

Study Session Minutes – September 28, 2020
Ivan “Ike” Ackerman Council Chambers

A Study Session Meeting of the Waverly City Council was held on September 28, 2020 at 7:00 P. M. at City Hall. Mayor Hoffman presided.

The Governor of Iowa has declared a Public Emergency because of the COVID-19 outbreak. The Mayor has determined that an in-person meeting of the City Council is impossible or impractical without violating the Governor’s mandates.

When an in-person meeting is "impossible or impractical," Iowa Code Section 21.8 permits a governmental body to conduct a meeting by electronic means.

The meeting was conducted by video conference using ZOOM from the Council Chambers. The Mayor Adam Hoffman, City Attorney/Economic Development Director Bill Werger, and City Clerk Carla Guyer were in the Council Chambers. The 7 Council members were not in the chambers, but participated via ZOOM conferencing. Comments for items on the agenda could be made by submitting them prior to the meeting to the City Clerk, Mayor or any of the Council members or by calling 319-596-0179 during the meeting.

The video/audio conference of the meeting was broadcasted on the normal public access channels. Staff strived to maintain the quality of the video and audio during that broadcast. Public access was available through this broadcast.

Meeting minutes were kept and included a statement explaining why an in-person meeting was impossible or impractical.

- A. Mayor Hoffman called the meeting to order.
- B. Present: Beaufore, Birgen, Drenkow, Glaser, Kangas, Rathe, and Schneider Absent: None
- C. Moved by Schneider, seconded by Rathe to approve agenda as presented.

Motion passed. Yes: 7 No: 0 Absent: 0

- D. Study Session Calendar.

- 1. Leisure Services Commission update

- Leisure Services Commission Chairperson Joel Johnson reviewed who is currently on the commission (Joel Johnson, Chair; Tara Winter, Vice Chair; James Carver, Derek Solheim, Brian Pins, and Randy Neuendorf). Mr. Johnson noted that Leisure Services is responsible for: Parks, Harlington Cemetery, Swimming Pool, Civic Center, Dog Park, Vegetation Management, and the Trails/Forestry/Public Properties/Central Business District/ Right-of-Ways (ROW). He commented on the list of Leisure Services Staff including 53 seasonal part-time staff. Johnson recognized accomplishments that have happened in the past 12 months. These accomplishments included: Candlelight Walk, receiving the Healthy Hometown Award, Candlelight Ski, Trees for Kids Grant allowing the planting of 88 trees with community families helping, landscaping done at the Dog Park thanks to Brian and Janadene Harvey, installation of Wind Sculpture and Bench at Big 6 Park, completing Prairie Park with the addition of a Basketball and Pickleball Court, South Riverside Park enhancement/continuation, began construction of Cemetery Maintenance Building, broke ground and started Phase 1 of Cedar River Park, the America in Bloom Grant aiding the Downtown Streetscape, installing new baskets at the Disc Golf Course at Brookwood Park, painting the Parks Storage Building with the help of a Paint Iowa Beautiful Grant, staining the Rail Trail with the help of volunteers from Nestle, and installing three memorial benches with two more on the way. Mr. Johnson explained that some of the challenges that were faced in the past 12 months included: COVID-19, finding enough quality seasonal staff, a continued heavy workload for staff, the swimming pool not able to open due to COVID-19, and the certain limitations placed on the use of the Civic Center, also due to COVID-19. The future remains looking busy with: Phase 2 of Cedar River Park, South Riverside Park, completion of Cemetery Maintenance Building, water line installation at Community Gardens with the use of a Community Foundation Grant, Memorial Park Site Plan, Park and Open Space Plan update, and increase foundation funds. Mr. Johnson expressed much appreciation for the dedicated staff in the Leisure Services Department.

- It was explained to Council that due to new state filter regulations, the dog swim was not allowed this season, and it may not be allowed in the future. Staff further informed Council that there will be a formal restroom sign on the Exchange Building in the near future. Council thanked the Commission for their work and, again, thanked staff for their hard work and dedication. Mr. Johnson also recognized Leisure Services staff for their quality work and commented that the Commission is very proud of them.

2. Human Equity and Diversity Task Force update

- Human Equity and Diversity Task Force Chair Shane Blackledge and Secretary Amy Kangas presented to Council. Mr. Blackledge and Ms. Kangas shared the background of how this task force came to fruition. The task force members include: Shane Blackledge, Chair; Amy Kangas, Secretary; Allison Banwart-Hales, Amber Blackledge, Kay Ellwanger, Craig Hancock, Len Jentz, Will Kurtt, Heath Moore, Raj Patel, Danielle Sharar, Ernesto Robles, and Kerri Wellman. Since July of this year, the task force has established a mission statement, vision, listened to stakeholders, and defined goals. The mission statement is: The mission of the Human Equity and Diversity Task Force is to open doors and build bridges to advance opportunities for all people in Waverly and the surrounding communities. Their vision is: This task force strives to provide safe opportunities for all to achieve their highest potential. The goals of the task force include: 1) Encourage the use of inclusive language by businesses and community organizations; 2) Partner with Waverly Chamber of Commerce and Waverly Economic Development Group to address employment and income inequality; 3) Develop community-based resources for drug and alcohol addictions and mental health; 4) Create programming and opportunities for at-risk youth through working with community organizations; and 5) Strengthen partnerships with minority/marginalized groups in rural communities and empower them to grow the community from within and share experiences with surrounding communities. In the future, they would like to review city policies and ordinances and actively pursue partnerships and programming needs.

