

CITY OF NORTON SHORES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
March 22, 2022

A regular work session of the Norton Shores City Council was held at the Norton Branch Library Community Room, 705 Seminole Road, on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Nelund, Council Members Flanders, Hylland, Jurkas, Kasher, Moulatsiotis, Olson and Sowa; also, Anthony Chandler, Taylor Hobby, Jim Murphy, Chris Lyonnais, Bob Gagnon Brandon Poel and Matt Anderson

Absent: Council Members Morgenstern

1. Recommended Agriculture/Farming Zoning Amendments

Planning and Zoning Administrator Ted Woodcock presented to council his proposed amendments to the R-5 Single Family Residential zoning district ordinance which stems from recent questions about agriculture and farming in Norton Shores. The first change would be to place both “farms” and “agriculture” in the section requiring a special use permit for either activity. This would ensure that any farm or agricultural operation does not disturb surrounding properties. The second amendment would be to add “agriculture” to Sec. 48-5 Definitions as “Agriculture means the science, art, or practice of cultivating soil, producing crops and raising livestock”. Council members questioned the definition and all concurred that the definition of agriculture include a size requirement to avoid imposing permits on residents with personal gardens and addressing whether animals are pets or livestock. The language will be modified and the amendments placed on a future agenda.

2. Zoning Fee Schedule Revisions

Planning and Zoning Administrator Ted Woodcock proposed revising the Planning/Zoning fee schedule due to a significant amount of resources and time being spent on a large number of projects which require multiple revisions. Mr. Woodcock provided the current Norton Shores Planning/Zoning fee schedule, last revised in 2015, along with a table providing comparable fees from other West Michigan area municipalities. Council members questioned the typical number of reviews and number of fence or shed requests received. Council Member Hylland expressed his displeasure in fees for sheds and fences and Council Member Flanders commented that the fees have to keep up with inflation. Council directed staff to make some revisions before bringing it forward for consideration.

3. Fiscal Year 2023 Proposed Capital Improvement Program

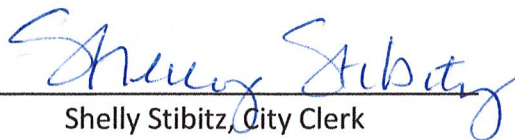
City Administrator Mark Meyers and Finance Director Chris Lyonnais shared the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget with Council. Initial capital improvement requests amounted to \$2,752,116 which is \$459,195

more than can be funded without using unassigned fund balance. Due to prior commitments of approximately \$1,302,803 in fixed vehicle replacements, equipment, loan payments for the Police Department garage (4yrs remain), Parks & Recreation garage (7yrs remain), City Hall and Library roofs (2yrs remain) as well as administrative reimbursement on an annual basis, the fund for new equipment and CIP projects is reduced to approximately \$990,118. After two rounds of budget meetings with department directors to prioritize needs, requests were reduced and the proposed CIP budget will have a surplus of \$8,472 to add to unassigned fund balance. Mr. Meyers shared some details of upcoming key projects such as construction of the new cemetery, renovating the pavilion at Ross Park, and reserved funds earmarked for fire equipment. Council members questioned purchasing another drone and Chiefs Gale and Gagnon explained the benefits of having a smaller drone at the Police Department's disposal in emergency situations. Tree replacement was described as a recurring expense used in removing trees that fall into Mona Lake Channel. New library signage on Seminole Road will be partially funded by the Friends of the Library and compliment the City's newly improved road scape along that stretch. In answer to Council's question, Mr. Meyers reported that the trail from Lake Harbor Park to Hoffmaster Park is estimated at \$2 million. Mr. Lyonnais expressed appreciation for staff's preparation of department budgets and professionalism during the process, even though some requests could not be fulfilled, and thanked the Council for their questions and consideration of the final proposed budget.

General Comments

None

Meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.



Shelly Stibitz, City Clerk