

**North Powder City Council Work Session**  
**August 24, 2020**  
**6 PM City Hall**

Attendance: Mayor Mike Wisdom, Councilors Dennis Lefever, Joyce Lawyer, David (Shorty) Schwehr, and Jeff Grende, City Recorder Beth Wendt. Councilor Logan McCrae came in late and Councilor Mike Morse was absent.

Others in attendance: Librarian Maggie Guthrie, Susan Wirkala, Walt Brookshire, and Carol Bouchard.

Mayor Mike called the meeting to order. The purpose of the work session was to work on a rough draft of a floor plan of the Stanford building. We are not buying anything at this time but we are doing our due diligence as agreed to. He understood that if we could at least make an offer pending inspections and it wouldn't bind us but would put a hold the property. We should do the same due diligence at the fire station. We need a basic floor plan of both buildings to compare. He thought the main things on the wish list would be City Hall, Library, and a Community Hall.

Meeting moved to the Stanford building to take measurements

Meeting reconvened at City Hall at 6:55PM. Mayor Mike has contacted a couple of structural engineers to look at the Stanford building. They will give free estimates. Shorty will draw up some generic floor plans of both buildings so we can do some comparisons. Mayor Mike noted that if we start moving walls, we need to consider how it will affect things such as lighting, exits, wiring, fire escapes, etc. Jeff wondered if the Council would be opposed to having Jake Myers look at the Stanford building. Jake has experience in restoring old buildings. Mayor Mike noted that Dale Mammen has looked at the building and would like to talk with the Council and answer questions. He reiterated that we have a structural engineer coming to look at the Stanford building prior to making an offer. Walt noted that it usually comes with the offer but the City would still have to pay for it. He didn't know how much it would cost but a home of that size would run about \$600-\$650. Mayor Mike wondered if it was possible to get a right of first refusal. Walt thought it was possible but those are hard to get. He felt the best thing to do would be to do make an offer and proceed with our due diligence. Mayor Mike clarified that if an offer is accepted, it would buy us a little time. Walt noted that we can put whatever terms we want on the offer but it has been taking about 45 days for a title search. (Logan came in). Joyce wanted to move forward. Mayor Mike thought we should make an offer and start writing up provisions. Jeff felt uncomfortable with that without knowing if the building is structurally sound. Shorty added that an offer doesn't mean that we can't back out pending the outcome of inspections. Mayor Mike reiterated that all we have committed to is to look at the building. Walt thought any votes had to be done at a public meeting. An offer will secure the building for the City. Mayor Mike noted that the structural engineer was going to give us an estimate of what needs to be done. Walt noted that the building is now actively listed. Mayor Mike suggested another meeting to work on an offer. We need to get access to the fire station, too. Logan noted that the information he provided has the measurements for the fire station. Jeff wondered what kind of time frame we are looking at to get City Hall into a new location. Shorty thought 2 years and Joyce thought 6 months. Maggie thought it would depend on which building the City goes with. Jeff added there will be some cost from the City up front but we need to have a time line of what we want and when. He thought it would take a lot longer to get into the Stanford building than the fire station. Mayor Mike thought that was the reason for the inspections. Logan wondered what it would take on an inspection report to be a "no go" on the Stanford building. He felt no matter how the inspection came back on the Stanford building there would still be a push forward on it. Mayor Mike hoped we could "piggy back" some of the expense for City Hall onto a Library grant. But if we find out there is too much work, it would be a no go. Shorty added that we need the same information about the fire station. Jeff thought we may have to do seismic upgrades for public buildings. Maggie was concerned about being left out of grant applications for the Library. Mayor Mike wanted to make a decision and get the wheels turning so we can get started as soon as possible. He reiterated that he didn't want to just throw money "down a rat hole" but he wanted to check things out. His idea is to get

City Hall and the Library temporarily into a building as phase one. To do that we need to obtain the building so we can start applying for grants. There is a lot of money available for preservation of historical buildings. Establishing a historic district would allow private owners to apply for the grants as well. Mayor Mike agreed there is a red light as to when to pull up on the Stanford building but without an inspection, he didn't know when that would be. Logan was trying to get a feeling as to which property was preferred. Shorty didn't think we could do that until we look at both buildings. Logan wondered what the engineer was supposed to do. Mayor Mike said they would look at the structural shape the building is in. Shorty agreed that it needs to be done to both buildings. Mayor Mike will ask the engineers to look at both buildings the same day. He added that we would go after grants based on the priorities. He thought we should just forget about the Odd Fellows side of the Stanford building for the time being. Walt thought we should start applying for Library grants now. He suggested the City consider buying a program called grant watch that would let us know when grants are available for different things. There might be money available fairly soon. Mayor Mike thought the next step was to get ready to make an offer on the Stanford building. Beth suggested a special meeting to look at the floor plans for each building to see what will work in each building. Mayor Mike reiterated that we should also decide if we are going to make an offer to give us breathing room. Logan wondered if we could send out a survey to get community input. Mayor Mike didn't think we had time before we make an offer. He also felt the Council was elected to make these kinds of decisions on behalf of the City and he didn't want it to become habit to send surveys. Logan still thought a survey was the way to go. He is generally hearing that we should buy the fire station. Mayor Mike was concerned that people were not fully informed. He has heard comments that the City should explore both options. He thought it made sound business sense to know that there is a possibility of selling off part of the property to re-coop some of the investment. He admitted he's been accused of being way too concerned about North Powder's history and maybe that doesn't mean anything to people anymore. Logan noted that the town voted to not fix the old school. Mayor Mike commented that if we decide to go with the fire station, that is what we get but it still needs to be done right. We are only going to get one shot at this. He wanted people to know what we are turning down if we go with the fire station. Joyce agreed that it needs to be attractive. Jeff wondered if we are going to dump a lot of money into it, why not just buy the front lot from Sharon and build new. Maggie added that we need to have some assurance that the City will be able to maintain the building when it is done. A special meeting was scheduled for 6PM on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Jeff felt we needed more than one week to inform citizens. Mayor Mike reiterated that an offer only stops someone from coming in behind us. Walt explained that once an offer is made, the seller can make a counter offer, but the terms of the offer should include what the city wants done, such as inspections. There will be a reasonable amount of time in which those can be done. Shorty suggested the offer could be less than the asking price with the stipulation that the City pays for inspections. Walt noted that a seller can't pay for an inspection to be used by a buyer. He clarified that until an offer is accepted the property is not "locked up" and it is still available for other offers. Beth was concerned about the City putting out money. Mayor Mike thought it couldn't be a secret from the Rural Fire Department that we are looking at another building. Logan said they would like to sell within the next 3 to 4 months and they hoped the City might consider rezoning if we don't buy the fire station. He still felt the fire station made the most sense because the City shouldn't own more than we need. If the City decides to buy the Stanford building we should consider re-zoning and sell our part of the fire station. He wondered if anybody had thought about demo on the back part of the Stanford building. Mayor Mike thought if we were to acquire the property we'd need to talk about whether or not it needs to come down.

Meeting adjourned at 8PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Beth Wendt  
City Recorder