



City of Northfield

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
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Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

Tuesday, September 13, 2022

6:00 PM

Police Department

Work Session

6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA

Present: 7 - Council Member Sean Allen, Council Member Clarice Grabau, Council Member Brad Ness, Council Member Jessica Peterson White, Mayor Rhonda Pownell, Council Member Jami Reister, and Council Member George Zuccolotto

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pownell called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. [22-592](#) 2023-2024 Budget Worksession.

City Administrator Ben Martig introduced the item. Martig explained the format for the meeting and stated the goal for the meeting, which was to come to a consensus for the City's preliminary levy.

Martig explained the 2023 budget specifics, including what has already been determined and the three options to consider for remaining requests. The three levy options proposed by staff were: (A) 15.3% for baseline costs with the addition of Police overtime; (B) 16.5% with the addition of a Police succession plan; (C) 18.5% with the park funding, facility funding, and/or library funding, and (D) other.

Martig discussed tax base changes for 2023 and discussed how the increase in home values will mitigate some of the impact from the tax levy. He then discussed the specifics of the 2023 levy options.

Finance Director Brenda Angelstad detailed information on preliminary levies from comparative/peer cities. Martig showed the impact on Local Government Aid (LGA) funds on these comparative numbers. He then detailed some staffing requests from Police and Public Works. Library Director Natalie Draper detailed the staffing requests for the Library, as well as the Library Oasis proposed for the Northfield Community Resource Center (NCRC). Martig then discussed the Park and Facilities Fund needs.

Martig presented on other aspects of the budget, including employment trends, fund balances, aspects of the 2023 that are already locked in, and related updates on strategic plan initiatives.

Martig also explained how, starting in 2022, the annual voluntary donations from Carleton College and St. Olaf College will not be included in the expected revenue for the City. The donations are annual and not tied to any contractual obligations, therefore staff determined it was best to not include it with City revenue. He suggested that the City

could designate that money to specific areas, as need is determined.

Council Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of staff. They asked for clarification on staffing requests and tax impacts on residents. Martig, Angelstad, Draper, City Engineer/Public Works Director Dave Bennett, and Police Chief Mark Elliott answered questions.

Council members divided into small groups for question and answer sessions with staff focusing on: (1) the library staffing requests with Draper; (2) parks and facilities funding with Bennett; and (3) tax impact/other general questions with Martig and Angelstad. Elliott, Deputy Police Chief P.T. Haider, and Community Development Director Jake Reilly were also available to answer Council questions.

Council took a break at 8:11 p.m. During the break, Council members were asked to offer their input on specific questions posed by staff related to the preliminary levy, library staffing, park funding, and facilities funding. The meeting resumed at 8:23 p.m.

Mayor Pownell briefly summarized the input obtained from Council members. Council had consensus on option C (18.5%) and on funding for the Library staffing request. They discussed alternative funding sources for parks and facilities, including utilizing the annual voluntary donation from Carleton and St. Olaf. Martig and Bennett, answered questions and provided input.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Council Member Grabau, seconded by Council Member Reister, to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Allen, C. Grabau, C. Ness, C. Peterson White, Mayor Pownell, C. Reister, and C. Zuccolotto