

COUNCIL WORKSESSION, MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2015 AT 5:30 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Duval with the following members present: Harrington, Krings, Odom, Niemeyer, Hoops, Skutnik, Goebel. Absent: None.

Others present: Joe Patterson, Dave Wacker, Kent Gilbert, Pete Kortum, Jeff Hassenstab, Marvin Schultes, Jack Newlun, Aaron Schardt, Matt Kuhr, Justin Osborne, Jenny Theesen, John Brooks.

Moved by Niemeyer, seconded by Skutnik that the Worksession Agenda be adopted. The motion carried.

Council President Duval read the public meeting notice.

Presentation of Heartland Pet Connection Annual Report.

John Brooks, 406 N. Cedar, Heartland Pet Connection Board Member, introduced Jenny Theesen, the new Shelter Manager for Heartland Pet Connection.

Ms. Theesen passed out to Council a fact sheet (*Attached and made part of original minutes.*) and reviewed with them the breakdown of the 629 total animals they have taken in.

Council President Duval questioned if they are able to release animals to other rescue shelters in the community.

Ms. Theesen stated that they have.

Councilmember Niemeyer stated that in the past the number of cats taken in exceeded the number of dogs but it looks as though that has changed with more dogs than cats coming in.

Ms. Theesen stated that they are seeing a decline of cats coming in.

Councilmember Krings questioned if there is a cost for reclaiming an animal.

Ms. Theesen stated there is a fee for every reclaim.

Council President Duval asked about plans to decrease euthanasia.

Ms. Theesen stated that numbers have decreased and she attributed the decline to public education.

Councilmember Hoops questioned information regarding adoptions and reclaimed animals and if there is somewhere public can view that information.

Joe Patterson, City Administrator, stated they updated the contract with Heartland Pet Connection in 2013 increasing the City's contribution to \$52,000.00.

Presentation on Hastings Municipal Airport.

Councilmember Niemeyer began by saying they wanted to explain what happens at the Airport and have some discussion. He said he had asked Matt Kuhr to put a presentation together regarding information on the Airport.

Aaron Schardt introduced himself and Matt Kuhr.

Mr. Kuhr stated he has a degree in business and aircraft management and currently rents a hangar at the Hastings Municipal Airport and that his motive for this presentation is to simply educate and let people know how valuable the Airport is and how it stands in comparison to other airports in the state.

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Mr. Schardt stated he had been an aviation enthusiast all his life. He began his presentation (*Attached and made a part of original minutes.*) by stating that many people do not understand aviation and to really be a thriving airport you have to provide full service. He stated they were there to advocate for the Airport and help enhance the Hastings Municipal Airport. He explained to Council the Hastings Airport Association formed in 2015 as a group of aviation professionals and enthusiasts who wanted to facilitate communication, educate the public, be a source of knowledge and provide leadership. Mr. Schardt explained commercial aviation and general aviation and stated Hastings has primarily a general aviation customer base. He shared with Council that two-thirds of the aircrafts in the air are general. He told Council there are 81 public use airports in Nebraska and Hastings is competing against all of them. He said that Hastings is the sixth largest community in the state and has a top ten airport facility consisting of almost 11,000 feet of lighted runway, self-service fuel pumps, is non-tower controlled, has VASI landing guidance and can serve about any aircraft. Mr. Schardt stated that the Hastings Municipal Airport is an important economic development asset and is classified as a National Airport which means it is an important part of national transportation system. He stated the airport is 90% funded through federal taxes on aircraft fuel.

Justin Osborne, 4660 W. Prairie Lake Road, spoke on behalf of Dave Rippe, Hastings Economic Development Corp.(HEDC), regarding the economic side of having an airport in our community and how it presents a first impression for many visiting companies, aids in business recruitment and is used as well by local companies. He stated that the economic impact of the Airport is difficult to calculate but is quite valuable to local businesses and industry such as AGP, Eaton Corp. and Thermo King. He stated they felt a well run Fixed Base Operator (FBO) is a critical part of any airport. He finished by encouraging the Council to call on HEDC if there is any way they can help with the management of the Hastings Municipal Airport.

