

SPECIAL MEETING NO. 27
Council Chambers, City Hall

September 14, 2021
5:30 O'Clock P.M.

The meeting convened at 5:30 P.M.

Present were Council Member Johnson, Berg, Dalbey, Roe, Meyers and Mayor Lazio.

Roe moved, seconded by Meyers to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes.

Mayor Lazio inquired if there was anyone from the audience who wished to address an item on the agenda. There were none.

Meyers moved, seconded by Roe that Res. No. 176-2021, accepting the renewal effective Jan. 1, 2022, for the City's Post-65 retiree medical supplemental and Rx plans carrier with Humana, be passed and adopted. Finance Dir. Mulder explained that the plan costs will increase for single \$209 (\$125.40 City + \$83.60 Retiree) to \$218.11/month (\$130.87 City + \$87.24 Retiree) with this renewal; but we are still reducing the City's cost by \$3,056.11 for the year compared to the previous plan in place. All ayes.

PW Dir. Seals began the discussion on the update for City Hall Improvements Project. The current boiler system is in need of replacement; different HVAC systems were evaluated with a desire to find a system to control temps in certain areas; if we are looking to build out the entire first floor, we recommend a phased approach to do areas as funding is secured; want to install a system that can be expanded upon and not portions removed when the area/phase is developed.

Allen Varney of Willett Hofman & Associates (WHA) and West Plains Engineering's Mike Drahos were on site to also describe the vision and answer questions about the project.

Varney described each floor: most of the basement is identified as storage; two restrooms need updated to ADA compliance and the boiler room will need tore out and replaced with new equip; first floor will have the two restrooms updated to ADA compliance, a new drinking fountain, electrical, ADA compliance with south entrance ramp and removal of asbestos floor tile; second floor will update restrooms to ADA compliance and the back corridor for council chambers; third floor is update to restrooms for ADA compliance and creating an area of refuge. These are the only items factored into the revised plan, with a total project cost around \$2.9 Million.

Roe stated this has been a well talked about project with City Hall being a central point in our community. Looking long term at this price tag, we want to invest money into the bldg. for repairs so we are not stuck doing more repairs later on (similar to The Beach, Fire Dept. and the Airport). Lack of ADA requirements, proper safety, and proper air turnover all the while following our Code, makes it more feasible that this project needs to be done. We will also want to take into consideration the amount of extra funding necessary for phasing the project out and mobilizing crews multiple times. We must also look to preserve the historical integrity of this bldg.

Varney added taking into consideration how old the bldg. structure is and not being able to fund the maintenance over time; it's not just the systems that evolve but codes change, technology changes; you might find a system that provides the same services you have but it may be more complicated and with a higher price tag; a lot of things are factored into the cost. There are some items that need to be installed now (electrical, base boilers); try to step/phase the process in a smart manner as to not incur a lot of add'l expense.

Berg inquired if any viable rebates through energy companies that we can apply for or a scale of estimates of change of energy consumption; what sort of costs might we see?

Drahos responded we will see an increase in cost in providing new ventilation that will be more than what it is now because we have not been efficient in this area.

Berg also asked Mulder about current and upcoming bond rates. Is there a rationale for trying to do more now with lower rates, or piece meal out later?

Mulder explained she does not know exactly when the bond rates will start going back up, but if we do another bond for CIP next yr., it would make sense to do it then instead of waiting two more years. We already have some funds available that need to be spent by June 30, 2022; these were to address some of the ADA compliances and entrance issues into the bldg. I would rather borrow the funds now than wait when rates are bound to go back up.

Council asked since we are not voting on this item tonight, what is our timeframe on getting the ball rolling? If we start with this revised plan now and identify other grant sources, when can we hit the go button on this project?

Seals reported the first step would be to come up with actual construction plans with possible dates for letting, which will all be based on financials/funding available. Coordinate possible funding timelines along with construction. First goal is to get this first set of plans.

Dalbey asked what is our plan. What options do we have (financially)? Can we bond for any of this? What is the best avenue to go? We have heard the advantages and disadvantages of doing each. Is there a better way?

Mulder, first we need a full construction plan to apply for some of the grants; the renovation schematics provided is a good start. Some of the grants need a planning and historic structure report that must be paid for to begin. We can apply for a grant (up to \$3-5,000) to pay for this report. We will start looking into next year's financing and funding for CIP in the next couple of months and it would be advantageous of us to bond for this at that time. We've all know that our four entrance doors need to be done; get a plan together for what these need to look like historically; get them done for security reasons. This is the main thing on my list to get completed.

Dalbey stated this entire project needs to be done; I would rely heavily on staff to give us these recommendations to get this done and not drag out too long.

Meyers stated he could go along with the revised plan presented tonight, but is curious as to what sort of timeline it would be. We always have more demands than what we have money for. Yes, I agree that we need to get all of the wiring, conduit and piping for the complete project; we need to go ahead and get those, does this work into the \$2.9 Million? Accountability, even though in the long run, it will cost more and the public would understand that we are making a good faith effort and we will phase it in to get it done.

Johnson asked if the HVAC unit in the plans puts into consideration putting back to the historic look of the building (high ceilings) and envision of installing everything- relocate current employees, work around?

Seals stated this would be part of the plans; how to still provide services, records still available; moving employees around for workflows; this will be determined as plans are developed. Drahos added, with the system selected (hybrid six); it is more self-contained and plays down how much construction is done with swing space and transitional periods.

Varney reported we have provided a more defined scope that is primarily code related, ADA and mechanical electrical. This also effects the percentage for contingencies; Drahos added mechanical may be 30% while historic preservation may be 50%; some of these elements can swing quite drastically.

City Admin. Rath inquired if the revised scope includes remodel of first floor which it does not; only the ADA restrooms and ramp on the south end. The purpose of the remodel was to look at efficiency, safety, security, accessibility and functionality. We have employees without any private space to conduct work. The whole layout of the floor is not conducive to an efficient working environment. There is no security; help protect employees, city documents, etc. Many things still need to be looked at for the second phase. We need to know what the final plan/end solution is going to look like; I am a little disappointed to see that this was not included.

Seals reported we are showing that this project can be done in phases. If funding is available and we can do it all, that is great, but we do not know.

Dalbey stated we need to keep this remodel in our sights and have as the end goal.

If the decision is made to go with this revised scope, we could be looking at between 2-3 months to put construction plans together with bid information. Possibly sign a contract in February to get started with a good years' worth of work to get through.

Roe mentioned at some point we need to have a healthy conversation about the fire dept. (staffing, OT, burnout, helping with ambulance services taking away from primary duties).

There being no further business, Berg moved, seconded by Dalbey that the meeting adjourn. All ayes.

Adjournment was at 6:39 P.M.

ATTEST:


Christina Reinhard, CMC, City Clerk

CITY OF OTTUMWA, IOWA


Tom X. Lazio, Mayor