

## MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

OCTOBER 16, 2018

The Special Meeting of the Ames City Council was called to order by Mayor John Haila at 6:00 p.m. on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2018, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue. Council Members Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen, Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, David Martin, and Chris Nelson were present. *Ex officio* Member Allie Hoskins was also present.

### **DISCUSSION OF PARKING METER RATES AND CUSTOMER/EMPLOYEE PARKING IN THE DOWNTOWN :**

Mayor Haila introduced Public Works Director John Joiner and Traffic Engineer Damion Pregitzer to review the staff report. Mr. Joiner discussed the scope, timing, and cost of a parking study for the Downtown area. He said the comprehensive approach would include parking supply and demand study, parking alternatives analysis, review of policies and practices, financial plan, report development, public presentation and meetings, and outreach and stakeholder meetings. He said this approach would take three to six months and cost up to \$125,000. Mr. Joiner said an alternate approach is a simplified study that would analyze the current demand, supply, and utilization of parking in Downtown and propose alternatives to meet identified unmet needs. The simplified approach would take four to five weeks and cost up to \$40,000. Mr. Martin asked if the simplified analysis would be done internally or externally. Mr. Joiner said both options are being considered. Mayor Haila asked when the last parking study was done. Mr. Pregitzer said in 2012/13 a parking study was done to look at the most efficient way to build a ramp between Clark Avenue and Kellogg Avenue, but did not look at parking efficiency area by area.

Mr. Gartin said he's still unclear about what will be received from both alternatives and said he is willing to spend more if the product would be useful in policy making. Mr. Pregitzer said the first two items (parking supply and demand study and parking alternatives analysis) will get rid of the unknowns. He said one of the biggest questions is whether the current parking supply is being used most efficiently. He said it is difficult to say a ramp is needed without knowing if a percentage of current parking is underutilized. Mr. Pregitzer said if parking is not being used in the best way, there could be simple fixes or something more could be needed such as a structure. He said after those first steps the operational details will follow. He said the consultant would bring experience from other cities that have undergone similar challenges.

Council Member Gartin wondered about the potential of major developments Downtown and how that would impact the validity of this data. He asked if it's worthwhile to spend this much now when it's likely things will change. He said it would be helpful to know if the consultant had the capacity to show the current situation and insert a potential change, and then show the impact of that change. Mr. Pregitzer said yes, and when talking to the consultants, the study would include any future visions the Council may have for the area. He said the consultants have assured him that future growth would be included as part of the services provided. Mr. Pregitzer said if staff can create an accurate picture with assumptions of supply and demand, that will make the consultants that much more effective. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said the public presentation and outreach is included in the expanded plan and asked if that is included in the simplified plan. Mr. Pregitzer said in the simplified plan it would be on a smaller scale. Mr. Schainker said this is a generic cost, and features can be added to either plan.

Ms. Corrieri asked what a consultant would do differently with the data than City staff. Mr. Pregitzer said what he has provided in the past is an estimate of the revenue and parking being utilized, and the consultant would provide an actual survey block by block, count trips in and out of parking lots, and analyze which stalls are being used to get it down to a detailed use. Ms. Betcher asked if a more complex analysis could be done after initial data is gathered. Mr. Pregitzer said whatever scale of study is chosen could be expanded. If there is a desire to move forward, the City would need a Request for Proposals (RFP), and that would include specific details to be sure the consultant is responding correctly. Ms. Betcher asked if it would be like bid alternates for other projects. Mr. Pregitzer said yes, it could be progressive with different phases. Mr. Haila asked how the timing would interface with the Comprehensive Plan visioning and wondered if it's appropriate to defer this study until the Comprehensive Plan is finished, or do it simultaneously. Mr. Pregitzer said he imagines this plan could be held up by pieces of the Comprehensive Plan. He said some elements could be simultaneous. City Manager Steve Schainker said the Comprehensive Plan could take two years and three developments are being discussed for Downtown. He said all three developments would involve parking, so it's difficult to go ahead now with the comprehensive parking study. He said starting out in phases to get current information now would be beneficial, and during that time the projects that are being proposed may become more clear. Mr. Schainker said he doesn't believe the City should wait, as there will be demand for more parking before the Comprehensive Plan is finished. He said Council will have authority to decide whether or not to progress to another phase.

Ms. Betcher asked to what extent the time of year affects the timeline. She said during the holidays may not be the most appropriate time to watch parking. Mr. Pregitzer said the time periods to stay away from include July, August, and holidays. He said if a utilization study could be done before spring semester ends he believes average data would be received. Mr. Schainker asked about collecting data during the winter if the City would like to move ahead more quickly. Mr. Pregitzer said holidays and the ISU schedule changes during the winter make collecting data difficult.

Mr. Martin asked about discussions of development Downtown. He asked if Mr. Schainker had high confidence that there is a reason to begin a parking study for Downtown because of that activity. Mr. Schainker said he's worried the developers will want answers before a parking study can be completed in the spring. He said he's hopeful the study can be completed as soon as possible. He said the Council could see a request from a developer that would affect parking prior to spring.

