

INVEST IN WILLMAR BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

Approved: 11-18-20

The Invest in Willmar Board met at 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, October 14, 2020 via GoTo teleconference.

Members present were: Matt Dawson, Mary Sawatzky, Tony Amon, Denis Anderson, Shawn Mueske, Audrey Nelsen, Mayor Marv Calvin, and City Administrator Brian Gramentz.

Also present were: Council Member Julie Asmus, Recreation Director Rob Baumgarn, Administrative Assistant Janell Sommers and Shelby Lindrud, Journalist.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair Dawson. Upon review of the agenda, a motion was made by Mary Sawatzky, seconded by Denis Anderson and passed to approve the agenda as presented.

A motion was made by Denis Anderson, seconded by Tony Amon to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2020 meeting. Mary Sawatzky requested a change to the date of the Swansson Field Improvements bid opening to September 16th. With the offered changes the minutes were approved.

City Administrator Gramentz updated the board on the revenues from the Local Option Sales Tax. For the month of August, 2020 the revenues are over \$240,000 and \$186,000-\$190,000 estimated for September. These figures are two-thirds of what was expected so it appears COVID has not had as dramatic an effect on sales resulting in local option sales tax funds remitted to the City. It appears the City is consistently on track with approximately \$186,000 as the rolling average.

Chair Dawson inquired as to staff's involvement with the land transfer with Willmar School District and any updates for the board. Staff reported they have been meeting with School Superintendent Holm and discussing the amount of land needed for the recreation fields. The process is projected to go forward smoothly.

Council Member Julie Asmus updated the board on the recent proposal brought forward to the City by Terwisscha Construction and the Willmar Ten Investors group for the JC Penney building in Uptown Willmar. Ms. Asmus summarized the presentation that was given to the joint City Hall Task Force/Community Center Subcommittee. The Community Center would be in the south section entered on the east side with a Main Street façade to look like a city street and the City Hall with a separate entrance to the north encompassing that side. The square footage is more than enough allowing space for much needed storage. Definitely enough space and easier and safer access rather than that on North Highway 71. It would allow for an awning for drop off/pickup and be all on one level. Access for walking in the mall and close proximity to the Middle School for future programming, shopping is closer for community center members, and no one would have to be displaced during construction.

Cons are the emotional attachment to the present location, the Community Garden would not be as convenient and they would give up the lake view. They did vote in favor of the JC Penney location following the presentation. Willmar Ten Investors has proposed purchasing the building,

Terwisscha doing the construction and the City would rent to own and not be purchasing for a few years. The presentation will go before the City Council on October 19th noting support for the project of the joint City Hall Task Force/Community Center Subcommittee.

Tony Amon gave a brief update on the Recreation Fields project. The subcommittee has plans to meet with the architect this week following information from the Event Center subcommittee that they are focusing more on the actual structure rather than on an attachment to the bubble. He noted the bubble can be freestanding as costs are an issue for all the projects.

Rob Baumgarn gave the update for the Event Center stating they plan to focus on placement of the Event Center on the south side of the Civic Center and they don't feel the connection of the Civic Center to the bubble is their responsibility. They plan to focus solely on the Event Center rather than expanding locker rooms or recreation offices which they feel is more of a city project. The architect will be updating drawings with a meeting to follow.

Chair Dawson read an update from Rachel Skretvedt for the Robbins Island project. They are currently getting prices on enhanced shelters which include adding Guri improvements, planting additional trees, flowers and bushes, walkways, trail and decorative lights. Also looking at adding a skating loop as identified in the Master Plan.

Mary Sawatzky gave the update for Swansson Field Improvements. Marcus Construction has explained the hold up in the bids. To recap the bids were opened September 16th and two days later other bids were opened for the turf and stadium. No bids were received for the masonry work, only one bid for fencing and incomplete bids for the lumber portions of the project giving a three week window as lumber prices are increasing due to COVID. Once the low bids were received, a couple of them were out of line with other bids which caused the construction manager to research the high prices. Some things discovered were bids for labor and not for materials as the prices were varying causing inaccurate bidding and other factors. Presently the recommendation of the construction manager is to prioritize the various elements of the project. More details for moving forward are being discussed and with the timing it does not look like the project will begin this year. The subcommittee will continue to meet to determine the details of how to move forward with the project.

Next meeting date was announced as November 11 at 4:00 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Sommers
Administrative Assistant