

**Inver Grove Heights Worksession Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, September 3, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The City Council of Inver Grove Heights met in Work Session on Tuesday, September 3, 2019, in the City Hall EOC Room (Emergency Operations Center). Mayor George Tourville called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Present were Mayor Tourville; Councilmembers Bartholomew, Perry, Piekarski-Krech, and Dietrich. Staff: City Administrator/Interim Deputy Clerk Joe Lynch, Police Chief Melissa Chiodo, Community Development Director Heather Rand, Interim Finance Director/Senior Accountant Shannon Battles, and Fire Chief Thill.

**1. Organizational Structure Review (Administration)**

City Administrator Joe Lynch discussed the organizational structure review and stated that after presentations, discussions, and feedback were received, staff is recommending retaining the current organizational structure.

The following information was considered:

- Replace the Finance Director position
- Human Resources Coordinator position
- City Clerk position
- Create an Assistant to the City Administrator position
- Create a Deputy Clerk position

A breakdown of each role was given by City Administrator Lynch as follows:

- The Finance Director position is in the 2019 Budget. Someone has been performing in that position on an interim basis for six months. The job requires the person to be a CPA but is not a statutory requirement. There is another designation called a Certified Professional Finance Officer that may be more appropriate. He stated it was his recommendation to fill the position and to consider the person currently performing the role.
- The City Clerk position is currently open. The job description has been modified and due to the modification, there is an impact on the grade and compensation of the position. He recommended going forward with advertising and seeking candidates for this position as soon as possible.
- The Administrative Services Coordinator was a full-time position serving three others: The City Administrator, Human Resources Manager, and the City Clerk. He suggested changing the job title to Human Resources Coordinator. This position would report to the Human Resources Manager and work on HR needs. The position would become a .6 FTE. He stated there is an internal candidate interested in the position. The position can be posted as an internal hire, and also advertised on the outside.
- The Management Analyst position was non-benefitted. He suggested changing it to an Assistant to the City Administrator position. The position would support the City Administrator and help with ongoing projects, research, process, and development. He stated there is someone internal that would fit the requirements of the position. This could be an internal or external hire.
- Due to three Elections taking place in 2020 he requested creating a Deputy Clerk position. This would be a half-time position funded from the savings of other positions. The position would assist the City Clerk during Elections and assist the City Administrator in non-Election years. This would be a new part-time position. He recommended advertising publicly for the position.

He noted if the position changes were made, there would be a savings of \$24,500 in 2019 salaries.

Councilmember Piekarski-Krech stated the highest clerical level could be the Assistant to different people. She suggested other City employees help during Election time. She stated the salaries and the positions are higher than what she is comfortable with. She stated there are some very qualified people within clerical with others being hired to help.

Councilmember Perry commented that with all the Director level positions being filled recently, to stay consistent she suggested the Finance Director position be posted even though the Interim Finance Director is doing a great job. She encouraged her to apply for the position. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech stated every job should be posted externally. Mayor Tourville stated they should be posted both internally and externally.

Mayor Tourville asked about the four or five people that were working and helping the City Clerk around Elections due to workload and what they were being paid. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech commented they should use the people that were helping with Elections in the past and see if they would return.

City Administrator Lynch responded there are different categories of workers. There are Election Judges that are Election Day staff, they are at the Precincts, make \$12.00 an hour and go through mandated State Training. There are Head Judges that are in charge at each Precinct that make \$13.50 an hour. They are responsible for making sure everything goes according to standards and law. They collect the information and bring it to City Hall at the end of the evening and help report totals. There is an Absentee Ballot Committee that consisted of five individuals that work on occasion with Absentee Ballots and work approximately 60 hours during the Election season. He stated there are two individuals that were head of assisting with all aspects of Elections. They make about \$20.00 an hour and have said they would return but they are retired and don't want to work the 600 to 800 hours they worked last year.

He discussed concerns with using full-time office staff stating they would be sitting at training, at a Precinct, or getting paid their regular hourly wage because they are Union and working alongside those that make Election wages. They would be taken away from their normal daytime activities. He stated staff has indicated it would not work out to have staff working at elections full time. There needs to be one City employee designated to oversee Elections. He stated the City Clerk would still be the City's designated Election Official. The Deputy Clerk would assist the City Clerk in the Elections during Election season from around March 1<sup>st</sup> to the end of November. There is not an Election in 2021, during that time they would assist the City Administrator.