- Council discussion followed. The goals seem very ambitious and seem to cover a variety of issues. The mental health and drug addiction goal seems unusual for this particular task force. The task force added goal number 3 because they want everyone to have the opportunity to have a better life. People struggling with mental health or drug or alcohol addiction need more resources and more education on the resources that are available. There is a lack of in-patient treatment or recovery house. These illnesses impact people of all races and ages. Mr. Blackledge also talked about our income equality and job availability. A number of minorities are students at Wartburg College and some might not be in a community with the same cultural values. It is important to share and make known the resources that are available regardless of who you are or where you are from. Part of the discussions at every meeting seem to be about recruiting minority groups to move to Waverly, how to reach out to the groups, and how to include them in events that happen within Waverly. Partnering with schools or the EMBRACE group have been discussed. Part of the conversation was also about being involved with the City's new marketing development, "Waverly Welcome Home". The City's Economic Development and the Community Development Departments are spearheading the campaign and will send information out to businesses to try and recruit all people. Rather than using "stock" photos, City staff has asked people if they have pictures with diverse representation, to please submit them. The website will always be evolving. The campaign needs to radiate that Waverly is welcoming to people with wide range of experiences and backgrounds. Thanks, and appreciation were extended to the task force for their hard work given to this project. Celebrations are needed. The City doesn't have any funding for mental health services; however, after doing some personal surveying around the City and obtaining enough information, maybe the County would be willing to participate. Members of the task force

gathered information from their neighbors, co-workers, and other community members and received feedback in order to obtain their goals. Feedback they received included: a large concern for lack of resources for mentorship and what youth can do afterschool to help develop skills to help motivate them, lack of daycare providers, lack of inclusive language, and lack of representation of minorities in the work place (especially within management and within the City employees). The task force is planning to reach out to the Economic Development Department, the schools, and anybody else willing to help achieve these goals.

The City can help by allowing the task force to learn more. There was discussion on other cities in the nation, such as: Spencer, Iowa and Beaverton, WA. There are resources in Waverly; although, they don't seem to be well-known about. In the first meetings, there were discussions of the incident at a baseball game this past summer. Issues have now been identified. The group will move forward by trying to build bridges with others in the community.

3. Citywide Spring Clean Up Day

- A formal spring clean-up is important, and it helps everyone out. There might be ways to look at this and make it more efficient. Councilmember Schneider named a few cities that he felt had a good approach to citywide spring clean-up. The City of Waverly currently holds a spring clean-up annually. Each spring, residents can place items on their lawn next to the curb and then, call Public Services at 319-352-6247 to let them know they have a pick-up. Residents may also take their items out to the yard waste site all year round. However, during the winter months, they may need to call Public Services to find out where they should put their items. There is a list of fees for these items online at: <http://www.waverlyia.com/public-works/services/garbage/disposal-of-bulky-items/default.aspx> or you may call for fees as well. The fees cover the charges extended to the City for the disposal of the items. One way to create some efficiencies for staff might be to not pick up at curbside for a fee year-round as the City currently does. This may cause too much to pick up on an annual basis, and people have to wait a full year to get rid of it. It would be good if there could be a day or more for people to volunteer their services to help others remove items from their home. Additionally, it would be great if something like that were much more publicized. Total fees paid by the City to dispose of the items could be looked into. A fee amnesty may cause people to take advantage of the program. The system the City has in place is a good compromise with the City waiving a portion of the fees but not all so that residents have a little skin in the game and don't take advantage of the system. Public Works does an awesome job at collecting the trash. There was also discussion of a few local churches that also dispose of scrap metal each year.

E. Reports from Boards and Commissions

1. Bremer-Waverly Law Board Minutes; August 10, 2020; Received into record.

F. Staff Updates

- City Administrator James W. Bronner asked Council for updated lists for the future planning session scheduled for October 26th.
- City Clerk Carla Guyer reviewed current status of Census completion within Waverly and the surrounding areas.

G. City Council Comments

- Councilmember Glaser thanked the Historic Preservation Commission for extending an invitation for some of the Councilmembers to listen in on their meeting tonight regarding the 3rd Street SE Bridge.
- Councilmember Schneider shared a note from the Bank of Zimbabwe and talked about devaluation.
- Councilmember Kangas noted that the first day for absentee voting begins Monday, October 5.
- Guest Councilperson Conni Miller thanked Council for the opportunity to join their meetings.

H. Mayor's Comments

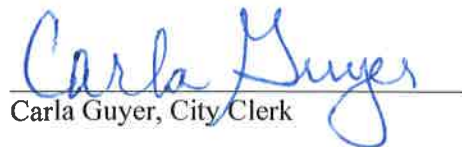
- Mayor Hoffman gave recognition and thanks to the Car Cruisers that gathered in Waverly on the 4th Thursday of each summer month.

I. Moved by Birgen, seconded by Kangas to adjourn. Motion passed and Council meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Yes: 7 No: 0 Absent: 0


Adam P. Hoffman, Mayor

ATTEST:


Carla Guyer, City Clerk