

City of Winsted
City Council Meeting
Council Chambers
June 16, 2009
6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Steve Stotko
Council Member Bonnie Quast
Council Member Dave Mochinski
Council Member Tom Wiemiller

Absent: Council Member Tom Ollig

Staff Present: Brent Mareck, City Administrator
Deb Boelter, City Clerk-Treasurer
Fran Eggert, City Attorney
Mike Henrich, Chief of Police
Mike Mensen, Police Officer

1) Mayor Stotko called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

a) The Pledge of Allegiance was taken.

2) Consent Agenda

Mochinski asked to remove item f) Closing of "Uncollectible" Accounts – Utility Billing, authorizing the closing of "uncollectible" accounts in the utility billing system from the Consent Agenda. Mochinski stated that he would like the uncollected accounts to be forwarded to a Collection Agency. Mareck stated the uncollected accounts will be forwarded to a Collection Agency.

Mochinski motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda with item f) Closing of "Uncollectible" Accounts – Utility Billing removed from the agenda. Quast seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

a) Minutes - City Council – Work Session – June 2, 2009

Accepted the minutes of the City Council Work Session of June 2, 2009.

b) Minutes – Regular City Council Meeting – June 2, 2009

Accepted the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of June 2, 2009.

c) Special Closed Meeting – July 7, 2009 (Vollmer Room)

Approved a Special Closed meeting on July 7, 2009 immediately following the Regular City Council meeting to conduct the City Administrator's annual performance review.

d) Resignation Park Commission – Monica Hertzog

Accepted the resignation of Monica Hertzog from the City of Winsted's Park Commission.

e) Appointment Park Commission – Cheryl Sutton

Appointed Cheryl Sutton to the City of Winsted's Park Commission.

f) Closing of "Uncollectible" Accounts – Utility Billing – REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

Authorized the closing of "uncollectible" accounts in the utility billing system.

g) May, 2009 Financial Report

Approved the May, 2009 Financial Report as presented.

h) May, 2009 Building Permit Report

Approved the May, 2009 Building Permit Report as presented.

i) Claims

Approved the Claims List for June 16, 2009 in the amount of \$77,569.94, check numbers 788E-793E, 7851-7865, 500319E and 15443-15490.

Certificate of Commendation – Dave “Bean” Gailey – Winsted Volunteer Fire Department

Mayor Stotko presented Dave Gailey with a Certificate of Commendation for his years of service as a volunteer on the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department.

3) No Public Hearings.

4) No Old Business.

5) New Business

a) Master Plan – Winsted Airport – Bolton & Menk, Incorporated

Mareck stated that in 2008, the City of Winsted began a Master Planning process for the future development of the Winsted Municipal Airport. The process included conducting a survey among the Winsted Municipal Airport users and City of Winsted citizens, meetings with Minnesota Department of Transportation/Office of Aeronautics (MN DOT/OA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and an Open House with hangar owners.

Mareck also stated that at the December 3, 2008 Regular City Council meeting, the City Council reviewed options for the future use of the airport, which included the following:

1. Full Build Out: Complete a twenty (20) year full build out of the airport, including an additional cross-wind runway, land acquisition, road closure and obstruction removal.
2. FAA Paving: Slight relocation of the runway to the north, to allow for a paved surface, along with obstruction removal, land acquisition and one (1) business relocation.
3. Paving: Pave the existing turf runway in phases over a long period (approximately ten (10) plus years) using only federal funding.
4. Turf Strip: Leave the turf strip “as is.”
5. Sell the airport.
6. Close the airport.

At their December 3, 2008 Regular City Council meeting, the City Council voted for Option Two (2), which included a slight relocation of the existing runway to the north, along with obstruction removal, land acquisition and business relocation of the Winsted Farmers Cooperative Creamery Association.

All projects constructed via the Master Plan have a current funding level of ninety-five percent (95%) by the FAA. The City has created an annual “improvement fee” to be collected from hangar owners, which will provide the City’s five percent (5%) match on future projects.

The Airport Fund currently has a deficit of \$89,583, which will have to be eliminated through a budget transfer at the July 7, 2009 Regular City Council meeting.

Mareck stated that the Winsted Municipal Airport Commission has reviewed the proposed Master Plan and is recommending that the City Council approve as presented.

Mareck introduced Ron Roetzel and Marcus Watson, Bolton and Menk, Incorporated. Ron Roetzel addressed the City Council giving a brief overview of the December 3, 2008 Regular City Council meeting where he and Watson presented the City Council with the aforementioned options to consider for the future use of the Winsted Municipal Airport.