Councilmember Bartholomew suggested having the Assistant to the City Administrator combined with the Deputy Clerk position and do both functions. He stated the \$83,000 for the Assistant to the City Administrator was high, but that he could support that amount if it was combined with the Deputy City Clerk position. Any work excess could be taken on with current City staff. He asked to see a refined job description for the Assistant City Administrator/Deputy Clerk position.

Mayor Tourville stated he liked the idea of a Deputy Clerk. Mayor Tourville stated he liked the idea of combining the two positions.

City Administrator Lynch stated that doing the suggested combination would reduce it from 4.1 to 3.6. The positions would be Finance Director, HR Coordinator, Assistant to the City Administrator/Deputy Clerk.

Councilmember Dietrich commented she was struggling with what precipitated the need to change the current organizational chart. She stated she spoke with HR and was told a .5 position was needed. She commented that due to the budget, this is not the year to do this.

Councilmember Bartholomew asked about the pay scale for the Finance Director position. City Administrator Lynch responded the salary was what was proposed with the current internal staff person.

Councilmember Piekarski-Krech stated the Administrative position salary was high and that a current member of the clerical staff could fill the position. Councilmember Bartholomew asked how the \$83,000 figure was chosen for the Assistant to the City Administrator position. City Administrator Lynch responded all current full-time positions have gone through a classification study that was adopted in 2018. He stated that is where the salaries come from, some were at the top, some are processing through. He stated the Finance Director, City Clerk, and the Assistant to the City Administrator were scaled at 5/10 steps and are considered mid-points. They are advertised at beginning salary to mid-point

salary. The Deputy Clerk was comparable to the office support staff positions. He stated the Consultant scaled the numbers and offered the suggestions listed at mid-point.

Councilmember Bartholomew stated the HR position could be scaled back from .6 to .5. Councilmember Perry agreed.

City Administrator Lynch clarified that Council was requesting a Finance Director, half-time position for the HR Coordinator, City Clerk, and an Assistant to the City Administrator/Deputy City Clerk position. Mayor Tourville and Councilmember Bartholomew agreed. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech suggested changing the duties of the Assistant to the City Administrator to state they help with the Elections. Mayor Tourville commented there may be advantages to keeping the Deputy Clerk title such as filling in for the City Clerk or signing forms. He suggested working on the job description. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech suggested having a full time Deputy Clerk and as part of their duties they are Assistant to the City Administrator. Councilmember Bartholomew agreed with the suggestion.

Councilmember Piekarski-Krech stated the two positions that should be advertised and filled would be the Finance Director and City Clerk. She suggested discussing the other positions further. Mayor Tourville questioned the HR Coordinator position and asked if the job description should be the same. City Administrator Lynch responded funding for the HR Coordinator is in the 2019 Budget as it takes the place of the currently vacant Administrative Services Coordinator position. He stated he would get in touch with the HR Manager and ask if they want to make the position half time. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech asked if the HR position included other departments and cross training. Councilmember Perry commented that cross training employees is important for filling in positions. Councilmember Dietrich asked if someone was currently helping in HR. City Administrator Lynch responded yes, someone is helping out in HR and has a degree in HR. They are also doing another job for the City.

Councilmember Dietrich asked what other positions in the classification code of the Assistant to the City Administrator position that he knows of at \$83,000. City Administrator Lynch responded he didn't have the information with him, but it could be some of the supervisory positions. He stated he would have to look at the entire scale. Councilmember Dietrich requested that information.

Councilmember Bartholomew asked what could be done to drop the proposed total from \$350,000 to \$300,000. City Administrator Lynch responded if the HR Coordinator was dropped to half time, eliminate the Deputy Clerk, and add that to the expected savings, it comes close to \$70,000. Councilmember Bartholomew stated he was concerned about the \$83,000 pay scale for the Assistant to the City Administrator and wanted to see a stronger job description, more emphasis toward the day-to-day helping with other departments, as well as the responsibility toward the City Administrator.

Mayor Tourville asked if the Deputy Clerk and the Assistant to the City Administrator positions were union positions. City Administrator Lynch responded the Assistant to the City Administrator position would be non-union and the Deputy Clerk position would be Union. The HR Coordinator at .5 would be a non-Union position because it deals with confidentiality.

Mayor Tourville asked for cost figures of what was spent in Elections. For example, the positions of the Deputy Clerk, Judges, and Election Judges. Councilmember Dietrich asked what the benefit was of having a Deputy Clerk. City Administrator Lynch responded they can sign documents on behalf of the City per State Law in the absence of the City Clerk or the City Clerk can designate them to sign items. They can also do licensing, begin background checks for Applicants, and can sign off, if approved, on them in the absence of the City Clerk.

