

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, April 19, 2011, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Bob Ramsey
Councilmember Randy Backous
Councilmember David Elvig
Councilmember Colin McGlone
Councilmember Jason Tossey

Absent: Councilmember David Jeffrey
Councilmember Jeffrey Wise

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Deputy City Administrator Heidi A. Nelson
Public Works Director Brian Olson

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ramsey called the City Council Work Session to order at 7:06 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1) Economic Development Authority Interviews

Councilmember Backous left at 7:06 p.m.

The Council interviewed one applicant for the City's Economic Development Authority.

The City Council Work Session meeting was recessed at 7:16 p.m. to reconvene the Public Works Committee meeting. The City Council Work Session meeting was reconvened at 7:29 p.m.

Councilmember Backous returned at 7:29 p.m.

2) Review Recent Success of In-house Services and Review Contracted City Operations

Parks Supervisor Riverblood reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Elvig questioned the level of supervision needed for these projects, and what the cost difference is in that aspect of the jobs.

Public Works Director Olson explained the City's engineering rates and design standards are typically 9 to 10 percent.

Parks Supervisor Riverblood noted staff realizes its schedules and where money can be saved and when it is time to contract out. Staff is mindful of the best return for their services.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the purpose of this case was to highlight successes the City has had with contract labor. He noted there have been other successes in the City as well. He reviewed savings in utility billing.

Deputy City Administrator Nelson reviewed electrical and building permit revenue. The cost for contracted inspections is down, as the activity is down. There is less need for inspections, so this position is contracted out. It has been working very well.

City Administrator Ulrich noted the City would continue to consider contract opportunities when feasible. The in-house staff offers many advantages as well. He said he would like to discuss making the RFP process more proficient and looking at pilot projects that include more volunteer labor moving forward.

Discussion took place regarding the ability to hold contractors accountable for their work.

Parks Supervisor Riverblood pointed out the projects that have been highlighted in this report are not standout shining examples; they were just recent examples. The good examples are continuous.

3) Update on Long Term Road Maintenance Program

Public Works Director Olson reviewed the staff report.

Public Works Director Olson informed the Council that the City needs to generate \$2.7 million. One way is through assessments and the other is through property tax. He explained the possible assessment numbers per resident and then what the possible property tax could be related to a \$250,000 home. He noted staff has considered generating the funds through franchise fee calculations. He reviewed the potential monthly charge per resident of \$27 and \$54 per business customer.

Councilmember McGlone questioned if these predictions are for reconstruction, or whether they include maintenance costs.

Public Works Director Olson responded this request does not include sealcoating. He explained it will be the Council's decision, but he is planning to increase their request incrementally for maintenance. The overlay fund is used for the streets needing the most repairs now.

City Administrator Ulrich noted a standard road is 9 ton and consists of a concrete curb and gutter.

Councilmember Backous offered his opinion that he would rather spend money on tonnage than on sidewalks.

Public Works Director Olson noted the concrete curb and gutter does hold the road well. He stated he would like to keep curb and gutter in the equation.

Chuck Himle, Account Supervisor, Himle Homer explained he was brought on board to help with the communications issues on this situation. He noted he will help the City assess the public's understanding of the need for street reconstruction. The final goal of their participation is to provide the Public Works Department and City in general a communication plan. This will be a multi-step process. He noted the first step is research, which has begun. The second part of that step is a survey. He stated they will prepare a 30-question survey to help communicate the issues and allow the public to feel they are part of the decision-making. He projected this would be done in early to mid-June.

Mayor Ramsey stated the questions will be developed and approved by staff and Council.

4) Discuss Resolution Recognizing Mark Fisher – Fishing Hall of Fame

Councilmember Tossey reviewed his report. He said after he learned about Mark Fisher, he ran into Mr. Fisher and explained he was considering writing up a resolution. He said Mr. Fisher questioned why there are no outdoor retailers in the area and offered to help advocate for one.

Consensus was reached to draw up a Resolution recognizing Mark Fisher.

FUTURE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1) Review Future Topics/Calendar

Councilmember Tossey expressed his concern with the recommendation made the previous week regarding extending the Economic Development/Marketing Manager's probation. He suggested this be put on the agenda for the work session on April 26.

Councilmember Elvig gave an update regarding Happy Days and that the committee had discussed the issue of having electrical on the other side of the road.

Public Works Director Olson reviewed the costs that had been researched for electrical.

Mayor Ramsey suggested the issue be added to a work session agenda.

MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT

Update on Councilmember Jeffrey

Councilmember Backous gave an update on Councilmember Jeffrey who had surgery earlier in the day. He was out of surgery and doing well.

ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Chris Moksnes
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.