

Meeting of: COLUMBIA HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL
Date of Meeting: August 3, 2020
Time of Meeting: 7:00 pm
Location of Meeting: Council Chambers
Purpose of Meeting: Work Session

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL - The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

Present: Mayor Schmitt, Councilmembers Murzyn Jr, Novitsky, Williams, and Buesgens

Staff Present: Kelli Bourgeois- City Manager, Lenny Austin- Police Chief, Erik Johnston- Police Captain, Ben Sandell- Communications Coordinator, Will Rotter- Communications & Events Specialist, Nicole Tingley- City Clerk.

1. 5049-5051 Jackson Street

Police Chief Austin stated that there still has not been a resolution for the ongoing issues at 5049-5051 Jackson Street and stated that options for the property will be presented to the City Council on Monday August 10. He commended Captain Erik Johnston and Officer Bill Monberg for their efforts working with the care team, property owner and Scott County. Austin introduced Captain Erik Johnston to provide more details.

Captain Johnston noted that the memo included in the packets provides an overview of the situation. He stated that the Police Department worked with all of the parties involved to provide any support they can provide, but it has not worked.

Johnston shared information regarding the excessive amount of calls of service. To date the City has billed over \$16,000 in excessive service call fees and that the property owner has paid over \$7,000. In 2019, this address had more calls than any other property in Columbia Heights. In comparison to side by side duplexes this property had more than 10 times as many calls for service.

Johnston stated that he just received communication that the property owner is looking to rehome the individual. The City will either recommend revocation or issuing a provisional license and will work with the City Attorney on the City's options.

Mayor Schmitt asked since this individual is under Scott County services and if that makes any difference. Johnston responded that Scott County is the fiscal agent in that the case started with them and they have maintained fiscal responsibility. He noted that the company Bridges place the individual in Columbia Heights.

Buesgens asked if a provisional license would be for the time period it takes them to move the individual. Johnston answered that he would have to work through their options but his initial reaction is to have the provisional license in place longer so that they can prove the property will be properly managed.

Buesgens inquired if the revocation would take place right away or if they have time to correct. Johnston stated it would not be immediate and there would have to be notice.

Johnston clarified that the action would only be for the City's rental license. He also clarified that if the license was revoked this would be the only revocation for the property owner. In accordance

with the property maintenance code if there are two than a rental license cannot be held for 5 years.

2. Centennial Celebration Update

Communications Coordinator Ben Sandell stated that they have been working on planning the 100th Anniversary events and are getting close to solidifying dates and events. He stated that they want to obtain City Council feedback before going further so there is time to change direction if need be.

Sandell stated that the submission deadline for photo contest for the calendar is August 5th and that afterwards outside judges will score the photos. It is anticipated the calendar will be finished in September.

Sandell introduced Communications & Events Specialist Will Rottler to provide an overview of the rest of the events and planning for the 100th Anniversary.

Rottler provided information on projects and the City Council provided feedback and asked questions as follows:

- A centennial quilt will be created and is being led by Library staff. The City will be soliciting the community for ideas for the 36 squares.
- 60 street banners will be placed along Central Ave. Banners will be able to be purchased by businesses and organizations for \$150 on a first come first serve basis.
- The “Bootstrap” Book is being turned into a documentary by a resident.
- A Roaring 20s Dinner/Dance will be held at Murzyn Hall on July 24, 2021.
- Centennial carnival with games and music/entertainment will be held in July. The games would be a token carnival (instead of coins due to shortage). An idea is to a summer “read-up” program at the library to earn tokens. Donations could be exchanged for tokens.
- An application will be submitted for the AARP Community Grant with a project idea to improve the community.
- Sharing stories, photographs, and newspaper clippings on the City’s website and social media throughout the year.
- Distributing lapel pins and maybe using them for business discounts or giveaways
- Coloring page contest in March sponsored by Northeast bank with giftcard prizes

The City Council provided feedback.

Mayor Schmitt suggested having the banners up for half of the year due to fading. Councilmember Buesgens added that it may be a possibility to hang every other banner post for half of the year and then switch on posts and flags for the other half of the year.