Downtown employee parking was discussed by Mr. Joiner. He said the Public Works Department has worked with Ames Downtown Director Cindy Hicks and Ames Downtown President Eric Abrams on the proposal in the staff report. Mr. Joiner said in discussions with them, the following is being proposed: the southern most row of parking along the railroad tracks would remain 24 hour reserved parking, in the same eastbound aisle the middle row of parking would become unlimited time parking, and the west bound row nearest the businesses would be 2 hour parking. Mr. Joiner said with this proposed change customer parking would have turnover in the two hour parking, and employees would be encouraged to use the unlimited time parking row in the middle. He said currently that row has some two hour parking and some four hour parking. He said the 24 hour reserved spaces may transition toward residential parking. Mr. Joiner said a concern could be lost

revenue. He said they are not sure to what extent employees would keep the reserved spots so it is being proposed to see how this works for a year and how it affects revenue. It was discussed that hang tags could be instituted for a fee. He said in visiting with Mr. Abrams, a great number of businesses approve this approach. Ms. Beatty-Hansen asked about the hang tag approach. Mr. Joiner said after trying one row of unlimited parking for one year, that row could be changed to 2 or 4 hour parking but the hang tag would allow someone to park in a limited time parking space for an unlimited amount of time.

Council Member Betcher said there is no guarantee that employees would get the unlimited time spaces. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said the hang tags would limit that. Mr. Haila asked about no parking between 4 and 6 a.m. Mr. Joiner said that would be maintained, except in the 24 hour reserved parking. Mr. Martin asked if any signs would be needed about the hang tags. Mr. Pregitzer said the hang tags would be benefitting the parking staff. Mr. Martin asked if employers could purchase hang tags for employees. Mr. Pregitzer said as long as a current tag is displayed it would work. Ms. Betcher asked if there is a way to accommodate the parking needs of handicapped employees. Mr. Pregitzer said a wheelchair reserved space is possible, and that reasonable designations can be made by request. He encouraged Council to direct any special requests to the Public Works Department for assistance.

Mr. Joiner reviewed the meter locations and rates for 2017/18 and 2018/19 and projected revenues for each. Mr. Nelson asked about meters on Main Street. Mr. Joiner said 24.2% of Downtown meters are on Main Street. Mayor Haila asked about the last time rates were increase, and why rates were increased. Mr. Joiner said rates were last raised in 1994. He said parking lots are in need of maintenance and repairs, so staff looked at the cost of those repairs and maintenance, the parking system equipment needed, and the revenues required. Then appropriate increases took effect. Ms. Corrieri asked if Mr. Pregitzer has looked at the revenue since the rate increases went into effect. He said first quarter revenue was forecasted at \$130,000 and revenues were \$79,000. He noted the highest collection months are in the spring (March-May). He said the utilization numbers didn't try to assume how the population would shift because of the rate increases.

Mr. Gartin said he has fielded a lot of questions regarding the process and the outreach to affected businesses. Mr. Pregitzer said three to four months in advance of the increase staff worked with the Public Relations Officer to include rate increase information in communication regarding the Park Mobile system and new payment options, as well as inform the general public about the rate change and the reasons for the change. Mr. Gartin asked if there was specific outreach involving Downtown through Cindy Hicks or if mailers were sent to businesses and property owners. Mr. Pregitzer said not about the rate increase to cover infrastructure, but many discussions were had about the employee hang tag system. Mr. Gartin asked how Council should respond to comments that the City didn't reach out to the business community. Mr. Joiner said they worked mainly through the Chamber and Ames Downtown. He said there was a City Council workshop in May 2017 for general direction, and in November 2017 with specifics on rate needs. Mr. Joiner said Mark Miller at Iowa State University (ISU) was involved during discussions on how to drive parking to the intermodal facility. Mr. Gartin said he feels a constant tension when engaging with Ames Downtown and Campustown, and wonders if the City should reach out directly to businesses and residents or rely

on Campustown Action Association and Ames Downtown when it's inevitable that some businesses get upset the City didn't reach out. He said he's concerned about the degree to which the City relies on those organizations when policy changes are happening and asked at what point the City should do its own outreach. Mr. Martin asked about the percentage of uptake for the Park Mobile app during the first quarter of use. Mr. Pregitzer said he can get that information. Ms. Betcher asked what percentage of revenue collected will go toward Downtown enforcement or projects. Mr. Pregitzer showed the budget document, and showed the revenues broken out and expenses broken out by category. He said revenues from meter rates and rental rates go into a pool and that pool is divided by needs. He said in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) process Council will see a new program called Parking System Improvements. Mr. Schainker said revenue from one district doesn't stay in the district. Ms. Beatty-Hansen asked about the transfer to the parking capital reserve. Mr. Pregitzer said that is the new line item, Parking System Improvements. Ms. Corrieri asked to see the chart including the value and cost of maintaining the specific parking lots. The chart was shown. Mr. Pregitzer said there is about \$8 million of parking lot infrastructure to maintain.

Mayor Haila asked if the City does not generate funds from parking, if that amount would need to be taken from the general fund, and taxes be increased. Mr. Schainker concurred.

Mayor Haila opened public input.

