

## **Commission On Aging**

**January 19, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.**

**155 E. Lewis Street, Platteville**

Present: Ray Banfi, Joyce Bos, Debara Browning, Bill Cramer, Jill Goffinet, Josephine Kischer, Jon Meidinger, Ally Shanahan, Kathy Kopp via Zoom

Jon Meidinger welcomes City Manager Adam Ruechel and a number of citizens interested in the City Manager's update on the proposed new fire station.

- I. Meeting is called to order by Debara Browning at 9:34 a.m.
- II. Motion to approve Minutes of Dec. 15, 2021 with the correction on page 2 under V. "COA", not GOA, by Joyce, second Bill, all in favor, Minutes are approved.

Adam Ruechel – City Manager

"Our fire station was built in 1960 and has limitations and due to changes with the vehicles, they would have to be retrofitted in order to fit into the current station. The city looked at what a new fire station would have to look like with accommodations for dorms. Nationally it is difficult to get volunteers, but we don't seem to have a problem. We have 2 full time employees, the Fire Chief and Fire Inspector.

Forecast 50 years out:

1. Can we continue to function as volunteer based?
2. Eventual Department structure and all procedures concerning the fire station.
3. The new requirements as far as vehicle size and current procedures. There are certain rules and steps they have to take for decontamination.
4. The acreage needed is 26 – 42,000 sq. ft. or 2 to 3 acres. We provide services to eight surrounding communities.

A study by an independent company looked at the O.E. Grey site, which is centrally located, and the Armory. If the City has to purchase a property it will take it off the tax roll. Cost effective is the use of a property already off the tax roll; the Armory is not ideal, but O.E. Grey would be a suitable location. This property became city-owned on 7/20/21. The first thing to do was to renew the agreements with the current occupants of O.E. Grey. The proposal for the new fire station of \$13 Mil. was submitted to Ron Kind to be added to the 21/22 fiscal budget. It came out of the Appropriations Committee for \$7 Mil. in the 2022 fiscal budget. The next step is to request proposal from Architectural firms for a design for this location. The perfect solution would be a design where everyone of the current tenants

stays. If this is not possible, we will have to look at alternatives. The city would have to look at a site where everyone currently a tenant at O.E. Grey could be accommodated. If the tenants cannot stay here, there is the question of where would the Senior Center go? The DNA is interested in selling the Armory, but the biggest concern is the cost of taking on that building. There is no generated revenue source for the Armory. The DNA may just transfer it to the City, but the consideration is the annual cost. Currently we only have one person for maintenance of all our properties. At an annual cost of \$150,000 our taxes would increase by 26 cents to cover just the costs for the Armory building.

The City's intention is to utilize the current agreements with the tenants of O.E.Grey.

We are trying to find a place for the fire station that makes the most sense and this location checks many of the boxes. We are not there yet and it will be a long-term process. If the fiscal budget passes \$7 Mil., the City will be looking at writing grants. 2024 – 2026 is the projected timeline to have a new fire station. The intent is to renew the current contracts for another year. It is very unlikely to break ground in 2022, but even 2023 may be a stretch. If there is a way to keep the current building and renovate, we'll have to bring everything up to code and the City will look at this. We anticipate to have a study presented in February or March and the City will decide which proposal to accept. There will be representation from the Senior Center on the Architectural Committee. A disruption to the current tenants would have to be short term. The goal is to have the least interruptions and all needs will be considered, and we'll make sure that all continue to function. We expect to do an update maybe in April and meet again." Adam is willing to come anytime we invite him.

V. Jon

At the Council meeting it was suggested that we lease a Van rather than purchase one. Adam says they have not received a quote yet but hope to have one by the next Council meeting. Jon says the money was donated for a purchase and not for a lease. Adam says that it would be leased through a local dealer, but at this time none of them have a way to get this done.

Debara asks if there is a new Director for Parks and Recreation yet and if we will still be under that department. A Director has not been appointed yet, and we will be under Parks and Recreation.

VI. Next meeting of the COA will be February 16, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

VII. Motion to adjourn by Josephine, second Ray, all in favor, meeting adjourns at 10:55 a.m.

Submitted by Josephine Kischer, Secretary