

Official Proceedings
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 21, 2014 6:00 P.M.
CITY HALL WILLISTON, NORTH DAKOTA

1. Roll Call of Commissioners

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Tate Cymbaluk, Chris Brostuen, Brad Bekkedahl, Howard Klug and Ward Koeser

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Chief Lokken, Kent Jarcik, David Tuan and John Kautzman

2. AE2S Program Management Update

Mayor Koeser presented a quorum; he stated that they only have one item of business to deal with tonight. This includes a presentation from Advanced Engineering on program management. There have been a number of meetings with department heads but the city felt that if they were going to seriously consider this, the commission as a whole needs to look at this matter.

Charles Vein from AE2S stated that he would like to make this more of a discussion than a presentation and to feel free to ask question.

Since October they have had a number of meetings with various city departments to go over this program management service they are offering. A lot of this comes from looking at the situation the city is in and the goal of providing this is to help the city move ahead and to deal with the amount of growth that is currently going on.

Mr. Vein presented a graph looking at staffing needs and what they see going on. With all of the growth happening, their hope is to get to some future sustainable staffing level. The goal of the program management services is to provide that extra man power. This is all meant to be a collaborative process, working with the various city departments and reporting to the City Commission. During the course of AE2S providing this kind of service the city can grow its staff at a steady rate to get to the level the city needs to be at.

Mr. Vein stated again that this is a collaborative process between the city staff, program management staff and also a number of sub consultants. They have looked at the City Commission setting up a Working Head Department Group and the program manager working with and supporting that department group. There will be four departments that consist of Finance, Planning, Engineering and Public Works.

There will be two phases of this: the initial Planning and Finance Phase and the Comprehensive Phase. Out of the planning and finance they will develop the projects that need to be constructed. After, it will go to the design and construction and then they are basically looking at three different types of projects; the new projects that come because of growth, the upgrade and replacement projects, and the developer projects.

There is a lot of infrastructure that needs to be maintained and this is where they would look at An infrastructure asset management plan that is a more comprehensive approach to tracking and looking at the maintenance of the city's infrastructure. This is a continually evolving process that will be going on. The fact that this project management is truly management of the Services, there will be other contracts that will be doing a number of additions to what the Program manager is going to look at and in this case they would be working with companies like SRF.

In addition to this, they need to develop waste water and storm water master plans, master plans for city facilities and those types of things that play into the overall planning effort.

The AE2S Nexus is going to develop the finance piece and the source of funding as well as looking at the project costs and repayment options.

The next two pieces of this management plan are design and construction. The program Manager will work with the City Engineering Department to develop standard specifications and Design details.

They will also be looking at an Asset Management Plan to help determine when and where to adequately fund replacement and maintenance of the City's infrastructure.

Mayor Koeser commented that there were a number of things AE2S is proposing and that they have had Capital improvement plans before, this would be expanded and in more detail.

In light of both maintenance of the existing and building of new infrastructure, this Capital Improvement Plan would be around a five year planning period. They will look at where growth is going to happen and from that growth look at what needs to be constructed and in what years. Then, breaking it down into smaller specific projects like sewer and water projects.

Mayor Koeser stated that the city has had numerous master plans and asked if those master Plans would have to be updated.

Mr. Vein stated that they would have to look at each plan individually. As AE2S has done most Of the City's distribution system master planning, water master planning, waste water Treatment Master Planning and the collections systems; those systems are in pretty good shape. The level of Master planning beyond that is going to be limited. Mr. Vein said he feels the city needs to really look At the storm water master plan and how the city is going to approach the growth in that area.

Mr. Vein said that the best way to start is to develop a task order that would go into the detail of each one of these areas.

City Auditor, Mr. Kautzman asked if they have put together a plan like this for any other city in the state.

Mr. Vein said that they had not done anything as comprehensive as this plan for any other community. They did put together a comprehensive plan for Grand Forks, ND. This plan Helped the city evaluate, compile and cross reference a lot of planning documents and also Figure out what their funding gaps were and how they were addressed. They used this to help Grand Forks pursue funding for their water treatment plant expansion and worked with the State Water Commission and State Legislature.