Eric Abrams, 3016 Stockbury Street, Ames, said the reason for the proposal including unlimited parking is partly because employees are parking in those spaces anyway. He said it is unfair to make them pay for a parking tag, or borrow a tag. He said if they go to that system, he would buy them for his employees and it would cost about \$700 per month. He asked that Council keep the four hour parking in place. Mr. Abrams said Ames Downtown has put together a task force. He read a statement from the task force thanking the City for its work Downtown. The members are gaining understanding so they can work as ambassadors to answer parking questions from other businesses. He said the task force is requesting a meeting with City staff to understand rates, look at finances related to meters, share data and experiences regarding rates, and explore rate options. Mr. Martin asked if he could email that statement to the Council members. Mr. Abrams said he would like to have a formal meeting with the Public Works Department to discuss options. Mr. Gartin asked how he would characterize his constituency's assessment of the City's effort to solicit input. Mr. Abrams said he believes it was missed and he and Ms. Hicks don't believe they were communicated with directly. He can't remember a formal letter or invitation to discuss rates before they were increased. He said the discussion desired would include pros and cons of the rates as they relate to downtown businesses. Mr. Gartin asked if there is consensus among businesses regarding the adverse effects of the rate increase. Mr. Gartin said Council wants to avoid making decisions based on anecdotal information, and business owners are not all saying business is down. Mr. Abrams said this is where the task force can help, as they can help compile data to help in understanding. He said the task force wants to help the City produce any information needed. Ms. Betcher asked about unlimited spaces for employees and wondered if it's legitimate. Mr. Abrams said full-time staff shows up between 7:30 and 9:00 a.m. He said he doesn't know if it would create a problem. If everything was four hour, that may be a problem. Ms. Betcher said the big concern is from the hospitality industry when the employees are arriving late.

Cindy Hicks, 304 Main Street, Ames, said she met with City staff in August, and then spoke with 107 business owners by survey or in person, of which 97 are in favor of unlimited parking. She said when she arrives at work at 8:00 a.m. the two-hour parking side is empty, and the four-hour side is filling up fast by employees. She said she doesn't feel like Downtown business owners are being targeted, but she can understand how another Downtown employee feels like that. She said business owners and employees are very supportive of unlimited parking. By 5:00 p.m. some employees are moving on, and the employees working at night are arriving, so she said she feels this would work. Ms. Hicks said she knows many Downtown employees with multiple tickets they can't afford to pay. She said she has gotten three tickets in the last week. Mr. Haila asked for her thoughts on a parking study. She said in May she was contacted by the City and asked if she could disburse information on rates going up, which she tried to do. She said at the same time they were having discussions on parking rates and then in June Ames Downtown came to request a parking study. She said data is needed to back up the concerns. She said the number of employees is double what it was in 2009 in the Downtown area. She said they would like information on parking for the future as well as current needs. Mr. Haila asked if there's an assumption that a parking structure would be free, or if it would be paid for by the ones parking. Ms. Hicks said she is unsure. She said a ramp might not be needed if there is a parking management problem. Ms. Beatty-Hansen asked about the unlimited parking survey and if that was the only option presented. Ms. Hicks concurred.

Gary Youngberg, 220 Main Street, Ames, said his role as a business owner is to make customers happy. He said statistics can be misleading. He said they are hearing hundreds of complaints by customers regarding parking rates. He said he speaks for many business owners Downtown. Mr. Youngberg said customers are putting a quarter in, and hurrying back to their cars instead of visiting multiple businesses. He feels the rate increase is affecting businesses negatively.

Terry Stark, 230 Main Street, Ames, said he pays for unlimited parking. He is not in favor of hang tags as he believes it would be a logistical nightmare. Mr. Gartin asked Mr. Stark if the City made a mistake by increasing rates. Mr. Stark said it was a very significant increase, enough that it brought people together for a discussion. He said there is software available that permits a one-time warning with a note including details of where free parking is located.

Mr. Youngberg said a more moderate increase would have been much more acceptable.

Daniel Forrester, 225 Main Street, Ames, said he has been getting emails from the District, but suggested a brief update about what City Council is doing that is physically delivered. Mr. Forrester said no parking between 4 and 6 a.m. encourages people to drink and drive to avoid getting a ticket. He said he is unsure if parking policy follows commerce or commerce follows parking policy. He said the cost of a parking study could go toward a parking ramp instead. Mr. Haila asked if he is against the 4 and 6 a.m. parking time. He concurred, saying even though the ticket wouldn't be significant, he said it feels significant. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said it's her opinion that transportation habits will be affected by the availability of parking. She said to change the culture it's a matter of education and changes to the parking system. Mr. Forrester said the fee to park is penalizing people for parking downtown.

Mayor Haila closed public input.

Mr. Gartin said he is having trouble understanding the relationship between the task force and Ames Downtown. Mr. Abrams said it was created by Ames Downtown.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Gartin, to request staff bring back options for a simple to moderate parking study of the Downtown area.

Ms. Betcher asked if this would include the four to five week option. Ms. Corrieri said she would be interested in a hybrid of the two options. Mr. Nelson said he is leaning more toward the moderate end so enough information can be gleaned.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mr. Martin asked if anyone knows what the cost is to retrofit meters to accept credit cards. Mr. Pregitzer said some companies provide the hardware for free. Mr. Martin said the rates seem reasonable to him but that is a lot of quarters. He said many people have credit cards. Mr. Nelson said he remembers the credit card retrofit being very expensive. Mr. Pregitzer said the cost from the current company was very high but he said there are many options. Ms. Betcher asked if it would be more expensive to retrofit meters or remove the meters and replace them with pay stations. Mayor Haila suggested giving staff direction. Mr. Martin said his concern is making it more convenient to pay the current rates.

Moved by Martin, seconded by Betcher, to request staff bring back information on how to make paying the current rates more convenient.

Mayor Haila said Park Mobile was introduced because that is what ISU is using and it would create uniformity. Mr. Martin said for out of town visitors this is a real issue. Ms. Corrieri said ISU offers pay stations that take credit cards.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Betcher, to direct staff to meet with the task force members to hear the concerns and proposals they have.

Mr. Gartin said good government depends on communication to its constituency. He said the task force needs to be heard. Mr. Nelson said he doesn't want the task force to spend too much time on solutions in light of a parking study coming up. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said it's Council's job to hear the businesses. Mr. Martin concurred. Mr. Gartin said Council asks staff to reach out and meet with groups frequently and he'd rather the first phase be meeting with staff. Mr. Pregitzer said staff is very conscientious of not driving policy but an information meeting where staff could answer questions is fine. Mayor Haila asked if a meeting with staff to answer questions but not to discuss meter rates would be effective. Mr. Abrams said the objective is to see if other rates are possible. Mr. Gartin said goals of the task force include exchanging information and sharing experiences

which are things that staff does on a regular basis.

Mr. Youngberg said his feeling was that the task force could bring this up to the City Council and ask that the rate change be reconsidered. He said he doesn't want to waste staff's time but knows staff makes recommendations to Council. Mr. Schainker said staff can meet to dialogue and clarify numbers. He said the reason the cost is going up is because of the policy in place and to cover operations and capital improvements. Mr. Schainker said if Council wants to keep the same policy, that revenue needs generated. He said staff can meet with the task force to explain the numbers. He said he's not sure how much flexibility there is in rates unless Council is willing to accept less revenue.

Motion withdrawn.

Mr. Gartin invited the task force to share thoughts directly with Council. Ms. Betcher asked about the employees and business owners with tickets in the hundreds of dollars range and wondered if that can be addressed in the short term. Ms. Betcher said she gets the impression that Council doesn't want to change the time limits on parking spaces since a parking study is coming but it doesn't address the short term issue. She said she's not sure what Council should do but something should be done. Mr. Schainker said meter rates and the request for employee parking are two different issues. Mr. Schainker said if the City switches from reserved spaces to unlimited for a year and finds there was lost revenue a hang tag system could be implemented, or if the reserved spaces are maintained there may not be any lost revenue. Mr. Haila said a motion could be made.

Moved by Betcher, seconded by Gartin, to bring the Downtown employee parking needs issue back to a Council agenda in the short term.

It was discussed that both options would be brought back as well as a free hang tag option for employees.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mr. Gartin said he believes the door has been opened to hear from the task force. He said the task force has now heard Council's concerns on policy restraints and he would like to see a formal proposal from the task force. Mr. Martin said staff is always available for questions.

**NEIGHBORHOOD SUMMIT:** Neighborhood Liaison Julie Gould provided an overview of the purpose and benefits of neighborhood associations. She said there are 25 neighborhood associations and 20 of the associations are currently active. Ms. Gould said Emanon Neighborhood Association (NA) will be celebrating 90 years as an association. Ms. Gould said her position is to maintain communication with neighborhoods. She told the Council that Strong Neighborhoods is the City's neighborhood program that began about ten years ago.

Ms. Gould discussed several programs supporting neighborhoods such as the Neighborhood Improvement Grant, Newsletter Grant, Neighborhood Sculpture, Street N' Greet Block Party Trailer,

Neighborhood Walks, Street Painting, Chalk the Walks, and Curb Replacement. She said Neighborhood News is a newsletter that goes out quarterly.

Ms. Gould said there is room for improvement such as updating the website with a new look to include neighborhood association benefits, requirements, information, and events. Community engagement events such as seminars and scheduled roundtables is also an option.

Ms. Gould told the Council that Roosevelt NA grew out of Friends of Roosevelt. Emanon and Roosevelt have worked together. Ms. Beatty-Hansen asked where the name Emanon came from. Ms. Gould said it is “no name” backwards. She said the Roosevelt NA boundary includes the Emanon NA.

Ms. Beatty-Hansen asked if the neighborhood newsletter grant is the only benefit given only to officially established associations. Ms. Gould concurred, and said other neighborhoods are welcome to participate in other neighborhood activities and benefits.

Ms. Betcher asked about the neighborhood walks. She said interest has been expressed from Old Town NA about having a sidewalk walk to find sidewalk issues. She said these neighborhood walks could take on other purposes such as infrastructure walks or safety walks. Ms. Gould said the Inis Grove NA had Elizabeth Wentzel of the Roosevelt NA walk through their neighborhood with them using walkability guidelines, so there is opportunity to create other types of walks.

Mr. Diekmann said neighborhood association representatives would like to share project information and updates.

Joel Barbour, 318 Hickory Drive, Ames, Old Edwards Neighborhood Association, said Edwards School was opened in the 1950's until 2015. He said when the school district planned to close the school, the neighborhood became interested in what the school could become. Mr. Barbour said the neighbors rallied around keeping the area as a park. The neighborhood was able to raise money to offset some of the cost of creating the park. He told the Council the school district is currently finalizing some things before transferring the property to the City of Ames. Mr. Barbour thanked the Ames Community School District (ACSD) and the City of Ames for putting in the extra time and effort to make this a city park. He said many emails, phone calls, and meetings happened to make this a reality, as well as many donations. Mr. Haila asked what they do to keep the neighborhood cohesive. Mr. Barbour said they have an annual picnic and rally around causes. He said they are driven by issues that come up, but look forward to being an association after the park is finished. Members communicate through email, door to door interaction, and phone calls. He said at the annual get together the members update the email list. Council Member Gartin asked about a sense of connectedness among neighbors. Mr. Barbour said he knows everyone in his neighborhood, which brings them together. Mr. Gartin said more connections in a neighborhood result in more safety. Mr. Barbour said they have partnered with other associations to discuss safety issues.

Peter Hallock, 114 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Ames, Old Town Neighborhood Association, said they have received



many Neighborhood Improvement Grants. At the base of each street sign and at the base of the welcome signs to the historic district there are limestone rimmed gardens that were installed in 2005. He said in the first 11 years the maintaining persons provided flowers and in the last few years they have partnered with Parks and Recreation to receive annuals from Holub Garden and Greenhouses as a part of the Adopt a Garden program. He said other projects they have done include planting trees and working closely with Parks and Recreation to redevelop Old Town Park. He said on the west end there were many trees lost, so they are looking to find a shade structure such as a semi-shelter. He said Old Town NA has utilized the neighborhood newsletter grant. Mr. Hallock said Old Town NA does include neighbors east of Duff Avenue, and new boundaries were sent to the City but have not yet been acknowledged.

Jim Popken, 921 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Ames, said he gets frustrated about neighborhood associations being confused as Home Owner's Associations. Mr. Popken encouraged the City not to be too restrictive on what a neighborhood association is. He said many of the associations began with an issue, and then the associations continue. He appreciates the communication that is shared to associations.

Tam Lorenz, 311 S. Maple Avenue, Ames, said she agrees that the City should not be too restrictive with requirements for neighborhood associations. She said Oak to Riverside NA has had an annual picnic for over 20 years. She said members of City Council and members of the Police Department have attended. Ms. Lorenz said the love of the neighborhood and desire for quality of life drives the association. She recognized the coordinators of their association, and appreciated their dedication and work.

Joanne Pfeiffer, 3318 Morningside Street, Ames, told the Council that they have had a voice in many issues lately including the rental cap discussion and Franklin Park improvements where they have requested safety, lighting, and a tree memorial. She said the annual picnics have been beneficial, and she thanked Mr. Martin and Mayor Haila for attending. She said information is sent to over 150 people by email. Ms. Pfeiffer expressed her dreams for the neighborhood including incentives for landlords to sell homes for affordable housing, encouraging the arts in the neighborhood, paths and shelter at Franklin Park, and encouraging attractiveness in the neighborhood. She said they need to work on realistic bylaws.

Dylis Morris, 535 Forest Glen Street, Ames, said the entrance to Emma McCarthy Lee Park was improved by the Oak-Wood-Forest association, and a foot path and gardens were added. She said they have an annual potluck. She said she would like the deer problem addressed because of the issue of lyme disease.

Fred Bradner, 1111 Stafford Avenue, Ames, Sunrise Addition NA, said they have an annual block party. He said members have been part of an ongoing conversation with the Hospital-Medical group and it has been very productive as understanding and trust have been developed. He said it's important to encourage associations. He said as it's relevant to the earlier parking discussion, he works for ISU and he has to pay for parking every year.

Sandra McJimsey, 2236 Storm Street, Ames, South Campus Area Neighborhood Association

(SCAN), thanked the Council for the progress on the rental cap issue and parking. She said she would like to see the neighborhood association website updated and the way neighborhoods communicate enhanced. She said she is in support of the neighborhood grant program, as it gives wonderful opportunities to build community. She said her project ideas for grants that she would like to discuss with her neighborhood are renting a trash container and chipper to invite residents to fill up the container and use the chipper as a yard clean up day and filling a “welcome bucket” with cleaning ingredients and recipes for cleaning solutions for new neighbors.

Mayor Haila closed public input.

Mr. Martin asked if there are any policies complicating the borders of associations. Ms. Gould said the lack of policy can be a problem for neighborhoods. She said the SCAN NA boundary she has does not match SCAN’s map. The Old Town NA boundary was discussed. Ms. Gould said strict or numerous policies are not needed, but something would be helpful. It was noted that bylaws are not required, and associations can operate how they desire. Ms. Betcher asked about Old Town NA’s request to change boundaries in 2007. Discussion ensued. Mr. Diekmann said a process to petition boundary changes is needed. Mr. Gartin asked if there is direction that could help staff. It was discussed that options could be brought to Council at a future meeting.

Moved by Nelson, seconded by Betcher, for staff to begin working with neighborhood associations to identify future improvements.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mr. Gartin said neighborhood associations are highly valued. He said by looking at the map there are several areas without any associations. He asked, given the benefits of safety and connectedness, if there are any benefits in reaching out to neighborhoods to see if there is interest in forming an association. He asked from staff’s standpoint if there is anything that can be done to encourage neighborhoods, and said that sometimes people just need to be asked. The Southdale area was discussed, and it was noted it is no longer an “active” association, but the neighborhood is very active. Mr. Diekmann said all programs are available to every neighborhood regardless of its association status except the newsletter grant. Mr. Diekmann said there is currently minimal promotion of this program, but staff could look at ways to bring up benefits.

Mr. Gartin said residents near Emma McCarthy Lee Park have worked with the Parks and Recreation department and other neighborhoods may benefit from that connection.

The Council recessed at 8:34 p.m. and reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

**AMES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:** Mr. Diekmann introduced the Comprehensive Plan process the Council is preparing for. He said the recommendation is to approve the contract with RDG Planning & Design (RDG) of Des Moines, Iowa. He said representatives of RDG are in attendance to walk through the proposal and the scope of work to be done in Ames. Mr. Diekmann said the overall timeline of the process is 18 months. Mr. Diekmann introduced Project Manager Cory Scott and Principal Planner Marty Shukert with RDG. Mr. Shukert told the Council that RDG has done

a lot of work in Ames, and they look forward to this project. Mr. Shukert said they are pleased to have a great multi-disciplinary team on the project.

Mr. Shukert reviewed the relevant experience of RDG. He said the process and the outreach are very important. Mr. Scott said first there will be an analysis from a qualitative and quantitative perspective and then they will be working out patterns to create a vision and working out the approaches to the different scenarios. Then graphics, illustrations, and policies will be pulled together and put into a document. He said the schedule is set at around 18 months or perhaps a bit more. Community engagement is an ongoing part of the timeline. He said awareness campaigns will create momentum and excitement in the beginning followed by about four months of data collection and looking at patterns. Mr. Scott said around March the Council will help determine how to approach the different scenarios and before the summer months Council should be looking at a preferred scenario. The six milestones of the project were highlighted as: 1) Principles and Goals Workshop, 2) Input and Data Review/ Scenario Structure, 3) Scenario Evaluation/ Proposed Plan Structure, 4) Review Plan Recommendations, 5) Implementation Workshop, and 6) Approval Hearings.

Mr. Scott said a communication plan will be first, and will help everyone stay on task. RDG will develop a way to brand and market the process, and hopes to involve many people from the beginning. He said stakeholder conversations are very important to define goals and identify opportunities. Mr. Scott discussed student involvement at ISU and Ames High School. Other workshops and surveys will be conducted, as well as any other communications that have proved successful in Ames. Mr. Gartin asked about surveys. Mr. Scott discussed different methods and said the techniques they find most effective are person to person, going out to people at their locations, and being in the environment. He said online tools are helpful, but they have a real sense that personal contact is best and would err on the side of overdoing personal contact. Mr. Shukert said they are advocates of the charette process. Mr. Shukert discussed defining scenarios to explore, and said after that comes design and diagraming, identifying cost and benefit variables, and finally the selection.

Mr. Shukert told the Council in Oklahoma City an efficiency scenario was chosen and Mr. Scott said in Cedar Rapids a hybrid scenario was chosen made up of a combination of three scenarios (traditional, urbanism, conservation).

Mr. Shukert said general concepts have been shared but as the process goes on, specific systems for the preferred scenario will investigate areas of specific importance or special character such as neighborhoods and Downtown. He said the neighborhood presentations identify individual concern and policies that will be applied to those areas.

Mr. Schainker said the City Council will be the policy directors and at times along the way specific direction may need to be given by the Council. Mr. Scott said much of this will be charted out in detail during the first and second meetings. Mr. Gartin said the last plan was done 18 years ago, and asked, given the growth of the community, how long of a horizon this plan will be effective. Mr. Shukert said it's important to have a long time frame but the plan's validity may only be about 10

years. He said a plan really needs to be updated every ten years and on an annual basis there should be a structured process to evaluate what has happened.

Mayor Haila asked about community engagement, noting this statement in the RDG proposal, “the City considers citizen input essential to developing a community vision.” Mayor Haila asked where vision gets developed since the vision should be driving the process, not the differing ideas and perspectives during the planning process. He asked for clarification on the process. Mr. Shukert said it happens fairly organically through elements of the participation process like surveys, stakeholder group meetings, and community meetings. He said inevitably certain patterns and resonances appear over that time on a repetitive basis. He said during the neighborhood conversations, there were common concerns emerging and it would be similar. Mr. Shukert said a really valid part of a scenario process is the articulation of certain and sometimes competing visions of a city. He said all are valid and must be tested visually and developmentally so people can see them and decide which ones are preferred. He said it’s difficult to go into a city and ask for a vision of what the city should look like, but when different versions of the future are shown they can be used to elicit a vision of what the community should be. He said some scenarios won’t be valid because policy cannot be built around them. Mr. Scott said bigger ideas are recorded first, and as time goes on certain ones are reinforced, and by February or March the vision will start to emerge.

Mr. Haila said spectacular community engagement is needed, or else one particular group could drive the process. Mr. Shukert said it’s exciting to see so many active neighborhood groups. He said having the structure and commitment in place allows RDG to go down to that level. He said the plan that emerges needs to come from many stakeholders, not a small group.

Mr. Haila asked about more frequent meetings with City Council. Mr. Shukert said a revision based on what is heard tonight would include an updated schedule and milestones. Mayor Haila said he wasn’t yet elected when it was decided there wouldn’t be a steering committee, but he realizes the success totally depends on community engagement and the Council dedicating the time it will take for effective communication and management of the process.

Mr. Shukert said many variables go into the design that generates alternatives. Once that vision is established, there is some flexibility. Mr. Haila asked what role ISU, ACSD, and Story County will play in this process. Mr. Scott said early contact would be recommended for the school district. Mr. Scott said it depends what level of partnership the school district wants. He said RDG has many connections with the College of Design and ISU Student Government. Mr. Haila asked about the policy makers like ISU Facilities and Planning and ACSD administration. Discussion ensued. Mr. Shukert said the university connection will be transportation, infrastructure, housing, and more as its impact on the community is enormous. Mr. Schainker asked about a technical committee. Mr. Diekmann said the technical committee will be heavy lifters in this process and will consist of City departments and staff, ISU groups, Story County policy makers, and school districts. Mr. Diekmann said when feedback is given at check-in points, direction can be given to reach out to other groups.

Mayor Haila asked if Exhibit A is included in the contract with RDG. Mr. Diekmann said Exhibit A is the scope of work exhibit in the contract. Mayor Haila said he has further questions regarding

some of the details. It was clarified that the neighborhood design studio is included. Mr. Scott said if three meetings turn into four, that kind of adjustment is allowable. Mr. Diekmann said the last page of the contract shows where the time is being prioritized and RDG is committed to the task. Mr. Haila said it's unfair to ask City Council to decide on whether the time frame is reasonable, but rather the scope of work so he wanted to make sure there is clarity. Mr. Shukert said a client has never said they did not receive enough. Mr. Scott said when assumptions were created for the tasks a document was created with details and can be made available.

Mr. Nelson said there are several school districts within the city limits. He asked if the technical committee will reach out to them. Mr. Diekmann said yes, they will all be contacted and asked how they would like to participate. Ms. Betcher asked about ISU Community and Regional Planning students becoming involved. Mr. Diekmann said reaching out to them will happen during the communication step.

Mr. Martin said it sounds like the design process is very open and thoughtful. He said Ames has no real goals or targets regarding climate change at this point. He asked if RDG learns that climate change mitigation is a high priority during the process, if RDG can work with that. Mr. Shukert said that is an issue that would fundamentally have to be dealt with. Mr. Diekmann said not all issues will go into the Comprehensive Plan but there could be follow-up implementation needed for some identified issues.

Erv Klaas, 1405 Grand Avenue, Ames, said some individuals have organized an Ames Climate Action Team. Several members were in attendance. He said it is an independent organization, but plans to partner with other organizations. He said he is familiar with RDG, and said they are competent and reputable. He said the list of topics included in the RFP represents a business as usual approach, which is inadequate and contrary to the climate crisis. Mr. Klaas said climate change is not an existential problem but a core problem we have to face. He said according to the report released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) issued eight days ago, the world must drastically reduce green house gases within 12 years or be in serious trouble. Mr. Klaas said he would like to ask the planning team how to reduce the carbon emissions in the City of Ames by 80% in ten years. He said in the least, any Comprehensive Plan must include resilience thinking in all sectors including energy, food, building, land use, and equity for everyone. He said it is a moral imperative to join with cities around the world to mobilize the community to save civilization and life on earth. Mr. Klaas said a draft resolution for consideration will soon be presented to the Council to take action by declaring a state of emergency. He said it is up to City Council to put climate action at the core of any Comprehensive Plan to reduce emissions.

Mayor Haila said the topic at hand is the contract between City of Ames and RDG.

Mary Richards, 3217 West Street, Ames, said she believes that a City Council should in some cases be proactive rather than reactive. She said real leaders don't solely rely on participation, but in situations like the looming climate change, people need convincing that something needs to be done. Ms. Richards urged action and recognition of the scientific evidence.

Katherine Barber Fromm, 3531 George Washington Carver Avenue, Ames, said she owns 45 acres of land adjacent to Ames. She said when the last plan, which took seven years to consider, was created the decision was made not to go north of Bloomington Road. She said when the Uthe property was for sale the City put in a technical amendment to develop that land. Ms. Barber Fromm said if the Council will not confront developers, she's not sure if it will do anything about climate change. She said the Council should confront the issues.

Deborah Fink, 222 South Russell, Ames, said she agrees with the Ames Climate Action Team members. She said we need core leadership to confront the issues now. The vision should be teaching ourselves how to create a low carbon society and the plan should be how to get there.

Kelly Naumann, 208 South Maple Avenue, Ames, said she is getting her Master's Degree in Sustainable Environments at ISU. She said the graduate students in her program are proposing additions to Ames' Comprehensive Plan to address plastic pollution in Ames waterways as follows: 1) providing a written collaboration between the current City initiatives of Smart Watersheds and Smart Trash, 2) consider innovative technologies used by cities to collect plastic waste from stormwater, 3) encourage local businesses to participate in plastic reduction strategies, and 4) designate funding for trash reduction in Ames waterways specifically. The petition and proposed solutions was given to the recording secretary.

Mayor Haila closed public input.