City Administrator Lynch asked the Council about the Finance Director position and the requirement to have a CPA. He stated the requirement would eliminate the current Interim Finance Director. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech stated she would prefer to keep the CPA requirements. Councilmember Bartholomew stated he preferred a CPA Certification. City Administrator Lynch stated the job description would need to be slightly refined.

City Administrator Lynch clarified the Council requests as follows:

- For the Finance Director position, modify the job description, state CPA preferred but not required. Advertise internally and externally.
- City Clerk position stays as currently described. Both internal and external applicants.
- The Assistant to the City Administrator becomes a combination position with Deputy Clerk. Modify the job description to state they assist with Elections, licensing, and serve in the absence of the City Clerk.
- Get numbers on the Elections. A breakdown of costs for the Judges.
- No Deputy Clerk position will be created.
- HR Coordinator position as a half time position. The position does more than just assist the HR department and would assist in other departments.

Councilmember Bartholomew asked if the Council would see the job description for the Finance Director position before it is posted. City Administrator Lynch responded yes. Councilmember Bartholomew recommended the job description for the Finance Director position state they have a CPA or are in the process of obtaining their CPA.

City Administrator Lynch stated the City Clerk position states they either are or will become a Certified Municipal Clerk. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech stated she wanted them to be certified when hired. She didn't like paying to have them certified and then losing money. She suggested they could also pay for their own certification. Mayor Tourville stated like any position, the City will assist in continuing education and re-certification. City Administrator Lynch stated the requirement of being certified will be on the job description. He stated he would get the job descriptions on the Consent Agenda.

## 2. **2020 Budget (Finance)**

City Administrator Lynch discussed the Budget Calendar.

He discussed the preliminary numbers from Dakota County on market values and net tax capacity. Market value is up \$54.5 million dollars. All categories except utilities are up. He stated it was the first time in three years for commercial industrial properties. \$54.5 million dollars is due to new construction, \$48.5 million dollars of that is due to residential.

City Administrator Lynch discussed the preliminary tax levy and the general tax levy. The operating levy is the number needed to operate the general fund. With all revenues and taxes, it offsets all expenses. There is a debt levy that is up \$308,000 some of which is due to the Fire Station debt. There are separate water management tax districts.

Councilmember Bartholomew stated that wages increased by \$367,000, additional debt levy of \$308,000, and pavement management for \$500,000. Those combined is a starting point of \$1,175,000 and then \$500,000 in priorities. He stated when speaking of an increase of the levy he is speaking of the \$1,175,000. Anything above and beyond is where he looks at needs versus wants.

City Administrator Lynch stated in June the Council discussed priorities and established the Police Department Cadet Program, an IT Position for Network Administrator, and a split position between Parks Maintenance and Stormwater. The third has no impact to the general fund and will be funded through contributions from the stormwater fund with the other half being an offset to the coverage from the deficit between revenues and expenses in Parks and Recreation. He stated \$192,000 is the total with \$110,000 for salary and benefits for the Network Administrator position and \$82,000 for the Cadet Program.

City Administrator Lynch discussed the following changes to the General Fund:

1. One item being done differently is family insurance. Starting with 2020 they have done actuals, which provide exact numbers, and a savings to the general fund in the amount of \$245,000.
2. Rental and Code Compliance position is being moved back into the general fund for 2020.

3. Technology is the greatest change. It has been an internal service fund. All costs associated to technology has been allocated to departments. He commented discussions and questions have arisen around that formula and should it be based on staffing levels, number of units, or square footage. He stated they would like to use it as an operational fund in the general fund except for capital. The capital would be reallocated to departments. IT would maintain all licensing renewals and updates and more accurately account for software and hardware.
4. There is a third election this year which adds labor costs.
5. Moving the Communications Specialist position back to the General Fund. This is currently funded at a 30 hour a week job and could be moved to 40 hours a week to help with other department communication needs.

He noted the following changes in General Fund revenues:

- For the first time they will hit the \$1.2 mark with building permit revenues
- Resident engineering is an offset to costs for development.
- Fiscal disparities: the 60% of all commercial valuation gets pooled and then redistributed within the metro area. He stated Inver Grove Heights is a net loser in fiscal disparities.
- Decreases out of the animal licensing, down on rental licensing,
- Will not have access to the \$100,000 Grant in 2020.
- Pawn fees were a pass through of the fee every time they did a transaction.
- They hope to continue to get Recycling Grant funding.

