



Minutes

City Council Work Session

Oelwein City Hall, 20 Second Avenue SW, Oelwein, Iowa

September 12, 2022 - 5:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Stewart, Weber, Lenz, Garrigus, Seeders, Payne (on speaker phone)

Also Present: DeVore, Mulfinger

Absent: NA

Discussions

1. Discussion on Event Center Funding.

Payne was present electronically.

DeVore opened the meeting by letting council know this was the time to discuss the funding request and provide direction from staff. DeVore stated he had received three phone calls stating the city should not provide funding to the event center. The concerned residents cited a need to improve roads and other infrastructure first.

Weber reminded Council people who oppose new ideas in town are always more vocal than those who support the idea.

Mulfinger informed council that the funding presented was not the only option and that the proposal would not affect current plans for projects.

Howard stated the committee needed funding to make sure they can apply for projects. The funding can come as a pledge and does not have to come right away.

Lenz stated infrastructure should really be the focus of the city.

Weber asked if the city could work on downtown improvements that would help multiple businesses and not just the event center. Weber would like to see improvements to the downtown parking lots.

Howard stated the initial conservative study stated the center will bring in 1.4 million annually to the community. She stated all nearby event centers are booked, and Oelwein will draw in from many communities.

Seeders stated the requested amount of money is a lot and is a big ask for the community. Seeders does not have an issue with the use of hotel motel funding but does not want to take away from infrastructure money. Seeders wants to support the center, but not at the current request.

Jim Kullmer reminded council the request can be spread out over five years and that the initial up front does not need to be as high as presented.

Payne wants to see the city more aggressive on tear downs and does not want to allocate money toward the event center that could go toward demolition or infrastructure.

DeVore asked about the school funding idea. Mulfinger said the school board would have to consider the request. Mulfinger has made the request and will wait for an answer.

Mulfinger advised that council does not have to decide tonight and can push the request to Planning Finance, Enterprise and Economic Development (PFEED).

Seeders was in favor of the discussion going to PFEED. Weber wanted to see a quick turn around so decision will not be extended.

Muflinger advised he will work with both committees and form a meeting.

Adjournment