March 13, 2019
State Capitol

Members present: Mayor Drew Merrifeld, Carlisle
Council Member John Edwards, Clive
Council Member Eric Johansen, Grimes
Council Member Tom Cope, Johnston
Council Member Jaki, Livingston, Norwalk
Council Member Curt Gause, Pleasant Hill
Council Member Robert Sarchet, Polk City
Mayor Bob Andeweg, Urbandale
Council Member David Russell, Urbandale
Council Member Kim Sacker, Van Meter
Courtney Clark, Waukee
Mayor Dave Burgess, Windsor Heights

Staff Present: Kandi Reindl-Sullivan, Asst. to the City Manager, Des Moines

Guests Present: Sen. Claire Celsi
Rep. Jennifer Konfrst
Rep. Kristin Sunde
Rep. John Forbes
Rep. Marti Anderson
Rep. Karen Deery
Rep. Heather Mattsen
Melissa Olson, CISS
Shelly Watkins, CISS
Jeff Lester, Des Moines City Attorney
Robert Palmer, Iowa League of Cities

Approval of the February 19, 2019 minutes were moved for approval by Dave Burgess and seconded by Tom Cope. All voted in favor. Motion carried.
MAC LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION POINTS

See attached handout.

Comments:

Rep. Konfrst – HF537 is coming up today or tomorrow. There will be late nights tonight and tomorrow night. I have talked with the City of West Des Moines and said they were fine with it. Lobbyist from Century Link wrote the amendment and found out it was not true. Are we for or against it?

Tom Cope said most of the metro cities are opposed

Konfrst – Regarding HSB233 – Clive, West Des Moines and Windsor Heights said they did not want me to vote for it.

HF487 – we will be voting on this today. The local community in Allamakee Co. did not want a tower for 911 service. My inclination is to vote against it. I am trying to protect local control. We need to hear from all of you so I can say my communities do or do not support this bill.

Rep. Sunde – I am torn on HF487 because we need that tower for public safety.

Rep. Anderson – HF487 only affects communities that are 15,000 or below in population, but it could affect other counties and I think local control is going to win that argument. There will also be cellular opportunities on that tower as well.

Robert Palmer – This is First Net which covers 98% of Iowa. This is a new and separate system. One of the disappointing parts is that this is a route of expediency and not following the state statute. This does not affect incorporated cities.

David Russell asked about fireworks.

Sen. Celsi – We have not seen it yet and Senator Schneider is not happy with that bill.

Tom Cope said that bill came out very early in the session and they are now looking more at local control.

Robert Palmer - ATEs – House has a bill that splits the revenue 40/60 where 60% goes to state public safety. There is another bill in the Senate for full prohibition of ATEs.
Senator Celsi – Regarding SF447, I know that the rental housing bill was aimed at Iowa City and Ames, but part of Drake is in my district and it could affect Des Moines. It’s really about affordable housing too. I did not hear from any lobbyists on this. Pick up the phone and give me a call.

Robert – the cities involved with this took a local approach.

Senator Celsi – The realtors supported this.

Robert Palmer – Our cities tried to work with the realtors and now the cities are meeting today with the realtors and now you are going to see the letters come out since they could not work together. It’s a timing issue.

Rep. Anderson – This is about Ames and Iowa City and I was surprised at the percentages they set in their neighborhoods of 25-30%. If a parent buys a house for their kid to live in while in college and they want to keep it until the next kid goes to college, they wouldn’t be able to rent it out in between. I advocated for removing the familial language. I’m going to vote against this because I don’t like taking away local control. The colleges could make everyone live in the dorm the first year and have a remote parking area.

Rep. Forbes – I agree with Marti and I believe local officials need to make the decision for their constituents. We are waiting for the REC numbers to come out on Friday to see where we are going to land on our budget. There was a $400 million tax cut last year and there are concerns on how we are going to balance our budget. The backfill should be okay this year unless the REC has surprising numbers. The backfill could be at risk going forward. It gets frustrating with some of the bills we see and we fight back to make everything positive for the State of Iowa. I am in agreement with most of your recommendations on your list and I welcome any comments or emails from you.

Rep. Anderson asked about the cap on mental health.

Tom Cope – I have not seen anything since they are ways and means bills.

Rep. Forbes – I have a bill I’m working on that would address that cap. Looking at a bill that would raise sales tax by 1 cent – 3/8 would go towards to I-Will, 3/8 would go to mental health and the 2/8 tax credit. This would take $114 million off of the property taxes in the State of Iowa. The Farm Bureau is supportive. We need to find new money to fund these issues.
Rep. Anderson – We passed a bill on children’s mental health, but there is no money in it and it doesn’t do any good to pass a bill without funding.

Rep. Forbes - That extra funding would go to mental health services for children.

Rep. Anderson – We have 31 child psychiatrists in the entire state.

Rep. Forbes – We need to address water quality in the state and quit pushing it down the road.

Senator Celsi- The inheritance take bill is taking another $36 million out of the budget. I love your idea John, but it’s my fear is that that 3/8 would be messed with by the Farm Bureau.

Discussion was also held on the death penalty and how expensive it is. It won’t make it to the Governor’s office.

Rep. Forbes – We had bills that would restructure our Medicaid program that did not survive the funnel. We are going down the path of relooking at the current structure to help rural Iowa.

Rep. Anderson – We had MCO’s before the restructure, but when it comes to the severely disabled or nursing homes, their costs are going to rise. Every person who has a disability has an assessment by the feds and the state is responsible for serving that assessment. We are trying to move long term population out of MCOs and most states did not include that population in their MCOs. We have MCOs that go broke here.

Senator Celsi – We introduced a bill that would prohibit MCOs moving into the most expensive office space in the State. Unfortunately, it did not pass.

Melissa O’Neil asked about SF538 (Medicaid expansion).

Senator Celsi said she didn’t this it would go anywhere.

Tom Cope said it would be really expensive to enforce.

SF548 relates to the ability to use your state revolving loan funds to go to the major conservancy to help negotiate land purchases.
Senator Celsi – The companion bill got huge pushback from farmers and other land owners.

Rep. Anderson – We only own 1% of the land in the State and it confounded a lot.

Rep. Mattsen said she was just in attendance to listen.

Rep. Deery thanked the MAC for being here.

Rep. Anderson – These meetings make a big difference.

Rep. Deery asked about HF537

Jeff Lester explained the right of way bill - We can’t charge rent but we can recover direct and indirect costs. This bill strips away the ability to recover indirect costs. It shifts the cost of managing the right of way to the taxpayers in the local government.

Tom Cope – We will be tracking HSB165 because of the impact to the cities.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 a.m.