Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	20-033 **Version:** 1	**Name:**	
Type:	Information/Discussion Item	**Status:**	Agenda Ready
File created:	1/10/2020	**In control:**	City Council
On agenda:	1/14/2020	**Final action:**	
Title:	Update of Resolution for Request for Local Sales Tax Authorization from the State of Minnesota.		
Sponsors:			
Indexes:			
Code sections:			
Attachments:	1. 1 - Parks_and_Rec_Survey Northfield, 2. 2 - Hyperlink to Fieldstone Research		

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result

City Council Meeting Date: January 14, 2020

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Ben Martig, City Administrator

Update of Resolution for Request for Local Sales Tax Authorization from the State of Minnesota.

Action Requested:
None.

Summary Report:
Staff is continuing to prepare background information to consider options related to a local options sales tax for parks and recreation purposes. The results of the parks and recreation survey is being developed. Additionally, staff is preparing more information related to the local sales tax option. A supplemental memo will be coming to further provide information and preparation for discussion at the meeting.

Background

The City Council had expressed interest to further pursue this option during the 2020 budget development process as a way to increase parks and recreation capital improvements. As we previously discussed, the new State law requires a detailed Council resolution to be approved by the end of January should we want to pursue the possibility of a special referendum question in November. Staff provided a short update on the topic at the January 7th meeting including information on the survey that has been mailed to residents. We have a longer discussion period programmed for our January 14th work session and leaving open an opportunity for Council to act at the end of January with the regular meeting on January 21st.

Over the past few weeks, staff has been diligently working with Fieldstone Research

<https://fieldstonemarketresearch.com/> on the development and deployment of a resident survey (see final version attached) around their perceptions and opinions related to parks and recreation in Northfield. The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback as a resource for staff and the City Council to evaluate in the context of upcoming policy considerations for the Council related to the possibility of requesting Legislative authority to hold a referendum question to Northfield voters this November related to implementation of a local option sales tax.

Fieldstone Research is the division of Neuger Communications Group that focuses on assessment and measurement and uses a variety of analytical tools. It is designed to provide objective, third-party analysis of market trends, employee and customer perceptions, investment analysis, web analytics and campaign evaluations. Staff worked on topic areas and content with Fieldstone Research for them to use in developing questions.

Due to limited time to have full Council review (no meetings scheduled in December), staff reached out to Mayor Pownell for assignment of an ad hoc group of three Councilors (any more would constitute a quorum) to give some input on the content of the questions as well as clarifying items related to the structure of the survey. Mayor Pownell, Councilor Zweifel and Councilor Peterson White were the ones who provided some perspectives, thoughts and ideas that Fieldstone used in the final survey development. We relied on the professional expertise of Fieldstone Research for the technical items such as how questions were posed and the response options.

Staff has been promoting the survey to the public and will continue to do so. We are optimistic that we will get a response that will generate a statistically significant response from the community. However, we would really like to get as high of a turnout as possible. So, we encourage you to share with others the survey and ask that they complete it as we will be using it as one tool in our upcoming policy considerations.

The surveys are requested to be completed by **January 10th** and Fieldstone will begin tabulation of results and analysis of questions thereafter to be available **for the January 14th Work Session**.

Staff is developing a presentation update for the City Council that will be distributed as a supplemental memo.

Alternative Options:
Not applicable

Financial Impacts:
Not applicable

Tentative Timelines:
January 21st - Council Resolution Consideration

* Timelines thereafter in development to be provided in a presentation.