

City of Winsted
City Council Work Session
City Hall . Lewis Room
Tuesday, March 15, 2016
5:00 p.m.

Council Members Present: Mayor Steve Stotko
Council Member Patty Fitzgerald
Council Member Tom Ollig
Council Member Bonita Quast
Council Member George Schulenberg

Staff Present: Mr. Dan Tienter, City Administrator
Ms. Amanda Zeidler, Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk

I. Call to Order

Mayor Stotko called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Fire Department Strategic Operations Plan

Mr. Tienter stated that on January 28, 2016, as part of the 2016 City Council Goal Setting Retreat, the City Council directed City staff to prepare a Strategic Operations Plan for the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department. As discussed during the retreat, the plan would examine several areas of Fire Department operations, including, but not limited to:

- Capital equipment needs;
- Compensation and benefits;
- Organizational structure;
- Recruitment and retention practices; and
- Training opportunities.

Mr. Tienter stated that, given the scope of the plan and the need to identify best practices, City staff recommend the City Council engage a qualified, emergency services consultant to assist City staff with plan preparation. In order to solicit prospective consultants, City staff prepared a draft Request for Quotes (RFQ), which outlines the specific areas to be addressed in the plan, as well as some specific plan development requirements.

Mr. Tienter stated that he discussed the concept of the plan at the February 1, 2016 Fire Department General Membership Meeting. The Fire Department leadership team reviewed the draft RFQ at their March 7, 2016 Officers Meeting.

Council Member Fitzgerald asked if quotes are defined differently than bids. Mr. Tienter clarified the requirements for bids versus quotes, and stated that for this particular project, the City would look to obtain at least three (3) quotes.

Ollig stated that at the February 1, 2016 Fire Department meeting, the draft RFQ was discussed and the general membership seemed to be receptive to the plan. Mr. Tienter added that City staff have been working with the Winsted Fire Chief to revise the RFQ.

Mr. Tienter reviewed the proposed project description with the City Council, which included the following areas:

Organizational Structure:

- Assess the number of allowable Firefighters established in City ordinance;
- Assess the number of Fire Department Officers and their corresponding responsibilities;
- Review the selection process for Fire Department Officers;
- Review existing organizational structure and position responsibilities;
- Consider additional City staff needs to support Fire Department activities;

Recruitment and Retention:

- Recommend programmatic efforts and strategies to improve recruitment practices;

- Recommend programmatic efforts and strategies to improve retention practices;
- Consider succession planning for current Fire Department staff;

Compensation and benefits:

- Consider type and amount of compensation for Fire Department Officers and firefighters (e.g., stipend, pay per call), including an area fire agency comparative analysis;
- Other forms of compensation (e.g., property tax credit, access to City benefits);

Personnel Policy and Procedures:

- Assess the current General Rules and Regulations (i.e., personnel policy) of the Fire Department and provide a revised policy manual;

Training opportunities:

- Assess current training program and requirements and recommend, if necessary, changes to current training opportunities;

Capital Equipment:

- Assess current facilities and make recommendations for improvements and maintenance;
- Consider cost-effective options for replacing or refurbishing Fire Department vehicles, especially the ladder truck;
- Assess condition of current vehicles;
- Develop a compliance and replacement schedule for firefighter equipment (e.g., turn-out gear) and other equipment (e.g., hoses);

Other

- Consider modification to existing service model.

Mr. Tienter stated that the draft RFQ does require quite a bit of public involvement, including the following:

- One general membership meeting to receive comments from current and past firefighters;
- One meeting with the Fire Department Officers to receive comments;
- One confidential survey of current and past firefighters as well as other stakeholders;
- One public engagement event, such as an open house or public hearing;
- Review of the Plan at a City Council Work Session; and
- Presentation of the Plan during a City Council Regular Meeting.

Mr. Tienter stated that if the City Council is comfortable with the RFQ, the City will proceed with the following schedule:

- Solicitation of quotes, March 8, 2016 . March 28, 2016;
- Quotes due, March 28, 2016 by 4:00 p.m.;
- Quote review, March 29, 2016 . April 1, 2016;
- Interview selected consultants, April 4, 2016 . April 8, 2016;
- Recommendation to City Council for authorization, April 19, 2016.

Council Member Fitzgerald asked Mr. Tienter how many quotes he anticipates. Mr. Tienter stated that he will be reaching out personally to consultants to request a response and he is hoping to receive four (4) quotes.

Council Member Quast asked Mr. Tienter which cities he consulted with to compose the RFQ.

Mr. Tienter presented a list of several different cities of varying populations and amenities.

Council Member Ollig stated that the City of Winsted can learn from some of the larger communities, because they may have implemented things that Winsted should have implemented, or have not thought of. Mr. Tienter stated that at this point, the goal is to answer or solve some of the issues that have been brought forward by the General Membership, Fire Department Officers, City Council, etcetera.

Mr. Tienter stated at present, City staff estimate these consulting services to cost approximately \$5,000 to \$7,000, depending on the final RFQ and consultant recommendations. The 2016 budget does not include funds for this activity. He stated that City staff recommend the costs associated with the plan be supported by a 50/50 cost share between the Fire Department Capital Improvement Fund and the General Fund. Mr. Tienter added that cost participation may change once quotes are received. City Staff will discuss any changes with the Fire Department Officers.

Mr. Schulenberg stated that he has been working with staff at Holy Trinity High School to gather a group of juniors and seniors to see if there is any interest in joining the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department. Council Member Schulenberg stated that the City may be able to give the students a chance to shadow and learn from the current firefighters.

