

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Finance Committee of the City of Norfolk, Nebraska met in the City's Conference Room, 309 West Madison Avenue, Norfolk, Nebraska, on Monday, May 15, 2006, beginning at 7:00 a.m.

Mayor Gordon D. Adams called the meeting to order.

Roll call found the following Committee members present: Mayor Gordon Adams and Councilpersons Brenneman, Fauss, Lange, Saunders, Stauffer, Van Dyke and Wilson. Absent: Kaspar-Beckman.

Staff members present were City Administrator Mike Nolan, Public Works Director Dennis Smith, City Clerk Beth Deck, Assistant City Engineer Dale Bohac, Police Chief Bill Mizner and Police Captain Steve Hecker.

The media was represented by Greg Wees, Norfolk Daily News; Kent Warneke, Norfolk Daily News; Jim Curry, WJAG/KEXL; and Brian Masters, KUSO.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Norfolk Daily News, and notice of the meeting was given to the Mayor and all members of the Council prior to the meeting.

The Mayor presided and the City Clerk recorded the proceedings.

The Finance Committee discussed Downtown Norfolk **Vehicle Parking District** issues. Enclosed in the agenda packet were copies of the May 9, 2006 and April 28, 2006 Business Improvement/Vehicle Parking District meeting minutes. City Administrator Mike Nolan explained City staff was contacted by Downtown Norfolk business people who continue to have an interest in expanding the District. Nolan stated members of the Vehicle Parking District discussed the feasibility of expanding the District to include businesses wanting to be annexed and excluding those businesses not wanting to be annexed. The businesses wanting to be annexed include Aquila, Mainstreet Deli, Nore's Carpet, United Rental and Bank of the West. The annexation would also include tax exempt property owned by NPPD, the City of Norfolk (Fire Station) and Salvation Army.

Councilperson Van Dyke questioned "what happens to the businesses that don't join the Parking District?" Van Dyke feels it isn't fair to those businesses outside the Parking District to pay three times as much for sidewalk improvements.

Nolan stated elected officials will need "to decide that". Staff was left with the inference that those properties not annexed to the District will pay 100% of the cost of sidewalk improvements to meet ADA requirements. Properties located within the Vehicle Parking District will pay 1/3 the cost of the sidewalks (as an assessment) with another 1/3 being paid for by the District and 1/3 paid by the City of Norfolk.

Van Dyke said, "so it's going to be a City Council decision" not City staff.

Nolan said elected officials have the prerogative to decide what options are available for businesses located outside the Vehicle Parking District.

Councilperson Fauss questioned whether the businesses not located within the Vehicle Parking District will only have to pay for sidewalk improvements or will have to share in the cost of the entire Downtown Parking District improvements project. Fauss questioned whether a business located in the middle of a block with a sidewalk that is in good shape would be forced to replace that portion of the sidewalk.

Nolan stated the sidewalk replacement project should be done at one time for uniformity and continuity.

Councilperson Stauffer stated the annexation plan “looks like a very viable plan.”

Fauss questioned whether all business owners were invited to attend meetings regarding the proposed plan.

Kathy Jedlicka, Amy’s Hallmark, said the businesses not interested in being annexed “aren’t being affected” and weren’t invited to the meeting.

Patty Van Dyke, Mainstreet Deli, questioned whether the businesses excluded from the new proposal have an opportunity to join the Vehicle Parking District.

Nolan stated those businesses do have the opportunity to join the District. Nolan stated Ron Skiff asked that same question. With additional discussions regarding the project, the project is now probably postponed until the next construction season. Nolan stated the City wants to accommodate everyone’s interest so there aren’t any more delays in the project.

Patty Van Dyke questioned the lineal foot cost of the sidewalk project. Van Dyke questioned whether the \$120/lineal foot is the landowners share or whether the landowners pay 1/3 of that amount.

Public Works Director Dennis Smith explained the landowners assessable portion cost is estimated at \$120/lineal foot.

