

North Powder City Council Special Meeting
January 26, 2021
6:30PM Wolf Creek Grange

Attendance: Mayor Mike Wisdom, Councilors Mike Morse (Big Mike), Logan McCrae, Joyce Lawyer, Vicki Townsend, Jeff Grende and Justin Wright, City Recorder Beth Wendt.

Others: Dan Willitts, Tony Lasich, Jeff & Wynn Nielsen

Mayor Mike called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Mayor Mike noted there was only one item on the agenda; to discuss the counterproposal from the Rural Fire District and to discuss some estimates for possible work to be done to the fire station. He noted the City made a proposal of \$75,000 for the Rural Fire District's part of the fire station. The RFD countered with \$87,500. There were 2 of the 3 contractor estimates for remodeling included in the Council packets. Joyce wanted to put the Stanford Building back on the table before a final decision is made. There are two new Councilors who have not seen the building. Mayor Mike thought it was not an option at this time. He felt we should address the fire station first. A counter proposal was for \$87,500. He didn't feel the City could pay that and get anything done with our available resources without emptying the General Fund. Vicki didn't know how we could not buy the fire station. She felt \$87,500 was a good price. We need something. We have \$120,000 budgeted to spend for a building. If we can't do it all at once, we can do a piece at a time. She wanted to form a committee and have some citizens involved to work with the Council. Mayor Mike noted that he had contractors only look at the City's side of the building but we could reasonably double the figures to do the entire building. Vicki reiterated that if we bought the building for \$87,500 we could decide what is more important, City Hall or the Library and we could start with that. Mayor Mike clarified that according to the estimates, we are looking at approximately \$135 per square foot. We don't have a specific floor plan so the contractors just looked at a basic plan to have 1 large unisex bathroom, removing the big doors, leveling the floor, lowering the ceiling, and framing walls. He reiterated that the estimates were very basic. Based on the estimates, we are looking at about \$281,000 for remodeling just the City's half of the building. That doesn't include furniture or anything done to the outside of the building. Tony Lasich asked if we needed to frame walls and level floors to start. Joyce thought so. Mayor Mike noted there was about a 4" slope from front to back. It is different foot traffic than what has been there. The walls are concrete blocks. Tony still thought framing walls could be done later. Joyce added that it is harder to do when the area is occupied. Jeff remarked that the floor meets standard ADA compliance. Joyce thought that was okay for wheel chairs, but what about kids? Logan thought at the last meeting we talked about getting to a price with terms, then we would identify a committee to make a prioritized list of what we need and want, then get bids on each thing and figure out how much we want to spend. He felt the bids meant nothing at this time. Jeff thought we also talked about if we agreed on a purchase price we would have a work session to work everything out. He was surprised to see any bids. Mayor Mike clarified that they were not bids, they were only estimates to help with a starting point to figure costs for remodeling. Jeff wondered why they weren't for the whole building. There is nothing for the RFD part of the building. Mayor Mike remarked that is not the only option. He was trying to look at what we have to try to make things work. He felt this all came down to doing a "solid" for the Rural Fire Department but we have a finite amount of resources. Jeff reiterated that he has been pushing from the start to sit down and decide how much we wanted to spend for the entire project. Mayor Mike noted that we now have numbers of what it would take to do what we own. Logan interjected that we are here to talk about the purchase of the RFD part of the building. Mayor Mike agreed but if we take \$87,500 out of the kitty, what do we have left to work with? He didn't want to spend it all. Logan reiterated that we are here to discuss whether or not to accept the \$87,500. Mayor Mike thought before it gets to that point, we need to know what the bottom line is. Joyce added that according to

Jason, it will take about 6 years to replace \$100,000. She reminded that the General Fund pays for everything but water and sewer. Tony wondered how much money would be left in the General Fund if we spend \$87,500. Logan answered \$167,000. Beth thought we had about \$258,000 in the in the General Fund Reserve. It's used to pay for streets, parks, contracted services for the Fire Department, general operations of the Library, and wages for the Librarian and part of the public works and city recorder. We don't have the full \$258,000 available. If we want to spend more than the \$120,000 that has been budgeted we would have to do a budget amendment. Money coming into the General Fund comes mainly from property taxes and state revenue sharing. Some of that has increased or stayed the same, but some has decreased. So some of the income will be replaced but she thought we shouldn't spend more than we could feasibly replace in a reasonable time. Dan Willitts asked how much Beth thought the City would be comfortable spending. He was leaning toward the purchase of the Stanford building, but was okay with either decision. He didn't want to see the City spend down the reserve fund to the point we can't handle an emergency. Beth thought that was a question for Jason. The \$120,000 budgeted is about half of the reserve fund. Some of the funds in the general reserve belong to the Library from fund raisers and unspent grant funds. She, personally, didn't feel comfortable spending more than half of the reserve. In the past 4 years, we've put about \$20,000 a year into the general fund reserve. Logan reiterated that we could adjust the budget through a resolution. He suggested we look at what needs to be done, make a plan and then bid individual things. Justin agreed we should do the things that need to be done right away to get into the building. He added that it would take too long to move into the Stanford building. Mayor Mike reminded that the Stanford building was a moot point at this time. Joyce still thought we could get into the Stanford building for \$75,000 and get grants for most of the fixing up. The City wouldn't have to spend a lot of extra money and we could be in at least part of it in 6 months. Logan made a motion to accept the proposal of \$87,500, the counter offer from the North Powder Rural Fire District, and set up a work group or committee to get on board with the inspection, building the list we talked about, speaking with our accountant to identify the minimum reserve, and that we spend up to a maximum. Vicki seconded the motion. Dan remarked that he still leaned toward the Stanford property, if we can get grants. He felt there are tough times coming and we should save all the money we can. Joyce volunteered to be on the committee but she still wanted to reconsider the Stanford building. It's a strong building and has historical value. Mayor Mike asked for a vote on Logan's motion to accept the counter proposal of \$87,500 and to form a committee. Motion carried with Logan, Jeff, Vicki, and Justin in favor. Joyce and Big Mike were opposed. Vicki felt the committee meetings should be open the public and have members of the community involved. Mayor Mike suggested we advertise for community volunteers. Beth will put something in the newsletter and post a date and time for a meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Beth Wendt
City Recorder