CITY OF NORTON SHORES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
June 23, 2020

A regular work session of the Norton Shores City Council was held remotely on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Nelund, Council Members Beecham, Flanders, Hylland, Jurkas, Morgenstern, Moulatsiotis, Olson and Sladick; also, Anthony Chandler, Shelly Stibitz, Doug Hughes, Jim Murphy, Bob Gagnon, Jon Gale, and Mike Huston

1. Chamber Membership Request

Administrative Services Director Anthony Chandler introduced Cindy Larsen of the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Larsen and Chamber representatives Steve Olsen, Tom Schultz and Morgan Carroll gave the City Council an overview of benefits the City would realize in joining the Chamber. In the past, the City's membership was included with Muskegon Area First (MAF) membership which ended when MAF became a private-public organization. Chamber representatives cited that over 200 businesses in Norton Shores are members and joining would promote a relationship between our municipality and our businesses. Past Chamber President, Tom Schultz, informed Council that the Chamber manages Silent Observer and the importance of that program. Ms. Larsen shared that she promotes Norton Shores often as a premier community with quality residential neighborhoods to executives and contacts outside Muskegon County. She sees the Chamber as a representative for Muskegon County as a whole and will create a list of specific events or times the Chamber has promoted Norton Shores. Mayor Nelund shared ways the City contributes to the Chamber outside of paying a membership. At the Council's request, Ms. Larsen will provide a comprehensive list of ways the Chamber has endorsed Norton Shores in the past and a breakdown of the dues tier system that could provide a clearer idea of the benefits per cost of membership.

2. Senior Millage Allocation/Vulnerable Adult Investigator

Police Chief Jon Gale asked the City Council to consider allocating $40,000 of a projected $79,000 in Senior Millage grant funds to investigation of vulnerable adults. The investigative team was formed last year with funds from the Senior Millage approved by Muskegon County and has investigated 80 cases from February to June 2020. Several other communities are committing some of their Senior Millage allocation towards the program and the Prosecutor's Office is providing some assistance at no charge. There are plans to hold town hall presentations and use opportunities like the curbside meal delivery program to provide education and bring awareness to the senior population. The Council consensus was for the Police Chief to submit a $40,000 grant application to retain a Police Officer as a part of the investigative team for vulnerable adults.

3. Airport Rescue and Firefighting Contract with Muskegon County

Fire Chief Bob Gagnon discussed the need to amend the Airport Fire Fighter (ARFF) contract due to reduced flight schedules during the pandemic. In 2019 three Fire Fighters were hired to cover the Muskegon County Airport's additional flight schedule but the recent reduction in travel due to the pandemic has necessitated a change. The proposed new contract will reduce personnel from three to two and establish a 15-hour seven day per week rotation schedule. Earlier this year, the Fire Department accepted the resignation of one Fire Fighter and chose to maintain the vacancy as a change to the ARFF was expected. At Council Member Olson's suggestion, Chief Gagnon will contact the Airport to discuss reassessment of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) to reflect two-thirds of the original $50,000 cost. Chief Gagnon will bring the contract forward to the next regular meeting for action.

4. Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Adjustments

Mr. Chandler gave Council members an overview of City Administrator Mark Meyers' FY2021 Budget Adjustment memo recommending revisions to address the economic downturn due to the pandemic. Most significantly, State shared revenue affecting the General Fund and Act 51 street funding affecting the Major and Local Street Funds were addressed. Revenue sharing is expected to be down by $210,000, offset with an increase of $40,000 to the Administrative Fee to non-general funds and recent Worker's Compensation insurance dividend totaling $35,000 for a net shortfall of $135,000. A proposal to balance that loss includes elimination of the Parks and Recreation Coordinator position at $65,000, maintaining a vacancy in the Administrative Services Department for $39,000, using TIFA funds to pay for lighting in the district at an $18,500 savings and implementing conservative MPTC general and merit increases for an additional $9,000. Forecasted reductions in Act 51 revenue could be handled by delaying two sidewalk projects or may balance itself throughout the season if all scheduled work cannot be completed as planned. Funding will be monitored closely and re-evaluated mid-year for possible changes to the recommendations. Council Member Hylland commented that the cuts make sense and he is not opposed to using Fund Balance reserves if necessary during this downturn. The Management, Professional, Technical and Clerical Pay Plan will be placed on the next agenda for adoption.

General Comments

Council Member Jurkas asked if in-person Council meetings will resume in July. Mayor Nelund stated that the Governor extended allowing remote meetings through July and has not yet increased the 10-person maximum for indoor gatherings.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Shelly Stibitz

Shelly Stibitz, City Clerk