Patty Van Dyke stated Mainstreet Deli has 178 lineal feet so the approximate for a sidewalk would be approximately \$20,000. Van Dyke wanted to clarify the cost because another property owner thought the total cost of the project was \$120/lineal foot.

Smith stated the total project has about 4,900 lineal feet at a total cost of \$585,000.

Van Dyke questioned whether business owners in the proposed annexation area, who don’t have any medians and possibly no change in lighting, are paying the same per lineal foot price as those businesses from 1st Street to 6th Street. Van Dyke has concerns that the businesses between 6th Street and 8th Street are “paying a lot of the cost of the project but don’t have the medians or additional lighting.”

Smith explained the \$120/lineal foot from 1st Street to 8th Street was looked at using a uniform assessment portion for the entire project.

Nolan stated the appurtenances are permitted assessable costs in an assessment district. The objective is to do the entire project at one time for uniformity.

Smith said the median project cost was approximately \$200,000 and the proposal was that a part of the cost would be assessed, part of it would be paid by the City and a part by the Vehicle Parking District. Staff is trying to make the project as uniform as possible from one end to the other without adding additional medians. Staff did feel, however, that it was necessary to update the existing landscaping and medians. Staff may look at trying to put some type of a “bump out” between the railroad tracks and 7th Street to provide a space for some landscaping in that block as well as somewhat narrow down the street. The free-flowing traffic into and out of the businesses in that area won’t be disrupted.

Fauss questioned again whether or not the businesses not wanting to be annexed were given the opportunity for input about the costs of sidewalk replacement.

Jedlicka said “it’s not an issue”.

Nolan anticipates several additional meetings on the sidewalk project. Nolan stated Mike Yost has indicated a willingness to pay 100% of the cost to replace the sidewalk in front of the antique store.

Fauss requested all of the business owners between 6th Street and 8th Street be invited to the next meeting to discuss the proposed annexation.

Councilperson Stauffer moved, seconded by Councilperson to proceed with the revised annexation proposal for the Downtown Vehicle Parking District per the map distributed in the agenda packet.

Van Dyke has concerns that those businesses not wanting to be annexed are not being included in planning the project because of the cost and the “tremendous amount of changes needing to be done with the grading, curbing, etc.”

Carl Nore, Nore’s Carpet, is not sure the business owners not wanting to be annexed understand the issue. Nore stated those people feel it’s “an all or none” deal and they don’t realize the issues and costs of the sidewalks. Nore said those businesses may want to reconsider joining the Vehicle Parking District.

Councilperson Fauss feels those business owners need to be included in the meetings to discuss the issues.

Roll call: Councilpersons Fauss, Lange, Saunders, Stauffer, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: Brenneman and Van Dyke. Absent: Kaspar-Beckman. Motion carried.

Councilperson Fauss moved, seconded by Councilperson Saunders to adjourn from regular session and convene into executive session at 7:20 a.m. to discuss law enforcement investigation. Roll call: Ayes: Councilperson Brenneman, Fauss, Lange, Saunders, Stauffer, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor Adams. Nays: None. Absent: Kaspar-Beckman. Motion carried.

Councilperson Wilson left the meeting at 8:20 a.m.

Councilperson Fauss moved, seconded by Councilperson Van Dyke to adjourn from executive session and reconvene into regular session at 8:43 a.m. Roll call: Ayes: Councilperson

Brenneman, Fauss, Lange, Saunders, Stauffer, Van Dyke, and Mayor Adams. Nays: None.
Absent: Kaspar-Beckman and Wilson. Motion carried.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Lange to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 a.m. Roll call: Ayes: Council members Brenneman, Fauss, Lange, Saunders, Stauffer, Van Dyke, and Mayor Adams. Nays: None. Absent: Kaspar-Beckman and Wilson. Motion carried.

Elizabeth A. Deck
City Clerk