

Committee of the Whole
May 22, 2018

Present: Mayor Vulich, Councilmembers Gassman, Seeley, McGraw (via phone), Allesee, Connell, Schemers, and Odor, City Attorney, City Administrator, City Clerk, Press and interested citizens.

1. FY 2019 Health Insurance Renewal – Tim Kearns & Sam Hammes of True North

Finance Director Dalton stated True North was the third party administrator for the City's self-insurance and had been working to help save costs. Tim Kearns and Sam Hammes from True North presented statistics on the City's health insurance plan and renewal. Hammes stated Wellmark was anticipating a 2.5% increase in the plan's expected costs for FY2019. Hammes stated True North would recommend that the City change its Stop Loss Premium from the \$50,000.00 mark, that it had been at for several years, to the \$70,000.00 mark. Hammes stated the City's average premium savings at each specific deductible level (2016, 2017 & 2018) was \$56,647.00 and a premium savings of \$168,000.00 for FY19 was projected by increasing the Stop Loss Premium amount.

Councilmember McGraw inquired if the family premium would be increasing or decreasing. Administrator Brooke stated that the premium would decrease for FY19. Mayor Vulich inquired if the Stop Loss Premium was calculated per occurrence or by accumulation. Hammes stated by accumulation. Kearns stated the City had expanded its reserve over the last three to four years and the offer from Wellmark was very reasonable.

Hammes stated telemedicine was being offered by Wellmark as part of the policy for no additional charge. Hammes stated telemedicine could lead to a cost savings by offering virtual access to a doctor at any time of day. Hammes recommended that a \$10.00 copay be required by employees for a telemedicine visit. Councilmember Seeley inquired where the doctors were located. Kearns stated the doctor would be required to be a licensed doctor in the state where the patient was located. Councilmember Seeley inquired what the copay was for office visits. Finance Director Dalton stated the current copay for an office visit was 20%. Finance Director Dalton stated a resolution would be presented at an upcoming Council meeting to approve the renewal.

2. BUILD Grant Application – City Administrator Matt Brooke

Administrator Brooke stated the TIGER grant was now the BUILD grant and a total of \$1.5 billion in projects would be funded this year as part of the program. Administrator Brooke stated applications were due to the U.S. Department of Transportation by July 19, 2018. Administrator Brooke stated the grant focused heavily on rural communities and Clinton was considered rural.

Administrator Brooke stated the criteria for the BUILD grant was reviewed with City Engineer Jason Craft for three possible projects: Mill Creek Parkway (four-laning, expansion to Highway 67 and adding a bike path), Veterans Memorial Drive (expansion to Main Avenue), and Manufacturing Drive and Bluff Boulevard (two bridge expansion, widening for turning and adding a bike path). Administrator Brooke stated the criteria included: safety, state of good repair, economic competitiveness, environmental protection, quality of life, innovation, partnership, and project readiness. Administrator Brooke stated the Progress Coalition recently met and over twenty-five attendees scored the three possible projects based on the

aforementioned criteria. Administrator Brooke stated the Manufacturing Drive and Bluff Boulevard project ranked number one in seven of the categories and scored the highest overall.

Administrator Brooke stated Manufacturing Drive was a heavily travelled road and 384 accidents had occurred on Manufacturing Drive in the last five years. Administrator Brooke stated with the Ashford University campus soon to be utilized as an academy, traffic would only increase on Bluff Boulevard and Manufacturing Drive. Administrator Brooke stated \$6 million of repairs for Manufacturing Drive were already included on the 2020 Capital Improvement Plan.

Administrator Brooke stated the Manufacturing Drive and Bluff Boulevard project could include running electricity underground, adding fiber optics, and creating of a bike path. Administrator Brooke noted that there were 1,800 workers in the businesses along Manufacturing Drive.

Administrator Brooke stated strong community partnership and support had formed for the Manufacturing Drive and Bluff Boulevard project, including a letter of support from the Lyons Business and Professional Association.

Councilmember Odor stated he supported the Manufacturing Drive and Bluff Boulevard project. Councilmember Seeley stated the grant had the possibility of a match not being required. Administrator Brooke answered in the affirmative and stated it would be advised to provide some type of match. Administrator Brooke stated work would still continue on the Mill Creek Parkway and Veterans Memorial Drive projects.

M/S, Odor-Allesee moved to direct staff to pursue the BUILD grant application for the Manufacturing Drive and Bluff Boulevard project. On roll call, carried unanimously.

