

CITY HALL TASK FORCE MEETING SUMMARY

The City Hall Task Force met at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 21, 2019 in Conference Room No. 1 at the Willmar City Office Building.

Members present were: Council Members Julie Asmus, Fernando Alvarado, Shawn Mueske, and Kathy Schwantes.

Also present were: Mayor Marv Calvin, Interim Planning and Development Services Director Sarah Swedburg, City Administrator Ike Holland, Rudy Vigil WRAC 8, Shelby Lindrud "West Central Tribune" and Administrative Assistant Janell Sommers.

The Task Force reviewed the feedback from staff that was asked for on each site. The cost to purchase each of the properties was as follows:

Fire Station (dry cleaners and two small businesses): \$1.3 to \$1.4 million. Concern was expressed on the timeline and when to vacate.

Block 25 (former Nelsen Cleaners): Administrator Holland explained there are multiple owners involved and to date the value was inconclusive. The "Use it Again" store has expressed no interest in selling and they purchased it for \$60,000. The Task Force discussed moving forward with this site or not. It was noted the City is obligated to offer the appraised value.

Current Site No purchase cost. Demolition cost of \$120,000 - \$220,000.

Becker Avenue and 5th Street SW: No cost, city owned.

Christianson CPA: Administrator Holland has toured the building and talked with the owner. The City should be receiving an appraisal next week. They paid \$600,000 ten years ago and the HVAC system has been updated along with the exterior. The building is three levels with the first two being very open. It was noted part of the building was built in 1904 and there have since been four additions and remodels.

Hardware Hank Building: \$399,000 was the price quoted by the realtor in 2017.

The Task Force then reviewed the parking space availability for each site. It was determined that there is adequate parking available at each site ranging from 45-75 spaces and in some cases overflow available nearby when a larger capacity is needed.

The possibility of using the city-owned property on the current Fire Station block was brought forward for consideration by the Task Force. The members spoke in favor of considering this site as there is no purchase cost and parking availability is adequate with back up in the city-owned lot east of the hospital for large events. The possibility of incorporating a Council Chambers with the training room seemed feasible as well.

The Task Force went on to look at each of the properties and discuss which ones should be moved forward for further consideration. Block 25 - it was noted that if there was no interest in selling in the next 48 hours it should be removed from consideration. 5th and Becker was eliminated due to lack of interest and accessibility. Building on the current site would displace employees and add 90 days onto the timeline. Discussion was held as to the possibility of making this area a green

space. The members looked favorably on receiving more detailed information on the currently city-owned Fire Station property.

The loss of property taxes of \$20,500 per year from the Christianson building and \$9,000 per year for the Hardware Hank building were added in for consideration. Administrator Holland pointed out the cost to update the current City Hall from the district heating system being estimated a couple years ago at between \$50-65,000 with a July 2020 deadline.

Each member gave an overview of their thoughts hitting the high points. It was a consensus that it should have a defined entrance for the public, be built for the future and be visible. Mayor Calvin touched on this being an opportunity to take care of the ADA requirements at the Fire Station.

The next meeting date will be determined by polling the members. Chair Schwantes asked that Public Works Director Christensen, Finance Director Steve, Fire Chief Frank Hanson and Project Manager Curt Hein be invited to attend.

The meeting ended at 1:30 p.m.

Janell Sommers
Administrative Assistant