Watson presented the Winsted Airport Master Plan and the following:

- Airport Development Options
- Airport Development Rankings
- Preferred Alternative
- Preferred Alternative – Option Two (2)
- FAA Recommended Ultimate Plan
- 3,900 Feet Ultimate Airport Layout
- Near-Term 3,200 Feet Impacts
- Possible Implementation Scenario – 3,200 Feet
- Project Next Steps for Master Plan

Mayor Stotko asked if the proposed runway plan means that the road and utilities west of the airport would have to be relocated. Roetzel stated yes.

Quast asked who would pay for the relocation of the road and utilities. Roetzel stated that it is an eligible expense under the FAA grant funding.

Wiemiller asked if the Winsted Farmers Cooperative Creamery Association would have to be relocated. Roetzel stated yes and that the relocation is also an eligible expense under the FAA grant funding.

Mayor Stotko asked if the proposed Master Plan is a twenty (20) year Plan for the Winsted Municipal Airport. Roetzel stated yes.

Mochinski stated that having the Master Plan will continue to designate the Winsted Municipal Airport as a National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) airport. Roetzel stated that the Master Plan indicates to the FAA that the City of Winsted has a viable airport; therefore, the City will continue to receive NPIAS entitlement grant funding.

Quast motioned to adopt the “Master Plan” for the Winsted Municipal Airport. Mochinski seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

b) Blight – 140 Sherman Avenue East

Mareck stated that for the last several months, the City has been trying to rectify blighting conditions at 140 Sherman Avenue East. The process was complicated due to some legal and financial proceedings that the property was involved in. The City is now free to enforce the Blight Ordinance, which allows for the City Council to certify the conditions and order their abatement (removal) from the property.

Due to the significant amount of blight and the length of time the blighting conditions have existed on the property, the City Council is being asked to certify the blight and order its abatement if the property owner does not meet the deadline of June 22, 2009. If the property is in compliance by June 22, 2009, the city shall take no further action; however, if the items are not removed, the City can begin the abatement process on June 23, 2009, rather than waiting until after the July 7, 2009 Regular City Council meeting. The abatement of the blighting conditions appears to be the most efficient way to deal with this issue, considering that the property is now lender-owned.

Mareck stated that the estimated cost for removal and disposal is \$4,230.

Mareck presented pictures of the blight conditions at 140 Sherman Avenue East.

Mareck presented Resolution R-09-07 certifying blighting conditions at 140 Sherman Avenue East and ordering their abatement by means of contracted removal by the City of Winsted.

Quast motioned to adopt Resolution R-09-07 certifying blighting conditions at 140 Sherman Avenue East and ordering their abatement by means of contracted removal by the City of Winsted. Wiemiller seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

c) Luce Line Trail Signage Plan

Mareck stated that during the last several years, the City has explored a variety of ways to connect the “severed” portion of the Luce Line Trail through Winsted. Currently, a winter trail easement exists to bring snowmobiles along the trail just south of the SJ&F, 151 Baker Avenue West; however, no similar route exists for bikers, walkers and other similar trail users. At one point, the City considered making Kingsley Street a one-way to facilitate a connection of the Luce Line Trail through downtown Winsted, but after a Community meeting this idea was abandoned, and the Community was in favor of a striping and signage plan.

Mareck stated that due to the current economic conditions, the plan lost some momentum; however, a signage plan is being proposed as a low cost alternative to doing a more comprehensive on and off street trail and striping plan. The signage seeks to develop the theme as “Gateway West” to the Luce Line Trail, as the identifiable theme for users to remember and recommend Winsted as a key location along the trail. The proposal features a large kiosk sign in Southview Park and a medium sized kiosk in Mill Reserve Park, along with several directional signs in the City directing users from the east side to the west side of the trail in Winsted.

Mareck stated that the estimated cost of the signage project is \$4,431. The proposal includes a sponsorship component, which with full participation, will pay for the project in four (4) years. Mareck has already received three (3) sign sponsorships.

Mareck presented pictures of each sign type and design.

Mareck stated that the Park Commission reviewed the proposal at their last meeting and recommended that the City Council move forward with the design of the sign. In addition, the Park Commission wanted the signage to have a type of accommodation for snowmobile traffic. Mareck stated that when considering snowmobile traffic along the route, the City Council should take into account that the City’s current ordinances prohibit snowmobile operation in this manner through the City.

Wiemiller stated his concerns that the proposed location of the signs only directs trail users through downtown Winsted and does not bring them to where the Luce Line Trail starts up again southwest of Winsted. Mareck stated that the last sign will be located in the Westgate Housing Development; however, an additional sign could be added further down McLeod County Road 1 near the trail connection and that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) may want to sponsor the last sign.

