

Work Session

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Norfolk, Nebraska, held a work session in Library Meeting Room A, 308 Prospect Avenue, Norfolk, Nebraska, on Monday, October 7, 2019, beginning at 12:00 p.m.

Mayor Josh Moenning called the meeting to order.

Roll call found the following present: Mayor Josh Moenning and Councilmembers Cory Granquist, Gary L. Jackson, Jim Lange, Rob Merrill, Thad Murren and Dick Pfeil. Absent: Shane Clausen and Fred Wiebelhaus.

Staff members present were City Administrator Andy Colvin, City Clerk Beth Deck, Finance Officer Randy Gates, City Attorney Danielle Myers-Noelle, Public Works Director Steven Rames, Risk Manager Lyle Lutt, Public Safety Director Shane Weidner, Police Captain Chad Reiman, Street Superintendent Mark Miller, Shop Superintendent Jason Hansen and Secretary Brianna Duerst.

Vehicle Parking District

City Administrator Andy Colvin said the Vehicle Parking District Board has requested several changes for the downtown area.

Steve McNally, Vehicle Parking District board member, said the requested changes are based on increased activity downtown, both residential and commercial. McNally discussed two changes the board would like to suggest:

- 1) Addition of overnight parking on side streets to allow residents to park closer to their residence. A residential parking stall in one of the lots would need to be purchased to use this option; and
- 2) Increase parking permit rate from \$65.00 per year to \$75.00 per year for employee, \$75.00 per year for residential and \$100.00 for residential parking including parking on side streets.

Connie Geary, Vehicle Parking District board member, discussed additional changes the board requests:

- 3) A 20% oversell of employee parking permits in all parking lots;
- 4) The sale of Parking Lot A located by Wacker Home Improvement on 4th Street. Geary said the lot is under-utilized as only 11 of the 26 stalls are rented; and
- 5) A change to the number of designated stalls in each lot.

Geary further discussed the overnight parking on side streets stating a special permit could be issued to residents that would be tied to a specific lot.

McNally said the streets dedicated to overnight parking could be emergency snow routes to assist in snow removal and noted that no overnight parking on Norfolk Avenue was recommended by City staff because of snow removal and street cleaning issues. Public Safety Director Shane Weidner said that not every snow constitutes a snow emergency declaration, however, the snow still must be removed.

Russ Wilcox, 1627 Blackberry Drive, expressed concern about tying overnight passes to specific lots and not overselling residential parking permits, as well as the lack of lighting on streets, and in parking lots and alleys.

Public Works Director Steve Rames said the City is currently re-striping downtown parking. The shifting of lines should increase the number of parking spaces.

Geary said there are currently 524 spaces available in 11 lots. Of those, 86 spaces are not rented.

Mayor Moenning feels the City should do a comprehensive study on downtown parking, headed by the Engineering Department, with input from the Vehicle Parking District. The City could manage the budget and have the VPD maintain the marketing.

Weidner and Police Captain Chad Reimann discussed enforcement with parking on side streets. Reimann said downtown business owners are required to remove snow from sidewalks and push the snow into the street to be cleared by City staff. If there are cars parked on the street, owners would need to scoop around those vehicles. Reimann also said the downtown area is not usually a big concern for law enforcement because it is typically free of vehicles and officers are able to focus on other areas of town. If an officer needs to issue a citation or have a vehicle towed, time is taken away from other areas of the City.

Wilcox suggested overnight passes be issued to landlords to distribute accordingly and to enforce the landlord.

Doug Stebbing, Mohawk Apartments, suggested the price for residential permits be \$75.00 and the price for the overnight pass be \$25.00 as he feels the rate of \$100.00 for all residential permits is too high.

City Clerk Beth Deck reminded board members and Council members that billings for parking permits are mailed out mid-November so, if there is a desire to increase the price of the permit, that decision would need to be made prior to the bills being sent out or the fee will remain the same \$65.00 for 2019-2020.

Moenning requested City staff to put together the necessary documentation to make the requested changes and bring back to a Council subcommittee for further discussion.

Street Closures

Reimann explained an event application was recently received that requested closing Norfolk Avenue from 2nd Street to 5th Street, which, in reality, means closing down 1st Street to 6th Street for safety. The added concern is over the time of the event, 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with increased after school and work traffic. Reimann noted that in previous years the street has not been closed for this event but the organizer thought closing the street might protect pedestrian traffic.

Moenning directed staff to discuss the concerns with the event organizer.

There being no further business, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 1:32 p.m.

Josh Moenning
Mayor

ATTEST:

Brianna Duerst
City Clerk

(S E A L)