He stated the net difference is an increase of \$687,600 minus \$250,000 equaling \$437,000.

Councilmember Piekarski-Krech asked about IT and if they would be getting additional information. City Administrator Lynch responded there was a question about whether to hire a position or contract for service. He stated the IT Director has spoken to staff and department heads and felt it was a better to hire someone.

City Administrator Lynch stated it is proposed that the preliminary levy be set at .54090, which is a 1.03% increase in the tax levy rate. It increases the tax levy \$1,632,862 which is a 7% increase in levy dollars. The preliminary number can be brought down for the final, it cannot be increased. That covers \$500,000 in pavement management, \$308,000 in debt service, and a cost of living adjustment for all positions and changes to operational expenses.

Councilmember Bartholomew stated he would like to have a discussion on general fund excesses to make sure the funds are used correctly. He stated he would like to look at the Host Community Fund. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech commented there is a big increase in valuations leading to more in taxes; she questioned why there is such a big increase in the rate. Councilmember Bartholomew stated we are raising revenue in fees and property values were rising.

### **3. 2020 Census (Community Development)**

Community Development Director Heather Rand stated next year is a Census year. Other cities have created a Citizen Census Committee (CCC) who takes the lead in getting the word out. She stated that herself, the Communications Director, and the Associate City Planner have met, and discussed organizing the CCC along with possible assistance from the Chamber of Commerce, and Inver Hills Community College.

Mayor Tourville stated the County would be starting a group. He commented there needs to be press releases stating that people are counted. City Administrator Lynch stated Heather Botten is the liaison with the Census. Community Development Director Rand mentioned the importance of getting a group together, and to get the word out through newsletters and social media. If there are any other suggestions to add to the list of contacts, she asked the Council to get in touch with her. Mayor Tourville suggested to begin with information on the City website.

**4. Railroad Quiet Zone (Community Development)**

Community Development Director Rand discussed the Railroad Quiet Zone and stated the Consultant, SRF, stated that the crossing at 66<sup>th</sup> Street would need more work at an additional cost. She stated she connected with the railroad and the consultant would need to come into town and do an evaluation. They could charge up to \$25,000 and would make use of the last work the previous consultant completed. She stated they would not commit to the cost being less than \$25,000 until they complete an evaluation. She stated the second Agreement would be for engineering for \$25,000. The third Agreement would be up to \$350,000 to perform additional work. She stated the process takes about twelve months and asked if the

Council wanted to see the first Agreement at a future City Council meeting. Funding would come from the Host Community Fund for all three phases. She stated funding from the State could be pursued but it is not commonly received. She stated there are residents in attendance who may want to speak.

Brenda Sabistina, 10380 Brent Avenue, stated 105<sup>th</sup> has been on the docket for two years and the whistle is a real problem. You can measure the increase of the trains, the length, and speed. Some trains park on 105<sup>th</sup> and have blocked a road. Mayor Tourville stated they had similar issues on 71<sup>st</sup>. He commented that if there is an Engineer in the train, they can block an intersection.

Paul Bute, 10016 Barnes Trail, asked if the railroad pays taxes and who does track inspections. City Administrator Lynch responded they pay taxes called personal property taxes, but it is at a different classification. The railroad has an inspector that inspects the tracks. Mayor Tourville stated each State has jurisdiction over the railroads within the State. The State has a Railroad Commission out of the Department of Transportation. Community Development Director Rand stated she could contact the Government Affairs person.

Ms. Sabistina asked if there was a speed limit the trains must abide by when going through the City. Mayor Tourville responded there is a speed limit depending on population and area. He commented there are different whistle blows.

Mr. Bute stated they fixed the intersection by him but didn't fix the track in between very well. He stated that a train coming from the refinery has a lot of potential energy. He lives in the blast zone if something happens.

Councilmember Bartholomew stated the need to start thinking of this as a quality of life issue. Councilmember Piekarski-Krech commented she was concerned about additional costs being added.

Mayor Tourville asked what SRF thought of the situation. Community Development Director Rand responded SRF felt that the railroad misled them. Mayor Tourville requested having information put together. City Administrator Lynch stated they would prepare a document and have it ready for the City Council meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Mayor Tourville stated the message from the Council is that we would try to get it done.

**B. ADJOURN**

**Motion by Piekarski-Krech, seconded by Dietrich to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.**

**Ayes: 5**

**Nays: 0 Motion carried.**