

CITY OF NORTON SHORES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
October 22, 2019

A regular work session of the Norton Shores City Council was held on Tuesday, October 22, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. at Norton Shores City Hall, 4814 Henry Street.

Present: Mayor Nelund, Council Members Beecham, Flanders, Hylland, Jurkas, Morgenstern, Moulatsiotis, and Olson; also, Mark Meyers, Bob Gagnon, Marc Vanderstelt, Mike Huston, Jerry Bartoszek, Anthony Chandler and Shelly Stibitz

Absent: Council Member Sladick

1. Fourth Grade Robotics Team Presentation

City Administrator Mark Meyers introduced the Lincoln Park Elementary School Robotics Team Coach Cathy Brubaker-Clarke. Ms. Clarke explained the robotics program and described the problem solving and team building skills that are developed with participation. The theme of their mission, City Shapers, is urban areas and cities. The team chose to concentrate on the Nugent Sand site, proposing a housing development with a public playground that operates on alternative energy. Ethan McDonald, Lauren Buboltz and Will Renkema presented the team's concept for redevelopment of this site. Lincoln Clausen and Jacob Dusenberry showed Council members a prototype example with solar panels and windmills that the team built. Brayan Clarke, along with coach Benjamin Clarke, demonstrated how the team's robot worked. In November the team will present their project at a robotics competition held in Zeeland.

2. Muskegon Area District Library Report

At Council's request Public Works Director Jerry Bartoszek invited Muskegon Area District Library (MADL) Director Kelly Richards and his staff to provide information regarding Norton Branch Library operations. Mr. Richards expressed gratitude to Norton Shores for their high level of support and reported that the Norton branch is the largest in the MADL system. A public survey conducted prior to the passing of the recent library millage indicated three top areas of interest: 1) Early literacy; 2) Accommodations for the blind; and 3) Lifelong learning. Many new and current programs are geared to this list including the opening of Storyville, upgraded technology infrastructure and materials and reinstating the Book Mobile. MADL has a unique funding system in that they are responsible for staff and materials and municipalities own and maintain the buildings they occupy. MADL pays Norton Shores \$1.50 per square foot of the library building towards capital expenses and in 2019 reimbursed the City \$105,000 of their capital improvement projects. In answer to Council Member Hylland, Library staff confirmed that this funding system is used for all ten MADL branches as is sharing of all media materials among the branches. Mr. Meyers complimented the recently updated mobile MADL website and thanked Mr. Richards and his staff for their overview of Muskegon Area District Library operations and updates of programs and services at the Norton Shores Branch.

3. Fire Department Lock Box Program

Fire Chief Bob Gagnon and Fire Marshal Ted Karnitz presented additional research into the replacement of soon-to-be obsolete lock boxes installed, mainly, on commercial buildings to provide emergency access. As directed, Fire personnel reported on replacement of manual key system lock boxes citing the biggest drawbacks as key accountability and exposure to lost keys. Maintaining current infrastructure and protecting business owners' investment is best met by upgrading the current lock boxes to new Bluetooth technology but will require both replacement of the battery lid and purchase of additional cell phones that can access lock boxes via Bluetooth technology. In addition to selecting a new lock box, there was discussion related to whether the City or the business owner should be responsible for the unit and any associated costs. Since the program was initiated in 2000, business owners have paid for the required lock boxes on their buildings. Some of the Council remarked that it is the cost of doing business while others feel that the businesses already paid once and shouldn't be expected to do so again. Following a lengthy conversation, several Council members stated that existing business owners should be given the option to upgrade to new technology at their expense but the new equipment should be required at the time of any building renovation or change in ownership. In addition, although never required, approximately 30 homeowners have purchased residential lock boxes for their homes which will also become obsolete in July 2020. Fire personnel will follow Council's direction in preparing for the discontinuance of the current lock box equipment.

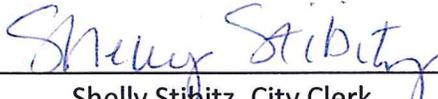
4. Accessory Structure Ordinance Amendment

Mr. Bartoszek relayed the Zoning Board of Appeals' recommendation to the Planning Commission that consideration be given to amending the Accessory Structure Ordinance related to size requirements. Several variance requests have been brought to the ZBA from property owners in R5 zoned districts who have parcels that can accommodate larger structures without impacting adjacent properties. Zoning Administrator Ted Woodcock researched five communities and found that it is common for municipalities to correlate the accessory structure size to the lot size. The Planning Commission agreed with the recommendation to amend the Ordinance and forwarded the request to the City Council who concurred. An Ordinance amendment will be drafted.

General Comments

None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.



Shelly Stibitz, City Clerk