

ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
September 28, 2016

A special meeting of the Ashland City Council was held at the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers on the 28th day of September, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Richard Grauerholz
City Council President Russell DeVries
City Council Member James Anderson
City Council Member Paul Gossin
City Council Member Janece Mollhoff
City Administrator Jessica Quady
City Clerk Kathleen Sliva

Absent: City Attorney Mark Fahleson

Others: Senator Jerry Johnson, Julie Ogden, Wayne Williams, Shirley Niemeyer, Peg Lutton, Pat Proctor, Beverly Ziegenbein, Katherine Novak, Marilyn Wright, Chris Devillier, Suzi Nelson, Annie Lauschman.

Notice of meeting was advertised in the Ashland Gazette on September 22, 2016. The Mayor and all Council Members received advance notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda as shown by the Acknowledgment of Receipt of Notice. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

Mayor Grauerholz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared. Mayor Grauerholz noted the Open Meetings Act that is posted on the south wall of the Council Chambers.

Motion by DeVries, seconded by Mollhoff to adopt the regular agenda.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried

Mayor Grauerholz opened a public hearing regarding the preservation and salvage of the Silver Street Bridge over Salt Creek at 7:02 p.m. Julie Ogden of JEO Consulting Group, Inc. and project manager, spoke to the Council regarding the bridge project. She stated that early on, they looked at different repair or replacement options for the bridge and they found that replacement of the bridge was the most fiscally responsible option. She said the bridge was found to be listed on the Historic Registry so they coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office about how this bridge could be replaced. She said that the bridge could not be left in place as the road needed to keep the current alignment

and the bridge would still collect debris. She said in conjunction with the State Preservation Office, they came up with a plan to provide documentation of the bridge and plans in electronic format to the Preservation Office and to hire a historic photographer to take pictures.

Ogden said they looked for others that were interested in using the bridge. She said they spoke with a developer in the area but they were unable to use it.

Ogden said the City of Papillion has shown interest in obtaining the bridge for use on their trail system. She read a statement from Daren Konda, Thompson, Dreessen & Dorner, Inc., "The City of Papillion is exploring the opportunity if granted by the City of Ashland to salvage the Silver Street Bridge for use as a pedestrian crossing. If economically feasible and agreeable to all decision makers the center section of the bridge would be removed under the proposed City of Ashland bridge replacement project, transported to Papillion and utilized at a proposed pedestrian crossing within the expansion area of City Park in Papillion. This may be an opportunity to preserve a historical feature and utilize it for future generations." Ogden said Papillion should know within the next couple of weeks if it will be feasible for them to salvage the bridge. Ogden said that estimates to salvage the bridge are between \$150,000 to \$300,000; the salvaging would need to be conducted in concert with the City's project; and an interlocal agreement would need to be made.

Ogden said that Wahoo does not have any interest or use for the bridge and that she has not spoken with other entities in the county. Ogden said the total bridge construction estimate is \$3 million with funding from Nebraska Department of Roads and the City. She answered questions of the Council. Ogden said that there will be an alternate bid item to salvage the bridge.

Chris Devillier made comment stating that throughout the ECAP process one thing that became very important to the citizens of Ashland was that we maintain our historical presence and keep our special history in mind as we move forward. She said the bridge's home is in Ashland, it deepens a sense of place, it preserves its history and is an opportunity to create new traditions and destinations. She said that she did not know what the cost would be but wondered if it would be possible to move it up stream to link to the existing trail.

Annie Lauschman made comment stating that she lives on the east side of town where there is no school bussing and it is not feasible or safe for her children to cross Highway 6 to walk to school. She said she would like the bridge to stay in Ashland and perhaps be used as a pedestrian bridge over the highway.

Julie Ogden stated that the new bridge will have a seven foot sidewalk with fencing. She said that the City would need to work with NDOR to develop a pedestrian bridge to meet their requirements. Discussion about a potential pedestrian bridge was held.

State Senator Jerry Johnson asked Ogden about the time table with NDOR for the bridge. She stated that the project should be out for bid in December with construction in 2017. She said bidding the salvage as an alternate will allow the council to choose a salvage option up until construction begins.

In response to a question, Ogden reported that the historical marker near the bridge along the creek shore will be relocated out of harm's way.

Shirley Niemeyer provided the Council with a copy of her statement and reported on comments that were made on the Ashland Community Board on Facebook. She said that the bridge is a historic pony steel truss bridge. She provided a Google search list of Ashland and historic bridge and noted potential economic development benefits. She said the bridge can be repurposed in Ashland. She said she would like the Ashland-Greenwood Schools to be contacted as the bridge could be made into an outdoor amphitheater. She said her second idea is a foot bridge and third a functional bridge in or near Ashland. She suggested contacting the Saunders County Board of Supervisors about potentially using on a secondary road. She suggested contacting Mahoney State Park, Wildlife Safari Park and Carol Joy Holling Camp.

Wayne Williams spoke stating that when he was on the Council, he researched the possibility of a walking bridge over the highway. He said one of the drawbacks would be the amount of steps that would be needed and the snow and ice accumulation in the winter.

Katherine Novak stated that she started up a company two years ago called Vintage Properties LLC. She said she cannot stand the thought of the bridge going to a different community because we can't figure out a way to keep it here. She said if it is not feasible to use it as a bridge it could be repurposed. She said the amphitheater is an idea. She said that anything that can be done to bring out more of the history of Ashland for people to see should be done. She reiterated that it is important to keep the bridge here.

Chris Devillier asked that the conversation continue about a safe highway crossing and sidewalks on the east side.

Ogden answered questions of the Council related to the project timeline, alternate bids and flooding.

City Administrator Quady said that she will contact the Lower Platte South NRD regarding a water access at the bridge.

Ogden discussed possible aesthetic changes that could be made to the bridge design.

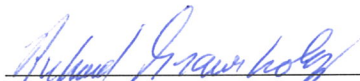
Council Member Mollhoff asked the public if there is a group of interested citizens willing to collaborate on bringing concrete options for the bridge to the Council and to spearhead this initiative and to fundraise. Discussion related to this continued.

Quady stated that she will reach out to the suggested entities to determine if there is interest in their acquiring the bridge.

With no further comment, Mayor Grauerholz closed the public hearing at 8:08 p.m.

Motion by Mollhoff, seconded by Gossin to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Roll Call: Ayes: All Motion Carried


Richard Grauerholz, Mayor


Kathleen Sliva, City Clerk



I, the above signed City Clerk of Ashland, Saunders County, Nebraska hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the proceedings had and done by the Council on September 28, 2016 that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the office of the City Clerk; that such subjects were contained in said agenda for at least twenty four hours prior to said meeting; that said minutes from which the foregoing proceedings have been extracted were in written form and available for public inspection within ten business days or prior to the next convened meeting of said body.