmembers agreed to move forward and continue with the staff recommendation as was presented to Council at the previous Council meeting.

**11. Staff Updates**

Mr. Hadden gave an update on the staff negotiations with Richard Hurd's Parkways development (IMT/Hy-Vee).

Mr. Evans discussed potential annexation of several properties to the west of the current city limits (Lauterbach, Knapp, Jungmann, Hallett, Bruere, and Wittern). Mr. Evans is currently discussing the potential of annexation with property owners.

Mr. Stiles noted that the Council will be asked to review an updated Bond Official Statement, in anticipation of a bond sale to occur on July 24.

Mr. Scieszinski asked for availability of Councilmembers to participate in interviews for legal services in July.

**12. Other Matters**

None

Meeting was adjourned at 9:41 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Katie Johnson  
Secretary