

City of Winsted
Special City Council Work Session
Vollmer Room
Thursday, July 13, 2017
12:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Steve Stotko
Council Member George Schulenberg
Council Member Bonita Quast
Council Member Patty Fitzgerald
Council Member Tom Ollig – 12:42 p.m.

Staff Present: Mr. Daniel Tienter, City Administrator
Ms. Raquel Kirchoff, City Clerk-Treasurer

Also Present: Mr. Ron Roetzel, Bolton and Menk, Incorporated
Ms. Melissa Underwood, Bolton and Menk, Incorporated

I. Call to Order

Mayor Stotko called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m.

II. Winsted Municipal Airport - Land Acquisition Process

Mr. Daniel Tienter, City Administrator, stated that at a previous City Council Work Session, the City Council discussed a Land Acquisition Services Contract related to work toward two properties that the City would need to obtain to complete a paved runway at the Winsted Municipal Airport. These two properties are the Winsted Farmer's Co-op property and the Otto property, and the City Council directed working on these so-called unwilling sellers first.

Mr. Tienter stated that the City Council discussed the grant reimbursement requirements during this Work Session and had some thoughts about possible cost saving measures occurring early in the process to determine if the acquisition was worthwhile.

Mr. Tienter stated that Mr. Ron Roetzel, and Ms. Melissa Underwood, Bolton and Menk, Incorporated are present today to provide the City Council with more information.

Ms. Underwood stated that the contract provided for the City Council's review includes the Federal Aviation Association's (FAA) process that needs to be followed for reimbursement of land acquisition projects at the airport. Ms. Underwood stated that the City will use a sub-consultant, Mr. Jason Alt, ProSource Technologies, LLC because he understands the process and regulations related to airport land acquisitions. Ms. Underwood stated that the process would start with title services to ensure that all parties own what they say they own. This would follow with ProSource Technologies, LLC completing the appraisal and meeting with the land owners to determine concerns/suggestions that they have regarding their property and working from that point forward.

Ms. Underwood stated that the goal would be to only complete the services necessary each month to work toward the goal of determining if the property owners are willing sellers or not, and stop at any point that the City Council directs to stop. Ms. Underwood stated that money will not be spent

outside of what is necessary for those tasks. Monthly updates may be provided to the City Council at their request.

Council Member Fitzgerald asked if an answer was ever determined if the City could have informal discussion with the landowners regarding their interest in selling their land. Mr. Tienter stated yes, it is possible to have informal discussion at the inception of any land acquisition to determine the property owners thoughts and any concerns they may have.

Mr. Roetzel stated that part of the overall process Ms. Underwood has referenced is that the City is required to meet with each property owner initially. At that meeting, the Federal process is explained along with what their rights are, et cetera. During this meeting, it becomes somewhat known where the property owner is at in the process and what their needs are, what the issues are, et cetera.

Council Member Henrich asked if the cost of this meeting was \$92,000. Mr. Roetzel stated no; that this meeting is one of the meetings included in the work for \$92,000. The initial meeting with the property owner occurs before any of the appraisals are completed; the appraisals incur the majority of the costs.

Council Member Henrich asked how much it would cost the City if the two property owners decide not to sell and the City moves forward with the turf runway option.

Ms. Underwood estimated that the first step of title search and an initial meeting with the two property owners would cost \$5,000.

Council Member Fitzgerald stated that one of the property owners has stated they have no interest in selling because they do not want airplanes closer to their house because of noise. She continued by stating that the City should not spend \$92,000 if this property owner's position will not change.

Mayor Stotko stated that the City Council has stated that it will not implement Eminent Domain.

Council Member Fitzgerald stated that ProSource Technologies, LLC is experienced in these matters and could have a more educated initial meeting discussion with the property owner than a Council Member and City staff could.

Mr. Roetzel stated that ProSource Technologies, LLC has a long history of addressing the very same issues, and with much larger airports than Winsted, including the Minneapolis, St. Paul Airport. They are very familiar with how to address noise issues, how to approach the property owner and how to ensure that their concerns are heard and addressed. Then ProSource Technologies, LLC will have a gauge on whether or not the property owner will be willing to sell based on past experience.

Council Member Ollig explained why the City Council was not interested in proceeding with eminent domain, stating that in the distant past the City tried to move forward with eminent domain with a landowner that did not want to sell their property. This instance went to court and the City lost the case. After that instance, this property owner did not want to have anything to do with the City and it affected the City at times when it wanted to expand.

Council Member Ollig stated that eminent domain creates hard feelings that go on through generations; and in his opinion, the City Council does not want to start that process again. The City Council Members discussed and agreed to move forward with ProSource Technologies, LLC completing title work and having an initial discussion with the Winsted Farmer's Co-op property and the Otto property for an amount not to exceed \$5,000.

Mr. Tienter stated that at the July 18, 2017 City Council meeting, City staff would seek authorization for the City Council to provide up to \$5,000 budget authority for ProSource Technologies, LLC to examine the two properties and have an initial discussion with the property owners. Once those discussions were complete, Bolton and Menk, Incorporated would return to the City Council to provide an update. Depending on the nature of the initial discussions, the City Council would then either consider moving forward with the next steps of the land acquisition process, or discuss changing the decision from a paved surface runway to a turf surface runway.

III. No Other

IV. Adjourn

Council Member Ollig motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Henrich seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

Steve Stotko

Steve Stotko
Mayor
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Raquel Kirchoff

Raquel Kirchoff, CMC
City Clerk-Treasurer
City of Winsted