

## 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, August 13, 2007, 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, Coy, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke and Wilson. Absent: Fauss and Lange.

Staff members present were City Administrator Mike Nolan, Public Works Director Dennis Smith, City Attorney Clint Schukei, City Clerk Beth Deck, Assistant City Engineer Dale Bohac, Water & Sewer Director Dennis Watts, Transportation, Building & Grounds Director Jim Koch, Property/Operations Manager Gary Miller, Fire Chief Shane Weidner, Finance Officer Randy Gates and Library Director Ted Smith.

The media was represented by Greg Wees, Norfolk Daily News.

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 Mayor informed the public about the location of the current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room and accessible to members of the public.

The first item discussed was a proposed change to the proposed FY 2007-2008 Storm Water Management, Water Fund and Sewer Fund **budgets**. Staff recommends a change to the budgets based on Storm Water grant money restrictions. The proposed Storm Water Management budget has \$56,000 budgeted for GPS equipment. However, if the City purchases GPS equipment with storm water grant funds, the only use for the equipment will be for storm water related items. If the City uses a cost share basis for the purchase of GPS equipment, use of the equipment would be more efficiently used among the various divisions and still stay within grant guidelines. Staff request budgeting 50% (\$28,000) of the cost of the GPS equipment in the Storm Water Management fund and 25% (\$14,000) each from the Water and Sewer funds. This leaves \$28,000 in the Storm Water Management budget which can be used to purchase capital items originally considered in the budget but removed to balance. The items include: water sampling equipment, \$24,000; desktop computer, \$1,800; and laptop computer, \$2,200. The additional \$14,000 budgeted in both the Water Fund and Sewer Fund will be offset by a corresponding decrease in Account #46, cost of meters. The net result overall is zero.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Saunders to approve the proposed changes in the FY 2007-2008 Storm Water Management, Water and Sewer Funds as discussed. Roll call: Ayes: Councilperson Brenneman, Coy, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: Fauss and Lange. Motion carried.

The next item discussed was the **Trails** on Highway 35 project. City Administrator Mike Nolan explained the City of Norfolk was notified by the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) about

the requirements for the City to have a trails project added to the Highway 35 project. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requested that a sidewalk/trail be provided for the project prior to approving a draft of the Norfolk to South Sioux City Planned Expressway location/corridor study. The NDOR committed to constructing a 10-foot wide surfaced trail; however, the NDOR wants input/comments from the City of Norfolk. The proposed Norfolk NE trail project will be located on the east and/or south side of the project starting at the existing trail on the west dike of the relocated North Fork of the Elkhorn River and will end at Eisenhower Avenue. The existing bridge over the river will be widened to accommodate the trail. The Norfolk SE trail project will be located on the east side of the project and start at the apartment's driveway and end at Norfolk Avenue. The trail will be placed behind the back slope of the ditch. The trail will be designed to meet ADA requirements. The City will be required to pay 20% of the additional costs to construct the trail or approximately \$100,000 for the Norfolk NE project and \$20,000 for the Norfolk SE project.

Councilperson Van Dyke questioned how much the trail is actually used.

Councilpersons Coy and Saunders said the trail is used a lot by citizens.

Councilperson Wilson agrees the trail is used a lot and actually receives complaints about the lack of access to the trails.

Councilperson Coy questioned how the City will pay for the project.

Smith stated the project will be paid for with highway allocation funds. The Department of Roads has the project in its 2007-2008 plan with construction in late 2008 or the spring of 2009. The project is predicated on the Federal government releasing the corridor study.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Reeder to approve and move forward on the Trails on Highway 35 project as discussed. Roll call: Ayes: Councilperson Brenneman, Coy, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: Fauss and Lange. Motion carried.

The Finance Committee discussed the July 18, 2006 and August 7, 2006 Finance Committee meeting minutes regarding the **Airport** Authority property tax request. The City reduced the amount of property tax requested by the Airport for FY 2006-2007. City Administrator Mike Nolan stated the minutes were reviewed by a Finance Committee subcommittee and nothing in the minutes indicates that the City of Norfolk would "give the property tax" back to the Airport Authority. At the August 7, 2006 meeting, Councilperson Fauss did ask whether "the City would be giving the money back to the Airport Authority" but no one responded to the comment and elected officials never directed that the money be returned. No commitments were made about returning money to the Airport.

Councilperson Reeder "thought the understanding was that it wasn't going to be given back but the City wouldn't take any more."

Nolan doesn't feel the City intends to cut any more out of the Airport's budget. At one time, it was felt the City could get \$400,000 from the Airport's budget but that never happened.

Councilperson Reeder feels the City needs to continue communicating with the Airport Authority because "this will probably be an ongoing thing." Reeder said "from now on we will probably need to address this every year and they need to know that." Reeder felt there was some confusion this year.

