

**Hastings, Minnesota  
City Council Workshop  
July 18, 2022**

The City Council of the City of Hastings, Minnesota met in a workshop on Monday, July 18, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Volunteer Room at the Hastings City Hall, 101 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Hastings, Minnesota.

**Members Present:** Mayor Fasbender, Councilmembers Braucks, Folch, Fox, Lund, and Vaughan

**Members Absent:** Councilmembers Leifeld

**Staff Present:** City Administrator Dan Wietecha  
Assistant City Administrator Kelly Murtaugh  
Finance Manager Chris Eitemiller  
Senior Accountant Ashley Bertrand  
Community Development Director John Hinzman

Mayor Fasbender called the workshop to order at 5:35 pm and welcomed Councilmembers and staff. Wietecha indicated the meeting is to provide updated information and for additional opportunity for further discussion on the budget. Eitemiller reported where the budget process is currently and the remaining steps/due dates. Wietecha explained the internal review process and who is involved.

Council posed questions about the feedback loop to employees to help understand the budgeting choices and if there are conversations about cutting/reducing to help offset the increases in requests. Earlier discussion on reductions may need to be brought back into conversation. Communication about efficiencies to the community would be valuable.

Eitemiller reviewed the personnel requests that have been made in the 2023 budget request from Department Heads. The SAFER grant would cover six full-time firefighters, if awarded. Council recommends that we use Police Reserves or part-time CSO rather than invest in a full-time position. Council discussion on the number of staffing requests and if administrative support can be consolidated across departments. Discussion on the project/initiative approvals by Council and the added workload these items may bring--personnel requests may need to be considered in light of these approvals. Councilmember support of the GIS specialist and cartography software that can be used across departments, as well as support for the Arts Task Force.

Additional budget items for discussion: The Compensation study will require additional expense going forward, when a cost of living adjustment is utilized. The SAFER grant, if awarded, will fund firefighter positions for three years and the City would be required to bear the full cost of the six firefighters going forward. Eitemiller presented options to prepare for the payroll following the grant by phasing in funds over three years. If the grant is not awarded, Wietecha presented a similar phased model to increase the firefighter staff by six over three years using

one-time funds and levy increase. Council discussion around training efficiencies in hiring 2 vs 4 vs 6 and impact on Paid On-Call staff. Council discussion on combining services with area cities within Dakota and Washington counties. Council discussion on communication/messaging/perception of public safety spending is critical and has been a message conveyed by residents.

Council discussion on following existing City plans vs urgent priorities. If we have not fully, consistently addressed maintenance of existing, adding new facilities (like sports complex) may not be feasible. There is good resident feedback on existing programming. Council discussion on earlier conversation about naturalizing some of the parks. There may be value in assigning the Parks & Rec Commission to review the parks and which ones may be appropriate for naturalizing. Possibly update portions of parks, as opposed to renovating whole parks at a great expense. Different park experiences would be an asset to the park system in the City.

Fire is a staffing priority. GIS and cartography software may be a priority. Clarify earlier conversation on priority of Investigator or School Resource Officer. While investigator is priority, mental health crises in schools is also critical, demonstrating need for SRO.

Finance Committee will meet to review the many requests in August.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The workshop adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

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Mary D. Fasbender, Mayor

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Kelly Murtaugh, City Clerk