Mr. Vein presented a graph of the Program Management Schedule of Services, showing when they would like various items finished. The first thing the program would look at is the planning stage. This consists of land use and infrastructure master planning. They would like this step finished by July of 2014. The second would be financial planning. The goal is for the financial planning to be done in a period of two months. After these steps are accomplished, they will reach out to the State Legislature.

Mayor Koeser said they would need numbers to put in the Governor's budget and also need to somehow get to the legislature. The last time they felt they were making progress, things fell apart at the end. Mayor Koeser asked if they have any ideas in regard to appeal to the legislature.

Mr. Vein said he thinks a lot of this needs to take place prior to the legislature starting and developing the plan early and getting it into the Governor's budget. One thing that comes into play, is that they think there are possibilities to get funds from other sources. AE2S will put together a document showing the various sources of funding and how much they can obtain from these sources. From there, it will be going out and meeting individually with legislatures to gather support.

Mr. Kautzman stated that Joel Gilbertson's suggestion was called the Tom's Dog and Pony Show, where he took a group of people and they went state wide to various people and that needs to be done again.

Mr. Vein said that they frequently face during testimony in the legislative session, is the belief that it can be done in a more conventional way without state help or that they just need to tax higher locally. A financial analysis will give the city some defense to say what will and won't work.

Commissioner Bekkedahl stated that they needed to show different options with what will work the best to what won't work as well, as well as how much each option will cost. He stated that he can see a higher level of sophistication to the information which the city will provide to the state.

Mr. Kautzman asked if the city commission signed off on this plan, would it lock AE2S in as the only engineer the city could use.

Mr. Vein said that they have tried to approach this by using firms that have worked with the city and that they are not planning on being the only engineer used by the city. They can work as a sub-contractor or a direct contractor of the city.

Mayor Koeser stated that he felt that the last time he was in Bismarck they had a good plan and made what they needed very clear but was not sure if the legislature cared what the real needs were. He said it seemed to him that communities that didn't need as much as Williston, still got the same amount of attention and response. They need to get the message across that these are actual needs.

Commissioner Cymbaluk stated that there is a perception that the City of Williston has bundles of money and that isn't true, a majority of the money goes to Bismarck.

Mr. Vein stated that part of the fight is this perception and the press.

City Auditor, John Kautzman asked what they would charge and how they would be billing this Project if they decided to move forward.

Mr. Vein said they would set up a master type agreement that would put AE2S under the program management role and then look at putting together specific task orders that would be approved by the commission on an item by item basis. They would like to continue working with the department managers. They would work with the other sub-consultants and other internal costs.

Mr. Kautzman asked if this was a step forward in good faith.

Mr. Vein stated he would like to put together an agreement and come back at the next Commission meeting with a master agreement and a task order that would basically look at trying to define which needs the city has, which areas, and what the city wants to move forward with. Two weeks after that, they would come with a specific task order of exactly what they are moving forward with.

Mayor Koeser inquired to if they would have a list of task orders at each commission meeting for the commission to vote on.

Mr. Vein said that was correct and that they would bill at an hourly rate, as opposed to a lump sum.

Mayor Koeser said they needed to know the next step, whether they take a consensus on it or Not. The Governor has made it very clear that he wants to see the Capital Improvement Plan before he makes his budget. Mayor Koeser stated that this is a top priority whether they do the program management or not. He also said he would like to get the plan to him early when he doesn't have so many things on his mind.

Mr. Vein stated that the key is to work with the Governor's office and to get support. He said he recommends developing a master agreement and then a first step agreement to define what they are trying to go forward with and bring it back to the next City Commission Meeting.

3. Adjourn

MOTION BY KOESER TO ADJOURN, UNANIMOUS BY VOICE VOTE.

E. Ward Koeser, President
Board of City Commissioners

John Kautzman, City Auditor