Schmitt noted that she did not want competition with Heights Theatre in regards to monthly movies. Rottler clarified at this point it is a suggestion and that it would be intended to work with Tom from Heights Theatre. Schmitt suggested emphasizing what they already have showing.

Schmitt suggested selling the pins and reserving some to give away to dignitaries.

The City Council suggested events to confirm and add to the calendar. These were the VFW flag burning ceremony, Tasty's Medallion Hunt, SACA Fire & Ice event, St. Patrick's Day parade, VFW Memorial Day Service.

Schmitt recommended still using pennies for the carnival. Pennies could be donated and do not need to be created.

Schmitt stated that quilts fade fast in light. Rotter responded that he has been working with the library on the location. Options that take into account sunlight and do not allow for pulling will be considered.

Schmitt asked residents and 100 Anniversary Committee members Kt Jacobs and Amada Marquez Simula for their feedback.

Kt Jacobs complimented Rottler for his work. She suggested that gold pins are created for dignitaries including past and present elected officials. She also shared in concerns regarding the size of the centennial logo on the banners noting it should be more emphasized (bigger). She thinks that there is a great line-up of events planned.

Amada Marquez Simula added that HeightNEXT is going to host a Multicultural Community Event in August or September of 2021. She also expressed that the Pat Proft movies would be fun as a movie in the park event. She added that there is a company in Columbia Heights called Curbside Productions that would probably be happy to donate the equipment. She also complimented Rottler.

Schmitt asked about the trivia night. Communications Coordinator Sandell responded he would be hosting it and making questions. Schmitt also commented about the importance of decorations for the events.

Jacobs shared details regarding the Roaring 20s Dance. Donations will be sought. The menu will be what was trending in the 20s. There will be period music and drinks. She has drafted a proposal that will be presented to the City Council once closer.

Schmitt asked if the City Council needed to formally approve anything at this time. City Manager Bourgeois stated that the City Council did not need to formally approve anything and if anything exceeded her spending authority it would come before the City Council.

Schmitt asked about calendar price and t-shirts. Sandell stated calendars will sell for \$10. Rottler added that the t-shirts and giveaways will be ordered. Schmitt stated that she would like giveaways to give to the sister city Lomianki for Christmas.

3. Contaminated Material Stockpile Disposal

City Manager Bourgeois stated that Public Works Director Kevin Hansen submitted a staff memo as a heads up that will come in the form of a change order for the second meeting in August or September. Bourgeois stated that it was brought to the City Council work session because the Pollution Control Agency requires a 10 day notice and because of the dollar amount. It will be approximately a \$75,000 increase to the sanitary sewer replacement project on Polk Street. She stated that there are not any alternatives.

4. Council Meeting Times

Mayor Schmitt stated that she would like the work session meeting time to change to 4:00 pm still on the first Monday. Her reasoning is so that City staff do not have to come home and then come back or stay late to attend. She asked the other Councilmembers for their feedback.

Councilmember Buesgens asked what initiated this discussion. Schmitt stated she is bringing this because of all of the special meetings being held at earlier times that staff has appreciated.

Buesgens stated that she is not interested in changing the meeting times. She noted that City staff understand that there are night meetings when taking the position and that this was not initiated by staff. Additionally, future councilmembers may not be able to attend daytime meetings. Schmitt noted that it can be easily changed by resolution and it would also be convenient for Council.

Councilmember Novitsky suggested changing Traffic Commission to 5 pm and EDA to 5:30 pm with the Work Session following. He is also fine with not making any changes.

Councilmember Williams would like to change the time to 4 pm for staff.

City Manager Bourgeois stated she brought it to the division head meeting earlier in the day. She emphasized that City staff would be fine either way and understand there are night meetings with the profession.

The City Council decided to table the discussion.

Schmitt asked about meeting with Phil Kern on August 10th to go over the final goal setting session report. Bourgeois clarified that Phil Kern will be attending the regular City Council meeting on August 10th.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Tingley, City Clerk/Council Secretary