

March 20, 2024 Committee on Childcare in Minot

Committee on Childcare in Minot – March 20, 2024 AT 4:30 P.M.

Members Present:

Scott Burlingame, Doug Diedrichsen, Amy Jenkins, Shelbi Lawson, Lisa Olson, Bekka Oswill, Keli Rosselli-Sullivan, Harold Stewart

Members Absent:

Heather Cymbaluk, Rianne Kuhn, Terry Schumalz

Also Present:

Mikayla McWilliams (City Clerk)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Burlingame at 4:31 pm.

DISCUSSIONS ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE AND FEEDBACK FROM CITY STAFF

Rianne Kuhn Recommendations/Discussion:

The City of Minot could dedicate a webpage on the current city website for childcare, that would include links to different sites for informational purposes. The State of ND does have a good site set up as well, which the City of Minot could provide a link to. MACEDC has created a newcomer/relocation guide that includes one page about childcare.

Lisa Olson Recommendations/Discussion:

Due to a critical need in infant care, a grant program with the City of Minot could be set up from re-allocated funds. As an employer, the City of Minot could take part in the daycare assistance match for employees. Once the position of the Economic Development Director is filled, the City of Minot can host a once a year “in person” event on childcare.

Shelbi Lawson Recommendations/Discussion:

Shelbi mentioned the possible need for an “in person” contact for assistance with information, maybe there is enough information on websites.

Rianne Kuhn arrived at the meeting at 4:52 pm.

Kelli Rosselli-Sullivan Recommendations/Discussion:

Ryan Kamrowski, City Assessor, attended the meeting to discuss the potential for tax exemptions. There is some language he would like to see the City Council change, but there is an exemption that can be filed for nonprofits and for-profit childcare entities. The for-profit facilities need to be in a commercial space and not a residence. These exemptions need to be applied for by the childcare owner/property owner.

There was also discussion on wage appropriation for childcare employees for the next legislative session. CPR/First Aid run through the Fire Department would still have a certification cost of \$21/person just to certify.

Terry Schmalz Recommendations/Discussion:

The committee mentioned reaching out to the Minot Public Schools Board to discuss the possibility of a daycare center going into one of the elementary schools being closed down next school year. The owners/operators of Kiddie Corral 2.0 currently have 98 kids enrolled and would be interested in the McKinley School space. Doug Diedrichsen did mention both schools are properly zoned for a daycare center.

Scott Burlingame Recommendations/Discussion:

MAGIC Fund annual and microgrants were suggested by Scott Burlingame. He also mentioned the new Economic Development Director being responsible for assisting new and expanding childcare businesses.

Amy Jenkins Recommendations/Discussion:

Amy would like to see some more flexibility with the City of Minot ordinances on parking with commercial buildings. The idea was discussed about incentivizing developers with tax credits, but the credits are heavily regulated by State of ND Century Code.

Doug Diedrichsen Recommendations/Discussion:

Doug would like to see what the previous changes in the code have affected the market and would consider looking into further changes. The city code is getting closer to state laws when it comes to the number of children in a home daycare.

Bekka Oswill Recommendations/Discussion:

In the provider prospective, the background checks are taking too long. The State of ND does provide this a free service to providers, but there is a long wait time. The State of ND did get funding to add additional locations but they might not be in place as of yet.

DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

The priorities can be divided into 6 categories:

1. People (such as the Economic Development Director)
2. Information (webpage/sources)
3. Grants (Economic Development funding)
4. Tax Break/Incentives (Commercial Facilities)
5. Buildings (MPS School Vacancies)
6. Start Up/Staffing Costs (Background Checks & CPR/1st Aid fees)

PUBLIC COMMENT

A current provider in the City of Minot would like the committee and/or City Council to consider allowing for a conditional use permit for a residence to be used for a home daycare without the rule of the owner living in the residence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Keli Rosselli-Sullivan moved the committee bring the 6 categories as recommendations to City Council. Motion was seconded by Amy Jenkins and carried the following roll call vote: ayes: Burlingame, Diedrichsen, Jenkins, Kuhn, Lawson, Olson, Oswill, Rosselli-Sullivan, Stewart; nays: none.

Scott Burlingame mentioned to the committee he would let the committee know when the recommendations will be brought to City Council.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:43 pm.