Meetings called to order at 2:03 pm by Council member Russell.

Committee unanimously approved October, 2016 and January, 2017 meeting minutes with no comments added.

Rob Davis shared the March Financial Report. The Financial reports showed that the economy in Cedar Rapids is doing well and the City took in 50% more funds in the 1st quarter of FY17 vs. 1st quarter of FY16. Assuming the FY17 GRI income matches FY16 for the balance of the fiscal year, the City will max out the GRI funds to the FY17 cap. The City has spent $36.2 million since April, 2014. Rob also showed where the money has been spent by neighborhood.

Rob Davis presented the Grant Log that gives an overview of all grants that have been applied for since 2015 until present. Most recently, the Flood Control System team has been working with the EDA for a grant that is expected to be approved which will be applied to the Quaker Oats water transmission relocation project. In addition, the City received an addition $1 million CDBG funds from the IEDA. Total grants received to date are approximately $7.5 million. Council member Russell asked if the $7.5 million total that was showing at the bottom of the grant log is only the approved grants. Rob Davis confirmed it is only the approved amounts.

Bill Bogert with Anderson-Bogert presented the Sinclair Construction update. Construction is currently underway and CDBG funds are being spent. The next phase of this project, Asbestos Removal project is set to Bid on May 17th. All phases are scheduled to be complete by May, 2018. Afterward, the 11 acre balance of the site will be available for re-development. Bill Bogert noted that monuments for Masaryk Park, Kuba, Osborn, and Sinclair will be erected at a later date and won’t interfere with redevelopment.

Council member Shields asked how large the land size is and why it is being done in Phases? Bill Bogert stated that the land size shown on the PowerPoint pictures was in fact the correct sizes and the project was bid into separate areas to help with completion to meet the CDBG requirements. Once all projects are done it will be considered one area.
Councilmember Russell asked how many years storm is the Sinclair Detention basin? Rob Davis stated it would be 5 – year storm.

Councilmember Shields asked where the Substation was on the map that was presented. Bill Bogert was able to show the area of the substation to the southeast and that the area will be okay for re-development.

Councilmember Russell asked how long it would take to pump out the basin, how deep it will be, and if it will be fenced. Rob stated the basin will be able to hold about 4 – 4-1/2 ft. depth of water, and that it will normally drain by gravity in 1-2 days. Pumping is only required if the Cedar River is at flood stage and the pipes are closed off to prevent back flow in from the flooding river. The area will not be fenced as it is intended to have recreation component to be used during the dry times, along with a walking trail. It will have other features including a winter snow dump and wetlands areas.

Councilmember Gulick asked why the levee is overlapping another area on the map that was presented for redevelopment. Bill Bogert replied that this area is a generally low graded slope area and not technically part of the 3:1 US Army Corps levee. This flatter area can be cut into for redevelopment and is not overlapping.

Rob Davis presented the FCS Budget Update showing the FCS project is now out of the design phase and out of the ground. 37% of the funding stream is identified so far over the next 16 years. Roughly 34%-39% of the project funding sources have not been identified yet, and will vary depending upon inflation. The US Army Corps share makes up approximately 15%, but it is not appropriated.

The City’s cost estimate is higher than the Army Corps’ estimate due to the Army Corp not including detention and storm sewers. As of 2017 the cost estimate is $530 million dollars with inflation rates at 3.5%. The 2017 cost estimate is based on the upsize of pump stations, which will help during flash flooding events, help with cost of insurances and the 8th Avenue Bridge replacement. In addition, the Army Corps did not factor in protecting the West Side of the river. Cost estimates for protecting the East and West side of the river are almost identical. The two (2) large areas of cost are the pump stations and the permanent walls. The FCS team has also been looking at cost reduction options while meeting Army Corps and FEMA standards. Rob Davis indicated there may be up to 10% in value engineering cost savings available. The main point of the presentation is that City is making good overall progress and construction is commencing.

Councilmember Gulick asked Rob if he and Casey could possibly look at the budget if 10 years earlier, how much inflation would we save? Rob Davis plans to work with Casey Drew, Finance Director to get Councilmember Gulick the new numbers.

Councilmember Shields would like to know what happened to the Federal money that was to be appropriated to Cedar Rapids. Do the larger businesses in Cedar Rapids such as, Quaker, Ingredion and Cargill have a lobbyist?
Rob Davis stated that Congressional staff is still reviewing possible changes to the funding formula, but nothing has been done to date. Davis further noted that Senator Ernst’s office is still working with the Army Corp, and this issue has not been dropped. Rob also stated that he has been actively engaging other businesses along Cedar Lake to get involved too.

Councilmember Russell asked if when the Mayor was in Washington was he testifying on the changing of the formula?
Rob Davis stated that yes, the Mayor did testify in Washington on the changing of the formula, noting the current funding formula is flawed and they are keeping it on their radar.

Councilmember Russell also asked Rob Davis for an updated on Cedar Lake?
Rob informed Councilmember Russell that the FCS team is still doing a study on the area, which should be completed in fall 2017. If after the study is reviewed and the Council would need to update the FCS Master Plan and Davis is currently working with the US Army Corps to prepare for that possibility. It is important the City remain on the same page as the Army Corp.

Rob Davis presented on the 8th Avenue Bridge replacement. The cost estimate on both bridges was reviewed and Davis noted the top two bridges the public picked were similar in cost. The west side of 8th Avenue is currently open green space, and the current focus is to see how the City can we use more of that space, recreationally or commercially. Des Moines has a similar area near Principal Riverwalk in downtown Des Moines. Davis showed pictures of Des Moines pump station and restaurant/trail restroom building and noted a similar structure could be very functional for Cedar Rapids. On May 2nd the City is holding an open house at the NewBo City Market and asking for public input on what should be done there.

Keith Billick with Shive-Hattery presented the NW Gateway update. In the Spring, 2017 a public meeting was held with Ellis Blvd and O Avenue neighbors to present the design concepts and materials. Option C was the most preferred with materials similar to those that will be used for the future Flood Control System. The memorial wall will show the Sanborn Maps which will show what the neighborhood looked like prior to the 2008 flood. In the middle of the space, there will be a blue light element to show the resilience of the neighborhood.

Councilmember Russell asked if the funding is underway for this project. Rob Davis noted the plaza and memorial wall is being funded by the City and funds are already set aside. The West Side Rising Sculpture will be placed in the plaza, but the sculpture is privately funded and currently in the capital fund raising stage.

Two recommendation items were presented for Committee approval and recommendation to the full City Council for consideration.

1) NW Gateway concept – Committee unanimously voted to recommend the presented concept to the full City Council for approval.
2) City Council Resolution authorizing staff to process relocation expenses for purchased properties. This amendment is to only add all properties to the acquisition list, adopted in 2016. It would not increase the overall $1 million cap for reimbursements. This is necessary to cover the properties coming in for voluntary early buyout. Flood Committee unanimously voted to recommend City Council add all properties to the reimbursement resolution passed in 2016.
Public Comment:

Fred Schuster with Senator Grassley’s Office stated that while the meeting was going on he contacted his office and was informed that the president’s budget will not be released until May, 2017 and at that time we will see if it was placed on the budget or not.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 pm.

Respectfully,

Mandee Beardsley
Administrative Assistant I
Public Works