3. City Assessor's Office – City Administrator Matt Brooke

Administrator Brooke stated rather than determining whether or not to retain the City Assessor's office based upon applications received, the Council could make a determination based on objective criteria. Administrator Brooke stated the Council could consider whether retaining the office or combining with the County provided the best service, transparency, market data, cost savings, innovation and partnership.

Councilmember Gassman stated service would be dependent upon who was the assessor and the staff employed in the office. Councilmember Seeley concurred. Councilmember Gassman stated the Council chose at the last Committee of the Whole meeting to solicit applications. Administrator Brooke stated the Examining Board had met and was seeking applications. Councilmember Gassman stated he believed it was best to retain the City Assessor's office. Councilmember Gassman stated the City of Clinton had a large industrial and commercial base and needed an assessor that was well-versed in assessing those types of properties.

Councilmember McGraw inquired if Des Moines or Cedar Rapids had City Assessor's offices. Administrator Brooke stated Des Moines combined with the Polk County Assessor's office over twenty years ago and Cedar Rapids still had a City Assessor's office. Councilmember McGraw inquired if the current staff in the City Assessor's office would become employees of the County Assessor's office if the offices were combined. Administrator Brooke stated Assessor Tiesman had indicated that would happen.

Councilmember Schemers stated Assessor Tiesman had previously worked in the City Assessor's office prior to becoming the City Assessor and provided good service. Councilmember Schemers stated he would be supportive of the offices combining in order to continue to work with Assessor Tiesman. Councilmember Seeley stated another assessor could potentially provide quality service.

Administrator Brooke stated combining offices could provide more transparency for residents and comments received from offices that combined were that complaints were reduced. Administrator Brooke stated Assessor Tiesman had already improved transparency and public perception.

Councilmember Gassman stated he wanted control of revaluation. Mayor Vulich stated the assessor would determine the revaluation procedure, not the City Council. Administrator Brooke stated if offices were to combine the County Board of Review would have a member from the City of Clinton.

Administrator Brooke stated Assessor Tiesman provided a potential cost savings estimate of \$148,850.00 if offices were combined. Administrator Brooke stated if the offices were combined the expenditures for each separate office would be reduced, resulting in a cost savings. Councilmember Gassman inquired about the current expenses for the City Assessor's office. Mayor Vulich presented the current City Assessor budget, as previously approved by the Conference Board.

Councilmember Seeley stated having one source for assessment data would be more transparent and it would be ideal if GIS services were combined. Administrator Brooke stated if the offices were combined there would be a larger pool for market data.

Administrator Brooke stated the Council would need to consider the way forward. Councilmember Connell stated the applicant pool would most likely be slim and Assessor Tiesman had experience with assessing industrial and commercial properties. Councilmember Seeley noted the Deputy County Assessor was also previously employed by the City Assessor's office.

Councilmember Schemers made a motion to forward the ordinance repealing the creation of the City Assessor's office to the next City Council agenda. No second was made. Councilmember Schemers stated the Council considered comparables in many decision-making processes and the comparables would support combining the offices. Councilmember Seeley stated less than six months ago the Council unanimously chose to retain the City Assessor's office and hired Assessor Tiesman. Councilmember Seeley stated at that time very few applications were received and very few applications were received for the County Assessor position. Councilmember Seeley stated while he did not believe combining offices would be a detriment to the City, he did not want to combine offices solely to follow a person.

Mayor Vulich stated once applications were received and potential candidates were interviewed by the Examining Board, it would likely be the week of June 11, 2018 that the Conference Board would convene to determine if an offer would be extended to an applicant. Mayor Vulich stated the Conference Board consisted of the Council, the School District and the Board of Supervisors, with each entity collectively having one vote. Mayor Vulich stated the Conference Board would ultimately determine if an applicant was offered a position as City Assessor or whether to re-advertise the position if no suitable applications were received.

Mayor Vulich stated the next date that the Council could consider whether or not to combine offices would be the June 26, 2018 City Council meeting and in the interim the City Clerk would be required to serve as the City Assessor. Councilmember Connell stated he wanted to proceed with soliciting applications. Councilmember Seeley concurred and stated he would like more information on potential cost savings.

4. Mayor and Council Updates

Councilmember Schemers thanked Battalion Fire Chief Jeff Chapman and the Building & Neighborhood Services staff for the recent ride-along and office visit. Councilmember Schemers commended the Building & Neighborhood Services staff for the work they complete.

M/S, Gassman-Allesee moved to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Frederick
City Clerk