

**MINUTES OF A JOINT CITY COUNCIL/PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2009 – 7:00 P.M. – ROCKVILLE CITY HALL**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jeff Hagen. Roll Call was taken and the following members were found to be present: Mayor Hagen, Council Members: Bill Becker, Susan Palmer, Jerry Schmitt, Randy Volkmuth & Duane Willenbring. Absent: John Koerber.

Planning Commission members present were: Chair Toni Honer, Jerry Bechtold, Dale Borgmann, Dan Hansen, Jerry Tippelt, and Steve Dietman. Absent: None.

(It was reported that no one would be paid for this meeting).

Staff present was: Rena Weber-Administrator/Clerk.

PURPOSE OF MEETING – Mayor Hagen announced that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss a reduction in the size of the Planning Commission from 7 members to 5 members. Also to be discussed would be the repeal of the “event center” ordinance.

Mayor Hagen stated that it also his intention is to reduce the Council to 5 members. He wanted to bring to the vote last year, but it takes a referendum and 60 days notice.

REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF MEMBERS

Toni Honer voiced concern that the new council made an impact the very first meeting – we are cutting and that’s it.

Mayor Hagen indicated they were looking at reducing committees as well.

Member Palmer stated that she thinks we need more discussion about the size of the committees.

Member Volkmuth stated that the reason for the reductions is the financial issue and also bringing us in line with the size of other cities.

Jerry Tippelt asked how you are going to do it.

Member Palmer asked to talk about the pros and cons.

PROS

Rockville is not the same as other cities because of the size and land uses

If we are looking at it financially we would have to weigh this against other cuts and the benefit

Liaison from council is important

It’s not for the money

People want a reduction in size of government

Little expense – to cover the whole city

There is always enough to have a quorum

CONS

What is our vision?

Need a strategic plan that says where is the city headed over the next five years so the Planning Commission knows where the council is headed.

Planning Commission does not like to spend time creating ordinances only to have the council give it back to them.

Cost of having consultants at the meeting is expensive.

\$175 per meeting

Jerry Bechtold voiced concern that he did not hear the word community tonight.

Mayor Hagen stated that what the citizen’s want is “Priority of service delivered as efficiently as possible.” A larger number does not get you a better decision. What the Planning Commission brings to the Council is a recommendation and they should not take it personal if something is rejected.

Toni Honer presented the Planning Commission document from the City of Cold Spring citing what a Planning Commissioner role is. The consolidation agreement dictates that we have a 7 member commission. We are not a Sartell and developed one end to the other.

Mayor Hagen indicated that we spent many hours on the ordinance and comp plan. He understands why we have conditional use permits and does not understand why we need that many people on the commission.

Member Volkmuth added that all they heard when they were campaigning is that government is too big.

Mayor Hagen indicated that we need to get away from equal representation or this city will never come together as one city. He was elected to make expense reductions and he is trying to treat everyone fairly. You can still make intelligent and proper decisions based on the information provided.

Member Willenbring asked if it was important to have a council liaison on the commission as a voting member. He informed the group that Park & Recreation is volunteering their time. The Trails Task Force has always volunteered their time and he sees a change is coming. This is what the residents want.

Jerry Tippelt indicated that the way it was done is a burr in his saddle. The decision was made to reduce the commission without input from the commission. You should have some respect for the people who have put in time for the city.

Member Volkmuth indicated that if we waited to do this out of respect there would be no reduction and we would remain status quo. The new administration was elected to do just that.

Mayor Hagen indicated these are just suggestions and no decisions have been made. That is why there will be a public hearing.

Member Palmer stated that what she is hearing is that fundamentally this was not handled right, but it does make a difference in how we work with the people in the city.

Should the Commission decide how to reduce the commission or should the council decide? No action was taken.

EVENT CENTER –

Member Volkmuth indicated that a number of new council members feel this is not in the best interest of the city.

- There should have been more input from the council
- Discussed other uses for barns
- Cost of the ordinance
- How is this a bad thing for the city?
- How can we fine tune it?
- The reason was to find uses for the structures.

Mayor Hagen urged members to look at the zoning district. It is so contradictory to the uses in the A-40 district.

Member Volkmuth stated it is competing against an established business.

Member Palmer indicated that we need to balance things out.

Mayor Hagen stated that serving alcohol, food and having that many people in one place is not the intent for A-40.

Member Becker suggested the council look at the ordinance again, give the Planning Commission some suggestions and give it back to them for their input.

Member Volkmuth stated that he made suggestions and is not sure they were put into the ordinance.

Mayor Hagen stated that if there are uses that are complimentary to A-40 then they should be added.

Member Willenbring volunteered to serve on the Planning Commission without pay as a non-voting member.

ADJOURNMENT – Motion by Member Palmer, second by Member Becker, to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

**VERENA M. WEBER-CMC
ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK**

**JEFF HAGEN
MAYOR**

