CITY OF GILBERT
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2018
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Mayor Milos called the Work Session to order at 5:02 p.m.

Present: Mayor Milos, Councilors Robich, Pontinen and Ouke.

Staff Present: City Clerk/Treasurer Debra Sakrison.

Al Johnson from Benchmark Engineering, they help cities with municipal needs, if need expertise they will work with outside consultants. This helps to keep costs lower, they cannot justify having a full-time specialist on staff.

What have done for cities as far as economic development? Response, can be housing or commercial. Has done townhomes in Chisholm. Has worked with Hibbing and Aurora. Mt. Iron through EDA. The mall in Virginia with their utilities and infrastructure. They have worked in the area with Hardees, Caribou Coffee and Einstein Bagels.

Do you have a grant writer? Response, no, will work with the client.

Gilbert has a grant application for the campground that will be a part of the Bonding Bill, do you have a lobbyist on staff? Response, no registered lobbyists on staff but can help with the narrative.

If the city looks for funding for a new library, can your firm assist with this? Response, buildings are not our expertise. They focus mainly on infrastructure.

How many people are on your staff? Response, they have a staff of 15 employees.

City of McKinley uses Dick Grabco and Gary Lemke, Community Resource Development, for grant writing.

Stantech charged $1,500 for USDA Grant application, would you have charged for this? Response, grants from CDBG, IRRRB don't bill for grant writing.

Mayor Milos, what was the most recent project you worked on that involved a grant? Response, the city of Taconite, casing under Highway 169 to get utilities across when MN Dot reconstructed Highway 169.

If it is a building project they would bring in architect as consultant.

Benchmark Engineering has been in business since 1993, strongest and most stable land surveying company on the Iron Range. Very involved with site development.

Billing was questioned. Response, could offer a quote for a study, can bill a percentage of larger project costs or quote per project. Requires no retainer. No charge to come to meetings.

Do projects typically stay within budget? Response, there is always a chance for overruns because they can't see what is underground. They try to make projects as affordable as possible.

Conversation about potential consolidation.

John Jamnick from JPJ Engineering.

Do you have any specialists on staff that the city of Gilbert could utilize, such as a water treatment or waste treatment expert? Response, no.

What have you done as far as economic development? Response, has worked with Planning and Zoning Committees and EDA work with those. Finds land, concept plans, local, commercial and rehabilitation programs.

Do you seek projects on behalf of a city? Response, they've always been proactive with projects they've been focused on the Wastewater Plant most recently but they do concept plans – AEOA, north of Holiday and east in Gilbert Industrial Park.

Jamnick is involved in grant writing, has assisted with grant writing with the IRRRB and writes grants for the CDBG.

The person on staff that focuses on grant writing would be John Jamnick himself.

Gilbert has a grant application for the campground that will be a part of the Bonding Bill, do you have a lobbyist on staff? Response, no lobbyist on staff. They will go to the Capitol to advocate for the city when the opportunity presents itself.

Mayor Milos reminded the City Council that Jamnick caught that we could apply for the Bonding Bill from Representative Metsa last fall.

How many people are on your staff? Response, they have 12 people. 16-18 seasonally. 3 engineers, 2 registered land surveyors. They have offices in Hibbing and Duluth, the client base is mainly Northern Minnesota.

Stantech charged $1,500 for USDA Grant application, would you have charged for this? Response, typically they don't charge for grant applications. It has to be technically fundable. Historically they want to be part of the city's process and projects. They are efficient, can be part of design fee. Does not offer architects on staff.

If the city looks for funding for a new library, can your firm assist with this? Can pursue and participate. They were the Project Managers for the library in Ely.

There is no mark up on consultant invoices.

Jamnick has been working with the city for 26 years and enjoys working with the city. In 2017 Jamnick had 410 hours of time devoted to the City of Gilbert. He billed 166 hours, 80% of what was billed was for the Equalization Basin. Jamnick did a couple of surveys for the City of Gilbert as well.

Mayor Milos is receptive to ideas. She noted that Gilbert wouldn't be on the Bonding Bill without Jamnick.

Jamnick explained MPCA Inflow &Infiltration Stipulation Plan.

Jason Chopp and Mike Larson, Community Development Director, from SEH. SEH is a full service engineering firm. Local offices in Duluth, Virginia and Grand Rapids.

Do you have any specialists on staff that the City of Gilbert could utilize, such as a water treatment or waste treatment expert? Response, yes, in additional to our engineers they have Certified Operators on staff out of the Duluth office. They have a Wastewater Treatment Operator with 30 years of experience and also have Certified Water Operators on staff.

We have a person that helps with new processes and train staff.

What have you done with cities for economic development? Larson has10 years of experience with SEH and 24 years of experience with the IRRRB. He has been involved with economic and community development all over Minnesota. SEH is a full service firm.

All of the Range communities finding funds and developing projects not just grant writers. Has served as acting EDA Lead for area communities.

They have someone on staff that does grant writing. Mike Larson does grant writing. They have full time economic development grant writers on staff.

Gilbert has a grant application for the campground that will be a part of the Bonding Bill, do you have a lobbyist on staff? Response, there are two lobbyists that SEH hires.

If the city looks for funding for a new library, can your firm assist with this? SEH would do that. SEH has architects and structural engineers on staff that do building work, they would work hand and hand with the local contact.

SEH can work on a project specific basis, even if not the city engineer for special projects.

How many people are on your staff? 30 offices in the Midwest mainly. 800 employees. 50-60 employees in Duluth, Virginia and Grand Rapids area.

Stantech charged $1,500 for a USDA Grant application, would you have charged for this? Response, no, would not have charged for a grant application if SEH was the engineer on the project. SEH would

act as an extension of the city. SEH has been in business for 90 years and is an employee owned company.

Mayor Milos stated there is a manufacturing company interested in coming to town. We are in the process of getting a City Administrator in place, they would be the economic development contact person.

Motion by Robich, second by Milos to adjourn at 6:30 p.m. MCU

Debra Sakrison

Debra Sakrison, City Clerk

ATTEST:

D. Elizabeth Milos, Mayor