Nolan said it may have been better to have had earlier conversations with the Airport Authority this year. Staff will try “to do that in the future.”

Councilperson Brenneman has a concern about “where we are going with this.” The Airport Authority is requesting an increase for FY 2007-2008 and it seems the minutes reflect an adequate carryover of funds to allow the Airport to proceed with projects this year. Brenneman doesn’t feel there is a need for the City to raise the tax levy to accommodate the Airport’s requested increase of \$160,000.

Nolan stated staff feels the Airport Authority should be able to do projects with the budget they have.

Brenneman stated the City has made budget cuts and it may be time to consider a tax increase. One of the things cut from the City’s budget was improvements at the camping area at Ta-Ha-Zouka. Brenneman feels those improvements “should stay in the budget.”

Councilperson Van Dyke said “that’s a whole new discussion.”

Nolan said the item isn’t specifically on this agenda but it can be discussed at another Finance Committee meeting. However, the discussion needs to occur quickly because the budget is being assembled per previous direction from elected officials through the cuts and adds sheet.

Reeder agrees with Brenneman that improvements need to be made at Ta-Ha-Zouka. However, the water improvements should be done first. It doesn’t make sense to do a whole lot of other improvements prior to that project being completed. Reeder also has heard that Wis-Pak “floods that area every now and then.”

Smith stated the Wis-Pak concern is the sanitary sewer. Staff is aware of the sanitary sewer concerns and plans are in place to address the problem. Smith stated “we would all like to do improvements to Ta-Ha-Zouka Park” but everything competes for available revenues and staff time. Smith stated the Parks Division does have a lot of improvements in the Level III budget to get done in the parks including the water improvements and ball field lighting. It is not an issue of totally neglecting the parks.

Reeder feels it would be best to do the upgrades after the water improvements are completed.

Brenneman just doesn’t want elected officials or staff to forget about making improvements to Ta-Ha-Zouka Park. Brenneman feels Ta-Ha-Zouka Park is important for economic growth of the City.

This item was for discussion purposes only.

The final item discussed was Fire Division **ambulance** fees. Fire Chief Shane Weidner and City Clerk Beth Deck compiled information on the proposed increase in ambulance fees. On June 13, 2007, Weidner and Deck received a copy of an ambulance fees survey completed by Grand Island. The survey indicates the City of Norfolk is far below the average for charges for ambulance transports compared to other municipalities. The last increase in ambulance rates for the City of Norfolk was in November 2002 when the charge for BLS Emergency transports (A0429) was increased from \$150 to \$270 and new codes were added to expand the City’s ability to bill patients for various levels of service. The rate for ALS Emergency transports (A0427) did not increase at that time and has remained at \$375.00 since March of 1998. Every

2-3 years staff has reviewed ambulance rates to study changes in fees by municipalities of comparable size. Rates have remained steady until this latest review which indicates the City of Norfolk fees are significantly below the average of municipalities surveyed. Therefore, staff recommends moving forward with an increase to ambulance fees as outlined below. The suggested increases still have City of Norfolk fees below the average but comparable to other municipalities.

<u>Service Level</u>	<u>Base Rate</u>	<u>Medicare Code</u>	<u>Mileage (loaded)</u>		
			<u>1-17</u>	<u>18-50</u>	<u>50+</u>
Basic Life Support (BLS) Non-Emergency	\$300.00	A0428	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$8.00
BLS Emergency	\$450.00	A0429	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$8.00
BLS Assist Only	\$50.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Advanced Life Support (ALS1) Non-Emergency	\$500.00	A0426	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$8.00
ALS1 Emergency	\$550.00	A0427	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$8.00
(one or more ALS interventions)					
ALS2 Emergency	\$600.00	A0433	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$8.00
(at least three different medications/procedures)					
ALS Assist Only	\$150.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Specialty Care Transport (SCT)	\$700.00	A0434	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$8.00
(interhospital service beyond scope of paramedic)					

Mayor Adams questioned the Medicare reimbursement rate.

Weidner stated the Medicare reimbursement rate for BLS Emergency is \$348 and for ALS Emergency the rate is \$414.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Reeder to approve an increase in ambulance fees as discussed. Roll call: Ayes: Councilperson Brenneman, Coy, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor. Nays: None. Absent: Fauss and Lange. Motion carried.

Councilperson Van Dyke moved, seconded by Councilperson Reeder to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 a.m. Roll call: Ayes: Council members Brenneman, Coy, Reeder, Saunders, Van Dyke, Wilson and Mayor Adams. Nays: None. Absent: Fauss and Reeder. Motion carried.

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Elizabeth A. Deck  
City Clerk