

In the Council Chambers of the Showers City Hall on Thursday, September 24, 2015 at 7:30 pm with Council President Dave Rollo presiding over a Special Session of the Common Council.

COMMON COUNCIL  
SPECIAL SESSION  
September 24, 2015

Roll Call: Rollo, Ruff, Mayer, Volan, Granger, Sturbaum, Neher, Spechler  
Absent: Sandberg

ROLL CALL

Council President Rollo gave the Agenda Summation

AGENDA SUMMATION

The minutes for March 25, 2015 were approved by a voice vote after one addition.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded that Appropriation Ordinance 15-02 be introduced and read by title and synopsis. Clerk Moore read the legislation and synopsis, giving the committee recommendation of do pass 9-0-0.

LEGISLATION FOR SECOND  
READING AND RESOLUTIONS

It was moved and seconded that Appropriation Ordinance 15-02 be adopted.

Appropriation Ordinance 15-02 To Specially Appropriate from the General Fund Expenditures Not Otherwise Appropriated (Appropriating \$15,000 for the Operation of the Community Sheltering Project for the Remainder of 2015)

Jeff Underwood, Controller, made a brief statement to inform the council that the General Fund had a sufficient balance to accommodate this grant appropriation from the council office budget. He noted that a Memorandum of Understanding would be developed to specify how the money would be spent and how the money would be delivered to the Community Sheltering Project.

Neher said that the history and background of the shelter formerly known as Martha's House was discussed in a previous meeting. He said the project had continued because of the generosity and collaboration of a variety of stakeholders, local government, and the Perry Township Office. He noted the Bloomington Township Office had supplied \$6,000, the Monroe County Council had supplied \$15,000, and now the city had the opportunity to contribute \$15,000 for the ongoing operations of the Community Sheltering Project. He said this would allow the program to continue to the end of the 2015 calendar year.

Neher said it was important that in the next 90 days, another entity be identified to take over operations. He said this could be a new body or an existing not-for-profit entity. He said he was hopeful that it would be possible for the same value system and operations that had been used for years with Martha's House to be in place with the new project. He said conversations surrounding the renewal of the shelter had centered on community buy-in and the importance of the services that Martha's House provided – a safe haven for those who sought sobriety with casework.

Neher said the dollars provided by the city would cover the shelter's payroll and utilities, and office supplies and incidental ancillary expenses would be paid by the Perry Township office.

Public comment:

David Schleibaum expressed support for this grant. He said that years ago he helped work on the building where the Helene's House shelter existed. He recommended that 50% of money from parking fines be used to support the Jack Hopkins Social Services Fund. He said these funds could be used to help women, kids, and veterans.

Rev. Forrest Gilmore, Executive Director of Shalom Community Center, said he was supportive of the legislation and thanked the council for their work to bring this money to the project. He said it was essential

to continue the shelter in the community, especially with the other challenges presenting obstacles to those in need.

Appropriation Ordinance 15-02  
(cont'd)

Greg George, Monroe County resident, applauded the council for considering the bridge funding. He said people helped by the sheltering project typically don't have a voice and asked that the council support this allocation. He said he met a homeless man on the square who wanted to buy a cigarette. He was struck by the man's situation, and his earnestness. Mr. George also offered to help with the project after he retired at the end of the year.

Council Comments:

Spechler said society owed shelter residents special help because they wanted to help themselves. He said he was hopeful that the shelter would be revived because several committed council members and other friends were involved in this effort. He said he was happy to vote yes.

Granger said that a caring community was committed to providing services for residents in need, and she said the community sheltering project was such a service. She said it spoke to the need to facilitate moving people out of homelessness. She said she was proud to support this effort.

Mayer noted the committee discussion of this ended with a Do Pass Recommendation of 9-0. He encouraged the council to continue that support. He said this was the opportunity for the shelter to continue until the end of the year, with a chance to regroup and see what could be done to continue the shelter in the future.

Sandberg said the bridge funding was a collaboration of city, county, and township government. She said it sometimes took the threat of losing something to bring folks together to save a service or project. She said that the shelter came perilously close to being closed, and with homelessness and affordable housing being so critical in the community, a piece of that continuum could not afford to be lost. She said that the current collaboration was promising for the future and hoped that the city could provide some leadership for creating a stable funding source. She noted that United Way had stepped up to act as a pass-through for funding, and that the Community Foundation was also involved. She thanked her colleagues for their support and noted that this was above and beyond what council members usually do.

Sturbaum commended Sandberg and Neher for their work on this very broad and complex issue. He said it needed to be approached from many directions by many people with creative ideas. He said this small amount of money did not solve the problem but it kept the door open for the possibility of more people coming together and for more inclusion.

Neher thanked Sturbaum and Sandberg for putting affordability into the discussion. He said that the community had been involved in a broader discussion about affordability in housing, including in communities surrounding Bloomington. He said Lillian Henegar, Bloomington Township Trustee, was working with others involved in the South Central Housing Network to complete the Heading Home plan. He hoped this would create a road map for how to work cooperatively and work together to find the next entity to ensure that the sheltering project would continue. He urged council members and community members to continue to participate in the conversation of providing for those most in need. He hoped that the vote on the appropriation ordinance wouldn't be the end of the conversation.

Appropriation Ordinance 15-02  
(cont'd)

Volan said the appropriation was a step in 'putting our money where our mouths are.' He said this grant was going beyond words to action on the desire to help lift people out of the status of homelessness. He thanked the four council members who worked on this issue and said the 'Community Sheltering Project' was a good name. He happily supported the ordinance.

Rollo noted that Perry Township Trustee Dan Combs told the council that this type of shelter was a successful way of transitioning people into homes, and it was important that the community not lose ground, but work to expand these efforts. He thanked Perry Township Trustee Dan Combs, City Controller Jeff Underwood, and Mayor Mark Kruzan for their support of the grant. He also thanked the four council members -- Granger, Mayer, Neher and Sandberg -- for their work on the measure.

The motion to adopt Appropriation Ordinance 15-02 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0.

Dan Sherman, Council Attorney/Administrator, advised the council that the following Wednesday, September 30, 2015, legislation pertaining to the 2016 city budget was scheduled to be introduced in a Special Session and discussed in a separate committee meeting.

COUNCIL SCHEDULE

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

- ADJOURNMENT

APPROVE:

ATTEST:



Dave Rollo, PRESIDENT  
Bloomington Common Council

Regina Moore, CLERK  
City of Bloomington