



City Hall, 215 Sycamore St.
Muscatine, IA 52761-3899
(563) 264-1550
Fax (563) 264-0750

To: City Council Members

FINANCE & RECORDS

From: Nancy A. Lueck, Finance Director

Date: March 6, 2018

Re: In Depth Agenda Item – Request to Consider Establishing an Ad Hoc Committee to Review City Building Inspections including those done for Muscatine County

Introduction:

At the end of the March 1, 2018 regular Council meeting, Council Member Brackett requested City Council consider forming an Ad Hoc Committee to review the City's building inspection/permitting process and the inspections done by the City of Muscatine for Muscatine County. There was a consensus of City Council to include this item on the agenda for the March 8 In Depth meeting.

Background:

Title 2, Chapter 10 of the City Code of Muscatine sets the requirements for establishing Ad Hoc Committees or Task Forces. The first three sections of Chapter 10 are as follows (underlines added):

2-10-1 Authority to Form Ad Hoc Committees and Task Forces. The Council shall have the authority to form, by resolution, ad hoc committees or task forces as needed.

2-10-2 Appointment. The Council shall appoint the membership of such committees or task forces. Members of regular Boards and Commissions may be appointed to ad hoc committees and task forces.

2-10-3 Council to Establish Duties. The Council shall set out the duties and, when necessary, the rules of procedure of the ad hoc committee or task force in the resolution establishing such ad hoc committee or task force.

Summary:

This item has been included on the agenda for the March 8 In Depth meeting for discussion and a determination of whether City Council would like to proceed with establishing this Ad Hoc committee. If so, the duties of the committee would need to be determined so they can be incorporated into the resolution establishing the committee. If City Council chooses to proceed with forming the committee, and determines the duties of the committee at the In Depth meeting, staff can draft a resolution incorporating the duties to be considered at the March 15 (or later) meeting. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

A RESOLUTION CREATING AN AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PERMITTING PROCESS USED BY CITY STAFF TO ENSURE WE ARE USING A BALANCED APPROACH THAT PROVIDES PUBLIC OVERSIGHT WITHOUT IMPEDED DEVELOPMENT;

WHEREAS, Title 2, Chapter 10 of the Muscatine City Code permits City Council to create committees for specific purposes to help City Council fulfill its duties;

WHEREAS, the Council desires to bring more transparency to its permitting process, to ensure the fairness of the process, and to ensure that the requirements and fees are fitting with all applicable standards and laws without discouraging development of commercial, industrial, and residential building projects;

WHEREAS, an Permitting Process Review Committee can help the City Council achieve these goals;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Muscatine City Council hereby establishes a four (4) person ad-hoc subcommittee, which shall be named the Permitting Process Review Committee, to review the process used by city staff for Site Plan Reviews, Building Plan Reviews, and Building Inspections and the fee structures and requirements associated with such. The result of which will be to provide a detailed overview of actual permits and permit applications to determine the validity of accusations made in a recent letter from Muscatine County Board of Supervisors terminating the MOU, "Memorandum of Understanding", which provided for the City of Muscatine to provide permitting services for entities located in Unincorporated Areas of Muscatine County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, said subcommittee shall be comprised of four (4) persons, as follows:

- 1) Three City Council Representatives consisting of both At-Large Council Members as well as Council Member representing 4th Ward. Appointment shall end upon disbanding of the subcommittee;
- 2) Muscatine Chamber of Commerce President or his/her designee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Permitting Process Review Committee shall follow the following procedures:

- 1) The Permitting Process Review Committee shall contact permit applicants and conduct interviews with the intent of determining what, if any, issues exist with the process;
- 2) The Permitting Process Review Committee will look at permits issued over the last three years; reviewing a minimum of twenty Commercial/Industrial permit requests; reviewing a minimum of forty residential permit requests.
- 3) The Permitting Process Review Committee will review permits from the Unincorporated Areas of Muscatine County as well as permits from within the Incorporated areas of the City of

Muscatine; the Permitting Process Review Committee will attempt to maintain a balance between these two designations in the permits reviewed.

4) Upon completion of the survey process the Permitting Process Review Committee will report its findings to the council as well as any recommendations resulting from this task.