Mr. Schardt explained FBO as a private business located at an airport that sells services. He told Council that nearly \$2 million comes to the community in the form of AIP federal funds. He indicated that in 2002 the Airport Authority disbanded and the City of Hastings has owned and managed the Airport since and doesn't really have an employee with any aviation background. He stated that he felt the service side of the Airport is lacking as they currently do not have a FBO to provide service at the Airport. Mr. Schardt stated that airports can actually have the opportunity to generate revenue to help with expenses. He indicated of the ten airports in the top twenty-five that are community owned, only Hastings does not have a FBO. Mr. Schardt told Council that successful airports are all about service and that you get customers here and sell them something whether it is fuel, food or maintenance. He explained that customers will pay for service. He stated you can gauge how active the airport is by how much fuel is sold and stated that Hastings sells one-third to one-half the amount of fuel it's competitors sell. Mr. Schardt relayed to Council that he felt the Airport is lacking in services and that he felt there was a need for better communication between the Council and the pilot community. He told Council he felt they had the opportunity as a Council to do nothing, establish an Airport Advisory Group or re-establish the Hastings Airport Authority.

Mr. Patterson stated that an Airport Advisory Board currently exists in City Code.

Mr. Schardt stated they were asking Council to consider re-activating the Airport Advisory Board or transfer ownership and management to an Airport Authority.

Dave Wacker, City Engineer, stated he felt Hastings is competitive on fuel prices when you are looking a Kearney and Grand Island.

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Mr. Schardt stated that he felt food service and no courtesy car were major services missing from the Airport.

Jack Newlun, Airport Superintendent, began his presentation on the airport facility operation and maintenance. *(Attached and made part of original minutes.)* He reviewed with Council a summary of FAA projects and compared it to a one and six year street plan for the Airport and referred to it as going back and capturing fuel tax money paid, that is now being used for infrastructure at the Airport. He reviewed all the building, facility and airfield repairs and maintenance costs funded by the City beginning in 2003 through the present. Mr. Newlun also went through equipment maintenance costs and explained these were just repairs and that no new equipment has been purchased. He talked to Council about the responsibilities of the department and of only having one fulltime employee.

Councilmember Niemeyer stated that from a maintenance standpoint he felt staff does a great job. He felt they kept things running smoothly and made do with what they have but on the service side there are things that we can be doing better and as a Council we need to decide what we want our airport to be. He stated that the City subsidized other groups.

Councilmember Krings questioned what it would take to get the Airport Advisory Board up and going again and maybe get some feedback and ideas from the pilot community. He stated he felt it was important that we listen them. He stated that the Council needs to know what they are willing to subsidize and if a proposal came to them, they would evaluate and make a decision.

Councilmember Harrington stated he felt we need to gather more information and felt our last experience with a FBO had some problems and made us all a little gun shy but maybe it is time to look at an FBO again.

Councilmember Krings asked what we need to do to get the Airport Advisory Board back up and running.

Mr. Patterson indicated that the Mayor would just need to make some appointments to that board. He stated when the City took over the management of the Airport, the physical facilities were in tough shape and he commended Mr. Newlun and Mr. Wacker on getting them back into shape.

Councilmember Goebel talked about not being able to re-establish the taxing authority if they chose to re-instate an airport authority.

Mr. Patterson indicated they would be similar to the Community Redevelopment Authority and would request their levy authority through the City of Hastings and be under the City's lid.

Councilmember Odom stated he felt they just needed to make sure the Mayor is aware that appointments need to be made and look into the big question of whether a FBO may work now.

Moved by Krings, seconded by Skutnik there being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting be adjourned at 6:55 P.M. The motion carried.