

Item 24-0061: Resolution for use of Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Funds

Common Council

Wed, Feb 07, 2024 7:00PM

Mayor Jake Woodford 22:09

All right, this is item 24-0061 Resolution for Use of Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funds. We have a motion and a second to approve. Alder Hartzheim.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 22:33

Thank you, chair. If anyone watched the Finance committee or attended the Finance Committee meeting in this regard, I'm sure you're aware of my feelings about how we should be promise keepers not promise breakers. And I know that some of you disagree with the way that the resolution is written and whether it does indeed break a promise or not.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 22:56

I would like to present, please, a amendment to the resolution. In lieu of the last paragraph, I would like it to say, please, "therefore be it resolved that \$134,180 of the Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant be applied to an existing qualified initiative in the Appleton Public Library building project without expanding the already approved scope of the library building project. Be it further resolved that the resulting taxpayer debt savings of \$134,180 will be applied to another already budgeted city project or projects in lieu of the city incurring further debt for other budgeted city projects or projects, project or projects." I've already provided this to Clerk Lynch as well. The reason that I have—

Mayor Jake Woodford 23:56

Just before, just before we get into discussion, what—I just want to be clear. So, is this a motion that you've made?

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 24:02

I would like—move to amend with this resolution.

Mayor Jake Woodford 24:05

So, before we get into discussion then, we have a motion to amend. Is there a second? Okay, we have a motion and a second to amend. Then Alder Hartzheim, please continue.

Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 24:16

Thank you. The reason that I've changed this verbiage and not significantly changed this verbiage is because I believe that we should be using these dollars for this project. But I believe that there's some misunderstanding and a difference of opinion as to whether this will increase the scope of the project, of the library project. I would like to see that we do not break our promise to our taxpayers by saying we will not increase the scope of this project, and by scope by mean what we already approved to have done for the library project I would like this grant applied to, not for something new involved with the library project. So that is—that is where those pieces come in in as far as my proposed amendment. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 25:10

Alright. Alder Fenton.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 25:15

Thank you, Your Honor. I would urge my colleagues not to support this amendment. I hope we've all had a chance to read the memorandum from Director Gazza talking about the allowed uses of the EECGB grant and what the proposal to utilize the funding for just some of the design and engineering that would result in the building being more energy efficient.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 25:46

And I'd like to point out that accepting this grant would not increase the budget overall, which we've already approved, which the funding has already been borrowed for the city share of it. We have in the budget that we approved and the subsequent bids that we approved, we have a million dollar contingency. And we have a million—\$1.2 million as a placeholder for geothermal. We have a bid for \$1.6 something million for geothermal, which right there, we would have to either savings in other areas or pulling from the contingency. But by accepting this grant and applying it to eligible portions of the library project, we would not be reducing the overall budget, the overall cost to the taxpayers, but we would actually be reducing what we would have to go into the contingency for. So, I find this amendment really not necessary. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 26:52

Alder Hartzheim.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 26:55

Thank you, Chair. I just also wanted to follow up in regards to this memo that was passed out to us prior to the meeting that I spoke at length with Director Gazza in this regard, and basically flat out asked "Is it possible for us to do what I would propose in this amendment?" which, again, is to me a promise keep. And he stated that the design and engineering portion for the geothermal has not yet been done and billed and that he believes that this grant these grant funds could be applied directly to that. Correct me if I'm wrong, please Director Gazza. In in that respect, I believe that this amendment still allows everyone in this room to do what we, I believe, all communally want to do, but the amendment still keeps us honest to our—to the taxpayers thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 28:01

Any further discussion? All right, hearing none, we have a motion and a second to amend. Please cast your votes. Motion fails 11 to 2, and we're back to the item.

Mayor Jake Woodford 28:26

Further discussion? Hearing none, please cast your votes. All right, motion passes 11 to 2, the item has been approved.