

MINUTES OF A WORK SESSION OF THE
INDEPENDENCE CITY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 21, 2016 –7:00 A.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a work session of the Independence City Council was called to order by Mayor Johnson at 7:15 a.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Postponed until regular meeting.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Johnson, Councilors Spencer, Betts and McCoy

ABSENT: Grotting

STAFF: City Administrator Kaltsas, Administrative Assistant Beth Horner

VISITORS: WHPS Director Gary Kroells

4. DISCUSSION / UPDATE ON SEWER RATE STUDY

a. Follow-up from Sewer Rate Open House

Kaltsas stated that everyone that attended the open house was a SA (sewer availability) resident. He said the one person that came after the open house was a quarterly paying resident and stated that he hoped if rates were going up for the sewer users than those not connected would connect and help with the ongoing costs. Kaltsas said \$755 per year should be just for maintenance. Spencer noted 90% is maintenance and upkeep, etc. He said everyone should be connected. Betts said the concern is those residents who have a long way to go to hook up. Spencer said a horizontal bore can go a long way with a connection. Johnson asked if Hennepin County had been contacted and if they could help some residents through one of their programs. Kaltsas said they utilized them on County Line Road and Highway 12. He said it needs to be a low-income qualification. Kaltsas said the City could look at a finance program for those that needed help with the costs. Spencer said it may make sense to offer a timeframe required to hook-up to receive financing at 0%. Betts said connecting is a lot less costly than a mound system.

Spencer asked if the Council wanted to go with the way the rate was proposed. Kaltsas asked if they wanted to look at any other scenarios. He noted the fund is going to run out of cash and the City needs to televise and jet that system next year. Kaltsas said it may make sense to phase in the availability costs. McCoy asked about replacement costs of the line. Kaltsas said with the plastic lines it will last about 75 years. He said the costs are mainly upgrading and maintenance of the line and lift stations. Betts said there needs to be education done so those that are not connected understand the reasons why this has to be done. Spencer noted that there has to be communication put out there to get those who are not connected to engage in the conversations as well. Kaltsas said he will look at options 1 and 2 for the January meeting. He said our system is expensive but growth would help alleviate costs a bit.

Johnson asked if Kaltsas would send the stats out to the residents and also let them know the alternatives. Kaltsas said he would send it to the availability residents.

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5. Planning Commission Vacancy

a. Process for appointing new member

Kaltsas said there are three people interested in the vacancy. He said they could accept all three if they passed an ordinance to have a seven member commission. He noted there are pros and cons with a seven member commission versus a five member one. Kaltsas said if it was decided to select just one that they could offer the Comprehensive Plan spots to the other two who were not selected. Kaltsas said maybe they could also appoint an alternate as it is nice to have a backup. Spencer asked if there would be a Comp Plan task force. Kaltsas said there could be a committee created to get some different perspectives. He noted the Planning Commission would spearhead the Comp Plan efforts. Johnson said it would be good training for the Planning Commission spots. Johnson said it would be nice to interview the candidates before or after a Council meeting. Kaltsas asked if the thinking was that five would still be the best number. The consensus was “yes” to stick with the five member Planning Commission.

6. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Bemmels, Recording Secretary