

Government Operations Committee

Minutes

March 21, 2016

Councilors Attending: Sprague, Nichols, Perry, Graham, Faircloth

Staff Attending: Farrar, Hamilton, Higgins, Goodwin, Hathaway, Linscott, Potter

Others Attending: Local Media

Councilor Sprague, filling in for Committee Chair Plourde, called the meeting to Order at 6:35pm

1. Review of Innovative Neighborhoods Plan and proposed Steering Committee membership positions

Council Chair Faircloth provided an overview and details concerning the Livable Community/ Innovative Neighborhood Plan and the proposed Steering Committee make-up. The overall goal is to make the community more attractive and to develop initiatives to move the city forward. This project is in conjunction a grant application that the city has recently submitted to AARP. Faircloth indicated that this is a project that the city would oversee. The grant would help with gathering data, assisting with focus groups, and engaging a facilitator regarding the Livable Communities portion of the project. The results of that effort would then be used to further develop strategies and identify funding sources to move forward with both the Livable Communities and Innovation Neighborhood initiatives. The Steering Committee would be comprised of representatives from various organizations who have an interest in the project. Faircloth would like to Committee to endorse the concept and allow the Steering Committee to be formed so that they can begin to start work on the Livable Communities part of the project. Councilors asked questions and provided comments regarding the proposal, and were generally supportive of moving the project forward. Concerns were raised about the general nature of the proposal, and that details and specifics were yet to be finalized. Following further discussion, it was moved by Perry, seconded by Nichols and voted to place an Order on the next City Council Agenda authorizing the establishment of the Steering Committee and providing support to move the project forward.

2. Approval and Adoption of Title VI Environmental Justice Non-Discrimination Plan for Community Connector Public Transit Service

Assistant City Manager Farrar indicated that the Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan is a federal government requirement as the Community Connector is a direct recipient of Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) grant funding. The current adopted Plan will expire on May 31, 2016, and a new plan is required. The plan outlines and addresses the City's compliance efforts with Title VI, which prohibits discrimination based upon race, color or national origin. The city received outside professional assistance reviewing and updating the plan to ensure that it will be acceptable to the FTA. It was moved by Nichols, seconded by Graham and voted to recommend approval of the Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan to the full Council.

3. Review of Proposed Taxicab Ordinance Revisions

(Acting Chair Sprague excused himself from the meeting due to a prior commitment and asked Councilor Graham to Chair the meeting in his absence)

Assistant City Solicitor Nicklas explained the process that resulted in the proposed revisions to the Taxicab Ordinance. The effort involved city staff from several departments (Legal, Police, City Clerk) as well as taxicab owners and operators over a several month period. Several meetings were held and the proposed revisions reflect the input from interested parties. Councilors asked several questions about the revisions and taxicab services in general. There were no taxicab owners / operators present to comment, which, according to Nicklas, was an indication that the proposed revisions appeared to be generally acceptable to those impacted / involved. It was moved by Nichols, seconded by Faircloth and voted to recommend the Amended ordinance to the full Council for First Reading. The Committee indicated that the Amended Ordinance did not need to return to the Committee for further review.

4. Proposed Fee for Emergency Service with No Transport- Fire Department

Fire Chief Higgins explained that the Fire Department has seen an increasing number of calls for emergency service where there is no transport involved. These include a significant number of calls involving requests for lift assistance when an individual has fallen and is not able to get up, or calls for involving requests for general types of assistance. Lift assistance calls occur at both local institutions as well as individual residences. In these cases when no transport occurs, there is a cost to the fire department, but no bill for the services rendered. Many of these calls for service involve repeat calls to the same institution (that may have implemented “no lift” orders for their employees) or to residences. Given the cost and time involved, the Fire Department would like to develop and implement a fee structure to deter these types of calls, to encourage individuals and institutions to seek help from more appropriate resources and compensate the department for its costs in providing this assistance when the calls exceed a reasonable number. The Chief provided information and examples of situations where the same individual had called multiple times each day, and another when an individual had called 171 in one year. He also explained that some institutions routinely call the department for assistance as they have prohibited their employees from lifting individuals who have fallen and need help getting back to a chair or bed. The Chief reviewed a proposed fee structure with the Committee. Councilors asked several questions, and were generally surprised at the magnitude and significance of the problem. Assistant City Manager Farrar indicated that the intent at this meeting was to present a general overview of the issue and then to return to the Committee with a specific proposal once the Committee had an opportunity to consider the issue further and receive feedback from interested parties /citizens. The Committee indicated that staff was on the right track regarding developing a fee structure and asked that this item return to the Committee for consideration and action within the next month or so.

With no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm