

March 18, 2024

COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Harold E. Getty Council Chambers
3:50 p.m.

Roll Call.

Members present: Mayor Quentin Hart in the Chair. Mr. Boesen, Mr. Chiles, Mr. Simon, Ms. Wilder and Mr. Feuss. Mr. Nichols entered the meeting at 4:15 p.m., and Ms. Creighton-Smith entered the meeting at 4:23.

Approval of Agenda, as proposed or amended.

Feuss/Simon
that the agenda, as proposed, be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Five. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of March 4, 2024, as proposed or amended.

that the minutes of March 4, 2024, as proposed, be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Five. Motion carried.

Discussion of a one-way street in front of Irving School.

Mohammad Elahi, Traffic Operations Director, provided information regarding traffic concerns of Irving School staff during drop-off and pick-up of children, suggesting that Western and Johnson Streets be designated as one-way streets. A study was performed and consultants recommended the street be designated as one-way to six corners.

Ms. Wilder shared as a representative of the Safety Committee for the Church Row Neighborhood she appreciated the efforts to make the community safer and recommended the council members approve the recommendation to help the Irving School community.

Mayor Hart questioned if a round-about was considered in the study.

Mr. Chiles questioned if any other measures were considered to avoid confusion changing to one-way traffic.

Mohammad Elahi assured the council signs would be posted noting one-way traffic and reviewed the parameters and history included in the study.

Mr. Boesen requested clarification one-way traffic starting on Baltimore, traveling east and continue onto Western Avenue traveling south.

Mohammad Elahi explained the one-way would start on Pleasant, just past the church driveway, traveling north on Western Avenue and then West on Johnson Street.

Mr. Boesen expressed concern it would confuse drivers starting a one-way in the middle of a block as opposed to an intersection.

Mohammad Elahi explained his intention was to avoid disrupting the church traffic and this could be accomplished with center lane markings and signage, but indicated he could speak with the churches regarding the project.

Mr. Nichols questioned what communication will look like with families to make them aware of the changes.

Mr. Simon questioned if this included widening the street.

Mohammad Elahi responded the project was only for changing the streets to one-way traffic.

Mr. Feuss questioned if the project could be done after school is let out for the summer and so drivers are used to the change by fall when school starts back up again and the impact or changes if 5th Street is turned into a two-way street and Johnston is turned into a one-way.

Mohammad Elahi responded the changes will not have a negative impact that they will help the situation.

Zach Zimmerman, Principal at Irving Elementary, shared that if there is a change they would like it to happen in the summer.

Mr. Boesen questioned if the study looked at the impact this would have on Pleasant Street.

Mohammad Elahi responded the study included both intersections and feel the existing volume would not be adversely effected by the change.

Ms. Creighton-Smith agreed she would like to see the one-way start at the intersection rather than the middle of the block.

Update from the Sanitation Department on technology and operations.

Scott Brunson, Sanitation Director, provided an update on various aspects of Sanitation Department operations.

Mr. Boesen questioned how much is being lost per month in recycling.

Scott Brunson explained they will lose with \$5,000-\$6,000 per month, dipping into reserves.

Mr. Boesen asked if the City eliminates use of the calendars how do they reach people who do not have internet or smart phones?

Scott Brunson explained, in those instances a calendar can be requested and mailed to a citizen.

Mr. Boesen questioned when the city will be charging for overfilling cans.

Scott Brunson explained the city currently doesn't charged for overfilling a can but for the return visit from sanitation to pick up excess refuse.

Mr. Boesen questioned moving to a system for dumpsters being located in a secured enclosed

area.

Scott Brunson responded they have had that conversation, but that a decision has not been made yet. It is his opinion that the best solution would be to have locking mechanisms on the lids to control loose trash.

Mr. Chiles commented that he likes the idea of an app and questioned if other city departments could use the same app or if other departments could use the same app.

Chris Youngblut, IT Director, shared that ReCollect is specific to Sanitation operations and looking at other cities that have this software have a second, city specific app.

Ms. Wilder questioned where the funds for the app would originate.

Scott Brunson responded this has been budgeted for in this fiscal year already.

Mr. Simon questioned overlap between the mailings and app use.

Scott Brunson stated he would research the crossover further.

Mayor Hart explained citizens would have the choice of using the app vs. receiving a paper copy of the calendar and the savings associated with using the app.

Mr. Simon questioned obtaining the customer data base to contact customers.

Scott Brunson explained they use routeware to gather that information and coordinate informing costumers regarding the app.

Discussion of an ordinance regarding rental application fees.

Ms. Creighton-Smith provided an overview of the proposed ordinance and shared that the ordinance proposes to limit rental application fees charged by property owners for applications to what it would cost to run a credit check and a background check.

Martin Petersen, City Attorney, explained that he spoke with an attorney in Iowa City who successfully argued a case at the Iowa Supreme Court that defended tenants regarding application fees.

Mr. Boesen questioned how fees will be monitored.

Ms. Creighton-Smith commented the city can determine an average of what background checks cost and use that amount to establish the ordinance limiting application fees as the fees cannot be banned totally.

Ms. Wilder considers this a great step in protecting renters.

Mr. Simon feels the fee should be equitable but have an avenue for adjusting the amount as the avererage increase for background and credit checks.

Mr. Feuss questioned if the information could be added to the city website and investigating the

entire application process and cost for both landlord and tenant.

Kelley Felchle, City Clerk, explained all information could be added to the City Website to add transparency to the process and explained the new rental registration software allows for tenants to access landlord information online to determine if property has been inspected and if landlords are licensed and registered. She explained the payment of fees in the ordinance change would make the payment of fees for inspection a condition of maintaining a rental permit as opposed to a condition of receiving a rental permit.

Mayor Hart questioned if a person submits a rental application and the background or credit check is denied does the applicant have a right to know the reason for the denial.

Martin Petersen responded he is not aware of a requirement to inform and applicant of the reason for denial.

Mayor Hart questioned if the applicant had a right to a copy of the report if the application is denied.

LeKeisha Veasley, Director of Housing Authority, explained if an applicant signs a disclosure document they may receive a copy of the report.

Mr. Nichols questioned if a renter could have one credit or background check run and that report used across the board for applications rather than paying for multiple applications.

Mr. Simon questioned the accuracy and longevity of using and running one report as credit and background reports can change daily. He also questioned if a landlord overcharged for an application if that could be rebated to the renter upon first payment.

Mayor Hart commented there is a consensus to do something with rental applications but that there needs to be more discussion.

Kelley Felchle questioned if section 2 of the proposed ordinance could be moved forward to the April 1, 2024 meeting as a stand alone ordinance.

Mayor Hart asked that the council schedule to complete additional discussion within a month to move forward with the remaining ordinance changes.

ADJOURNMENT

Simon/Wilder that the council adjourn at 4:55 p.m. Voice vote-Ayes: Seven. Motion carried.

Kelley Felchle
City Clerk