III. Commercial Operator Fee – Skydive the Lakes

Mr. Tienter stated that on May 19, 2015, the City Council approved an Operations Agreement between the City of Winsted and Skydive the Lakes, LLC, a commercial, fixed base operator providing skydiving services at the Winsted Municipal Airport. The agreement, which outlines specific conditions and terms for the use of the Airport by Skydive the Lakes, expired on December 31, 2015. On December 28, 2015, City staff met with a representative from Skydive the Lakes, LLC to discuss the possible renewal of the agreement and any proposed modifications to the previously approved terms and conditions. During the discussion, Skydive the Lakes, LLC made the following requests:

- Reauthorization through December 31, 2016;
- Additional signage for Skydive the Lakes;
- Additional signage for parking and gate enforcement;
- Deactivation of the beacon twice per year for skydiving activities after sunset, which are also known as night jumps;+
- Thirty additional minutes to conduct said night jumps; and
- Review of the Commercial Operator Fee.

Mr. Tienter stated that Skydive the Lakes also cited a fifty percent (50%) reduction in the number of jumps compared to the previous year as the primary reason for a greater examination of the Commercial Operator Fee. Per the recently expired agreement, Skydive the Lakes provides the City with two agreed upon fees: 1) the Commercial Operator Fee, established through the a methodology approved by the Council (Resolution No. 13. 02) to recoup the additional costs for servicing a commercial enterprise; and 2) an exclusive land lease, which provides approximately 7.76 acres of Airport property for drop or landing zone purposes. The fees are \$8,846.75 and \$1,552.00, respectively, for a total of \$10,398.75.

Mr. Tienter stated that based on the Skydive the Lakes request, City staff reviewed the estimated City costs and determined that the overall decrease in City staff time required to service Skydive the Lakes warranted a reduction in the Commercial Operator Fee. Additionally, the City Airport Engineer and Planner conducted a comparative analysis of other municipal airports located in Minnesota and Iowa, of Commercial Operator Fees and the methodology used to calculate them. According to their analysis, no municipal airport in Minnesota or Iowa charges a Commercial Operator Fee, but some did charge a commercial hangar land lease fee.

Mr. Tienter stated that any fees have to be applied fairly and reasonably for any commercial operators. He added that the analysis also provided that some municipal and county airports outside of the Minnesota. Iowa area in fact charge a Commercial Operator Fee in addition to a drop or landing zone fee and a commercial hangar land lease fee. However, the two methodologies to calculate these fees are unlike the City methodology, which estimated City staff costs on a per hour basis. Generally, these airports charge either a flat, monthly fee, between \$100 and \$300 per month, or a fee established as a percentage of gross sale revenue, between 0.5 and 3.0 percent. While the flat fee model would reduce the current Commercial Operator Fee, the City cannot estimate the effect of the percentage model without additional information from Skydive. Despite this analysis, it is important to note that the City may choose to recoup Airport costs in any manner the Council deems fit.

The City Council discussed the methodologies for calculating the fees, as well as consideration of a reduction in the fees that are currently charged. The City Council also discussed the possibility of a budget shortfall for the 2016 budget.

Council Member Ollig made a suggestion to inspect the Airport every so often to make sure that the owner is abiding by the contract. Mr. Tienter stated that the Public Works Department is very active at the Airport during the warmer seasons.

The City Council also discussed the other items that have been requested by Skydive the Lakes, including disabling the beacon and night jumps.

Mr. Tienter stated that there will be a follow-up meeting with a representative from Skydive the Lakes on Wednesday, March 16, 2016. He stated that if an agreement can be reached during the follow-up meeting, a revised agreement will be drafted and brought before the City Council at the first City Council Meeting in April, 2016.

IV. Other

a) Part-Time Police Officer

Mr. Tienter stated that the City Council is likely to see the appointment of the new part-time Police Officer for the Winsted Police Department and a swearing-in ceremony at the City Council Meeting on April 5, 2016.

b) Fire Department Fire Truck

Mr. Tienter stated that the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department is going to move forward, working with a prospective vendor to create the design and specifications for the purchase of a new fire truck to replace Engine Number Two (2). Mr. Tienter stated that the 2016 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) included a substantial amount of money for a fire truck purchase. The Fire Department is working on specifications that will eventually go out for bids. He added that once the specifications are complete, City staff will explore costs, including the possibility of cooperative purchasing agreements, to purchase the truck through some type of joint venture to save the City some money.

c) City Hall Security

Mr. Tienter stated that the most recent League of Minnesota Cities publication discusses security at City Halls and council meetings, as well as things that have been happening at other locations. Mr. Tienter stated that he has asked the Police Chief to start preparing information for the City Council to discuss in regards to security. He added that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) did include funding for security upgrades over the next few years, so City staff will obtain quotes and bring them back for the City Council to review.

d) Community Solar Gardens

Mr. Tienter stated that Planning Commission approved a recommendation for a community solar garden, which will be an amendment to the zoning ordinance and will be presented to the City Council at the April 5, 2016 City Council Meeting.

e) Part-time Administrative Assistant

Mr. Tienter stated that City staff will begin the hiring process for the new part-time Administrative Assistant during the week of March 21, 2016. He added that this position was authorized with the 2016 budget. The City has received fourteen (14) applications. Mr. Tienter stated that the City Clerk-Treasurer will be scoring the applications and candidates will be notified if they have advanced in the hiring process and will receive an interview.

V. Adjournment

Council Member Schulenberg motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Fitzgerald seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Steve Stotko

Steve Stotko
Mayor
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Amanda Zeidler

Amanda Zeidler, MCMC
Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk
City of Winsted