



From Virtual City Council meeting . . . to the Business Council

Prepared by Rich Groves, Executive Director
North Kansas City Business Council
May 18, 2021

Note: As a reminder, the notes below represent topics that, in my judgement, might be of interest to the business community. It does not include everything that was on the agenda.

Work Session – 6:00 p.m.

The purpose of this work session was to view and discuss an explanation of the zTrip transportation system which could become a replacement for the KCATA Flex bus service which the City has used for many years.

The cost of the Flex bus service comprises a majority of the total cost of bus service paid to KCATA by the City of North Kansas City. The cost per ride is very high due to low usership of this generous program which allows point-to-point transportation within North Kansas City for a very low cost for the rider. It is available to both residents and non-residents using smaller buses.

The cost per ride for zTrip would probably be less than is currently experienced with the Flex service. But it is very possible that use would increase resulting in a higher total cost to the City. Transportation is provided by cars instead of buses with a maximum of 4 passengers per ride.

The City Council will be asked at the next City Council meeting which direction they would like to go – renew KCATA or transition to zTrip. With the KCATA contract expiring June 30 City Administrator Eric Berlin recommended that if the City Council opts for the zTrip plan that the City enter into another 6 month term with KCATA to allow time to set up the zTrip program.

Regular Session – 7:00 p.m.

Consent Agenda

Approval of the Consent Agenda included, among other things, approval of a tourism grant for a Second Saturdays Program to be coordinated by RiverNorth between April and September.

Strategic Planning Session

Approval was given for engaging KU Public Management Center to facilitate the City Councils August Strategic Planning session.

City Administrator Transition

Approval was given for engaging Baker Tilly USP as an executive search firm for finding candidates to replace current City Administrator Eric Berlin who plans to retire effective July 2. Approval was also given to appoint Assistant City Administrator Kim Nakahodo as Interim City Administrator effective July 3 until a new City Administrator is brought on board.

Additional Cost for Burlington Complete Street Project

Engineering preparation for construction of the Burlington Complete Street project recommended water line replacement. This was not originally anticipated. There is an additional estimated cost of \$1.7 million. Staff recommended approval for a task order with the engineer for the project, Olsson, to design the water line replacement, in the amount of \$197,500.

The existing water line is a 10-inch cast iron pipe located on the east side of Burlington; it has been repaired multiple times over its time in service. Staff and the city's engineer believe that this line dates from approximately the 1950s. The age and condition of the pipe and associated valves makes this water line a good candidate for replacement in the near future.

Relocation and complete replacement of the water line at this time offers several benefits to the City. Replacing the water line would allow the City to avoid future water main breaks or valve failures that would require emergency repair. Replacing the water line during the planned construction avoids additional excavation work in the future, when replacing new street improvements above the water line would be more costly. Replacement also gives us an opportunity to consider up-sizing the pipe for greater capacity. Even replacing the existing line with another 10-inch pipe would likely increase water capacity to the southern portion of the Burlington corridor and the older industrial area due to corrosion inside the pipe due to its age.

This request was not voted on pending reporting of additional details about expenditures to-date. It will be brought back at a future City Council meeting.

Walker Road Intersection

Resistance was expressed about this project based on a much lower level of traffic into the Cerner campus from the west due to changes in remote vs in-office work. City Council members recommended consulting with Cerner management to determine future plans for in-office vs remote work.

Staff Comments

City Administrator Eric Berlin reminded City Council members about the previous decision to hold the first in-person City Council meeting on June 15, a decision that was made before the recent relaxation of mask mandates. There was active discussion with some City Council representatives favoring resuming in-person on June 1. But agreement was reached to continue with the June 15 date and plan to use a portion of the June 1 agenda to define expectations for room setup, mask requirements, vaccination verification, etc.

The full agenda for this meeting with links to critical documents is available on the City's website www.nkc.org under the heading of Agendas and Minutes. As always, additional details about City Council agenda topics are often available as attachments on the City's website www.nkc.org and later as <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR2r-HHt4PmQLpfdToFLzhg> part of the approved minutes.