Quast stated that she likes the signage designs and the proposed sign locations, but would also like to see another sign added further down McLeod County Road 1 to assist trail users in finding the Luce Line Trail connection.

Mayor Stotko recommended that the back of the signs provide directions going east.

Mochinski stated that he does not believe that there should be a separate post for informational brochures. Mochinski expressed his concerns about keeping the brochures updated and the box filled with brochures. Mareck stated that he had already discussed it with the Herald Journal and the brochure box can be added to one of the other sign locations. Mareck stated that the City would be responsible for keeping the brochures updated and the brochure box filled.

The City Council discussed and agreed that staff should proceed with the Luce Line Trail signage project.

d) Downtown Design Guidelines

Mareck stated that in 2006, the City's Downtown Renewal Commission developed a set of "Downtown Design Guidelines." The guidelines address signs, awnings, building materials, color, windows and other items associated with the redevelopment of building facades in the downtown. The guidelines were intended to be incorporated with a potential grant award to downtown businesses and the development of the Lakefront Promenade; however, with the grant application going unfunded in 2006, the guidelines were never formally presented to the City Council.

Papa Tom's Bar & Grill did incorporate some of the plan's components into the façade restoration of the building.

Mareck stated that adopting the proposed Downtown Design Guidelines would assist property owners in developing consistent façade treatments in preparing building applications for upcoming grant funds. At this point, the guidelines would not be enforced through an ordinance, but would be linked to obtaining grant funds for a development project.

Mareck presented the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Mayor Stotko stated that the signs and awnings, as recommended in the Downtown Design Guidelines, would really be a positive addition to any building and should not be cost prohibitive for a business owner to do. Mayor Stotko also stated that he thinks the Downtown Design Guidelines are a good tool for downtown business owners to use and should be followed.

Quast stated that she would like to see the downtown building owners use the Downtown Design Guidelines to make improvements to both the front and back of their buildings, especially the back of the buildings in the Lakefront Promenade area.

Mochinski asked what the status of the Small Cities Development Program Grant funding is and if the property owners who had shown an interest in using the funding have been contacted. Mareck stated that business owners interested in receiving funding to make improvements to their buildings have been contacted.

Mareck stated that he will contact Shannon Sweeney, David Drown and Associates, to work together to prepare an informational packet for each business owner detailing the process for obtaining the grant funding, the steps for making improvements to their buildings and the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Wiemiller motioned to adopt the "Downtown Design Guidelines" for the City of Winsted. Quast seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

6) Department Report

a) City Clerk

Deb Boelter, City Clerk, reported on the following:

- Shortly after my last report on March 3, 2009, Kirchoff and I attended the Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers Association (MCFOA) Annual Conference. We attended some very informative and educational work sessions. The networking is also an important benefit of the Conference.
- Blight Inspections.
- 2008 Audit is complete and will be presented to the City Council at the July 7, 2009 Regular City Council meeting.
- Kirchoff received two (2) scholarships to attend the first (1st) year of the Minnesota Certified Municipal Clerk's (MCMC) Institute the second week in July, 2009. One scholarship is from the MCFOA in the amount of \$350 and the other is from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) in the amount of \$300. The total cost for the program will be approximately \$900.

- Boelter, Kirchoff and Zeidler attended Banyon Data Systems software training on May 15, 2009. We all obtained new information on the programs the City of Winsted has. As a result, we were able to make adjustments to the existing programs that the City has and are using additional features of each program.
- Liquor Licensing was completed in May and June, 2009. This year a checklist was distributed to each licensee to verify that they qualified for the type of license they were applying for. It helped to make the application process go smoothly for them and for the City.
- Zeidler accompanied the Public Works Department when they did the remote meter reading for the June, 2009 utility billing cycle. Zeidler did this to understand this aspect of the software program.
- In an effort to save money, the City is electronically transferring all utility bills to the Herald Journal for printing and distribution. In the near future, the program is going to be enhanced to allow residents to print a copy of their bill from their utility account. Any bills that have been printed will not be mailed resulting in a savings to the City in printing and postage costs.

7) No Open Forum.

8) Announcements

a) State of Minnesota - Local Government Aid Unallotment

Mareck presented Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty's proposed 2009 and 2010 Local Government Aid (LGA) unallotment for the City of Winsted.

9) Adjournment

Quast motioned to adjourn. Mochinski seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah R. Boelter
City Clerk-Treasurer