

OTTUMWA CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

SPECIAL WORK SESSION NO. 34
Room 8B – Depot Conference Room

October 22, 2024
5:30 O’Clock P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M.

Present were Council Member Reid, Galloway, Hoffman, McAntire, Caviness and Mayor Johnson. City Staff in attendance: City Admin. Rath, Dir. of Airport Op. Wheaton, Fin. Dir. O’Donnell, PIO Lawrence, Parks & Rec Dir. Rathje, Police Chief Farrington, HR Dir. Codjoe, Comm. Dev. Dir. Simonson, WPCF Supt. Lloyd, Bldg. Inspec. Stevens.

Galloway moved, seconded by McAntire to approve agenda as presented. All ayes.

Caviness requested to further discuss Golf Cart Registration, fees and the process. \$60 price is too high; want staff from Police Dept. to perform inspection on golf carts before they can get permit. Other council members feel price is appropriate and to leave responsibility of completing application by the owner. No changes to Ord. or Res. at this time. Request to see more information on e-bikes for future discussion.

Ottumwa Airport Feasibility Study for Commercial flights. Options for commercial flights out of airport. Wheaton reported the Airport did not qualify for essential commercial air services back in 2010/2011; however, a new program – Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) - may be a starting point. Although commercial service has many advantages, the transition also may require addtl. airport or community revenues, significantly impacting an airport’s operating budget and capital development funding program. The FAA classifies airports without scheduled airline service as GA airports while an airport with 10,000 enplanements or more a primary commercial service (CS) airport. GA airports transitioning to CS face significant operational costs and security costs; addtl. Security personnel under TSA guidelines; new or upgraded aircraft rescue and firefighting equip., local law enforcement personnel time and training costs. The transition from GA to CS is possible with strong community support. Citizen Tom Lazio added what you want and what you can afford are sometimes two different things; Legacy did a study back in 2016 and the gap funding was tremendous; you don’t want to jeopardize losing any grant funds for Airport Operations. Council requests Wheaton to research SCASDP.

Request to install new pump with lights in the lagoon at Greater Ottumwa Park; next to campground area. Rathje reported est. cost could be around \$10,000. This was done about 10 yrs. ago, but results were not positive. The pump fountain will be pulled out of the lagoon end of Oct. and reinstalled in April. Council requests Rathje to gather more information on this item.

Adding a Grants Administrator to City Staff. We currently utilize Area 15 RPC to assist with sourcing and writing grants for various projects. Rath reported, we currently pay Area 15 RPC \$6,291 to administer IDOT funding and \$13,530.37 as part of the 28E Agt. If dissolving grants admin., would we still have option to utilize IDOT funding? Simonson added, there has been a noticeable difference with their services compared to three yrs. ago; do we have any leverage to push back on them to get staffing levels where they can provide services? Codjoe reported this position falls under Grade 6 in the Compensation Handbook; range between \$56,000-\$73,000 annually plus benefits. O’Donnell added, it will never be a position that will fund itself entirely each yr. Rath recommended we cont. discussion on Nov. 12 when we start looking at the budget and identifying Council’s goals for FY26.

Clerk Reinhard explained, Council action or deliberation should not occur until an item has been placed on an agenda for discussion or action at a subsequent mtg., in accordance with Iowa Open Meeting Law requirements. We have certain rules in place to allow for public participation that helps maintain order

and decorum; hold all comments to three mins. Expectations to be consistently shared at each mtg. Council discussed time limit – all agree, three mins. is our standard. Help educate the public of these standards and remain consistent. Reinhard also suggested putting a timer up so everyone can see it; speakers will know how much time they have left.

Mayor recd. notification from an entity about fitness courts; what is Council's appetite for this item? Rathje reported we do currently have a fitness court in Ottumwa Park. Galloway recalls Council approving applying for a fitness park that included artwork by Keith Haring back in 2021; however, it never came to fruition. Council agrees, this would be beneficial, but would need to be 100% grant funded.

Mayor recd. numerous calls and emails about the growing homeless population in Ottumwa; there isn't just one solution to this issue. Farrington added, homelessness is not illegal nor is it a police matter unless the homeless individual brandishes a weapon; many homeless choose this lifestyle. Questions remain on how to support this in the short term and in the long term. Warrants cont. conversation.

There being no further discussion, Caviness moved, seconded by Galloway to adjourn. All ayes.

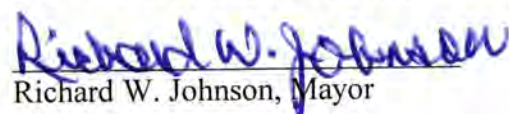
Adjournment was at 7:17 P.M.



ATTEST:


Christina Reinhard, CMC, City Clerk

CITY OF OTTUMWA, IOWA


Richard W. Johnson, Mayor

Published in the Ottumwa Courier on 10/31/2024.