Mr. Shukert said he's in the middle of reading the IPCC report and agrees with the seriousness of climate issues. He said it is an exciting challenge to consider what can be done by the community to satisfy the goals laid out. He said other views will also be presented.

Mr. Haila asked if it's safe to assume that concerns mentioned will be part of the planning process. Mr. Schukert concurred. Mr. Diekmann said the Comprehensive Plan is a policy document, and can't contain everything. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said these issues can be addressed by Council in other ways if needed.

Moved by Nelson, seconded by Betcher, to approve RESOLUTION NO. 18-576 awarding the contract to RDG Planning & Design of Des Moines, Iowa, in an amount not to exceed \$225,000.

Mr. Gartin said he appreciated the thoughts shared, and said this isn't the forum for a proper response, but Council members did take notes and looks forward to future engagement on the issues raised.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Resolution declared adopted unanimously, signed by the Mayor, and hereby made a portion of these Minutes.

**DISPOSITION OF COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNCIL:**

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Gartin, to refer to staff to discuss with Parks and Recreation Commission the email from Mary McCarthy dated October 3, 2018 regarding scholarships for low-

income and senior residents.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Moved by Beatty-Hansen, seconded by Betcher, to take no action on the email from Jeremy Davis dated October 8, 2018.

Vote on Motion: 5-1. Voting Aye: Beatty-Hansen, Betcher, Corrieri, Martin, Nelson. Voting Nay: Gartin. Motion declared carried.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Ms. Betcher said a Campustown Safety Walk will be held on October 24, 2018.

Moved by Martin, seconded by Betcher, to add an agenda item in the near future to discuss the prioritization of climate mitigation in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Martin said he is submitting this motion with the idea that the topic is important to Council. Ms. Betcher said even if it doesn't end up in the Plan, it would allow Council to capture the information for future use. Ms. Beatty-Hansen said there are pieces of climate mitigation that won't be included in the Comprehensive Plan, but some could. Mr. Gartin said he's not sure what the Council would be doing by making this motion as the consultant recognized this as a part of the discussion. Mr. Nelson concurred. Mr. Martin said many topics were in the RFP and climate mitigation was not. Discussion continued.

Mr. Diekmann asked when Mr. Martin would like this topic on an agenda. Mr. Martin said it could be during a Comprehensive Plan discussion or at another time, but before the consultants begin. Mayor Haila said he has had many questions because he's concerned about sifting through all of the information and priorities that will be shared during this process. Council Member Nelson asked if climate mitigation would be part of the normal process and part of the conversation. Mr. Martin said he's unfamiliar with the sequence. Mr. Nelson said it could be brought up at the kick-off meeting. Mr. Martin said he doesn't want the issue to be overlooked. Mr. Diekmann said no issue will be overlooked because the process hasn't started. Mr. Martin said this is not a one-meeting issue, so he wants to get the discussion started. Mr. Diekmann said sustainability is different than climate planning. Ms. Betcher asked if Mr. Martin would like Council to discuss this to determine if it should be part of the Plan or if it's a priority outside of the Plan. Ms. Betcher said the meetings get long and then there's no time to discuss the bigger picture and how the bigger picture impacts the Comprehensive Plan.

Moved by Martin, seconded by Betcher, to amend the motion to only include adding an agenda item in the near future to discuss the prioritization of climate change mitigation.

Ms. Corrieri said she would feel better if this motion were more narrow or part of a goal-setting session. It was discussed that goal-setting is in January. Discussion ensued on the Comprehensive Plan project timing. Mr. Gartin said the City is not starting from scratch on sustainability and wanted to note that substantial improvements have been made in the reduction of greenhouse gases.

Vote on Amendment: 4-2. Voting Aye: Beatty-Hansen, Betcher, Gartin, Martin. Voting Nay: Corrieri, Nelson.

Vote on Motion, as Amended: 4-2. Voting Aye: Beatty-Hansen, Betcher, Gartin, Martin. Voting Nay: Corrieri, Nelson. Motion declared carried.

Mr. Martin said there are 11 properties taking advantage of the rental cap exception. He said the report didn't have any details on the properties outside of the rental cap areas, and he would like more information on the new Letters of Compliance (LOC) outside of the rental cap neighborhoods. Mr. Schainker asked if he would like a map of them. Mr. Martin answered in the affirmative.

Moved by Martin, seconded by Beatty-Hansen, to have staff provide more information regarding the new LOC's with a graphical representation of their locations, even for those outside of rental cap areas.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

Mayor Haila said an email was sent to Council regarding Campustown pavement. Mr. Nelson asked if it will be part of an agenda. Mayor Haila said he will speak with Mr. Schainker about when to address the subject. Discussion ensued.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

Mr. Gartin asked City Attorney Mark Lambert if the City Council had a legal reason for going into Closed Session. Mr. Lambert replied in the affirmative.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Betcher, to hold a Closed Session as provided by Section 21.5(1)c, *Code of Iowa*, to discuss matters presently in or threatened to be in litigation.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

The Council entered into Closed Session at 10:47 p.m. and returned to Regular Session at 10:48 p.m.

Moved by Gartin, seconded by Corrieri, to direct staff to file for further review for Ames 2304 LLC vs. City of Ames Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion declared carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Moved by Beatty-Hansen to adjourn at 10:48 p.m.