

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 2011 at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:           Chairperson Colin McGlone  
                                  Mayor Bob Ramsey  
                                  Councilmember David Elvig

Also Present:               City Administrator Kurtis G. Ulrich  
                                  Deputy City Administrator Heidi Nelson  
                                  Public Works Director Brian Olson  
                                  City Engineer Tim Himmer  
                                  Development Manager Darren Lazan (arrived 6:00 p.m.)  
                                  Councilmember David Jeffrey (arrived 6:45 p.m.)  
                                  Councilmember Jason Tossey  
                                  Councilmember Jeffrey Wise (arrived 6:00 p.m.)  
                                  Councilmember David Jeffrey (arrived 6:45 p.m.)  
                                  Councilmember Randy Backous (arrived 7:00 p.m.)  
                                  Street Supervisor Grant Reimer

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson McGlone called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 5:30 p.m.

**CITIZEN INPUT**

There was none.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Mayor Ramsey to approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson McGlone and Councilmember Elvig and Mayor Ramsey. Voting No: None.

**APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion by Councilmember Elvig seconded by Mayor Ramsey to approve the minutes from the April 19, 2011 Public Works Meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson McGlone and Councilmember Elvig and Mayor Ramsey. Voting No: None.

## **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **Case #1: Consider Stormwater Utility Rate Change Request from Green Valley Greenhouse**

Public Works Director Olson reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Elvig asked if Green Acres is classified as agricultural.

Public Works Director Olson answered it is. He noted there was a lot of flooding in this area previously, and a rate reduction was requested at that time. Staff felt it was important to provide a service and brought pumps to the location. Ultimately, the owner installed a storm sewer pipe and took care of the issue himself.

Councilmember Elvig pointed out the City has asked the owner to put many things in place to protect his property, and he has. He stated he is in favor of making this change.

Public Works Director Olson added the owner has been a good partner with the City of Ramsey. The applicant is requesting a backdating of the stormwater activity to when the issues began. The City Ordinance prohibits this backdating. He suggested dating back to July 2009 which is when the staff went out to verify the pond was there.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Mayor Ramsey, to recommend that the City Council approve a request to change the stormwater utility fees to \$37.08 for Green Valley Greenhouse, retroactive to July 2009.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson McGlone and Councilmember Elvig and Mayor Ramsey. Voting No: None.

### **Case #2: Consider Installing Permanent Power for Happy Days Celebration**

Public Works Director Olson reviewed the staff report. He noted he does not have a fuel cost. He explained Connexus gave a preliminary estimate and it could change when the fixed costs come in.

Mayor Ramsey clarified the area under discussion. He said he could see where a generator would be needed at the stage area, and one near the food vendors. He added the issue with having one where the carnival would be is that there is not enough power for a carnival anyway.

Richard Chubb, Happy Days Chair, noted there is no carnival this year. The third generator would be for the inflatables.

Mayor Ramsey suggested having two, 200 amp services.

Chairperson McGlone stated his concern is with the cost of \$13,000 and running three lines. He asked if a heavier line could be run and lessen the cost. He also expressed concern with having a generator on both sides of a street that does not exist yet. Developments would change the landscape, and the landscape would change the event. He suggested putting the service in across the street, with a speedbump over the wire.

Discussion took place regarding the type of service needed and possible locations.

Mayor Ramsey said he would like to see what the configuration would look like.

Public Works Director Olson offered to show the Council what it would look like at the June Council meeting when the Council discusses the item. He explained they would look much like what is at campgrounds for power.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Mayor Ramsey, to recommend that the City Council consider approval of installing permanent power of either 400 amp service in one location, or 200 amp service in 2 locations, dependent on further research, on the east side.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson McGlone and Councilmember Elvig and Mayor Ramsey. Voting No: None.

### **Case #3: Consider The Use of Social Media in Public Works**

Street Supervisor Reimer reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Elvig posed the question of what communications are available for those that do not use email and internet.

Public Works Director Olson indicated this would not replace regular postal mail and phone line options. Public Works would most likely continue to send construction alerts by mail.

Chairperson McGlone questioned why the sites would be specific to Public Works. Since the City does have a Facebook page, it could include communications from Public Works.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the Staff is looking into customer response management software and whether it would save Staff from placing phone calls versus sending out one tweet. It could save money and Staff in the long run. The City will consider social media as a communications tool for all departments, but it is working on this incrementally.

Councilmember Elvig noted the site should have a link to the County for purposes of issues on a County road.

Public Works Director Olson indicated an event can be set up for a construction event on Facebook. Any issues on roads can be reported on this page as well. There are other similar

sites to use, however there is not sufficient staff time to monitor each site. He said Planning Intern Patrick Brama will research the Citizen Request Tracker which is used in other cities.

Motion by Mayor Ramsey, seconded by Chairperson McGlone, to recommend that the City Council consider conducting research in an effort to begin using Facebook and Citizen Request Tracker as communication tools for the Public Works Department.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson McGlone and Mayor Ramsey and Councilmember Elvig. Voting No: None.

Mayor Ramsey announced Councilmember Tossey will take his place for the remainder of the meeting.

Mayor Ramsey left at 6:19 p.m.

**Case #4: Consider Options for Street Sweeping**

Grant Reimer reviewed the staff report.

Chairperson McGlone stated he placed phone calls since this is a complex case. He explained there are more factors to consider. He listed the following findings: the truck mounted unit is faster, but does not carry as much water; a new government regulation is about to pass on sweepers and it may not be wise to spend money on something that is useless in a short time; the City of Plymouth subcontracts out all its work; refurbished pieces of equipment may prove to be feasible. He proposed the City research the possibility of subcontracting out its work. He also explained the responsibility of the tow truck is to clean up after an accident, and that should be mandated. Also, developers should be mandated to clean up after their work.

Public Works Director Olson pointed out one issue with having contractors perform the work is it may not be done as timely as the City would have it done. He explained this item came up because it is nearing time to start the budget for next year. He said the spring sweeping is done and the quotes they are requesting are for budget purposes.

Chairperson McGlone stated his mission is to be cost effective. In the coming year, more research can be done to make sure the City is working efficiently.

Public Works Director Olson clarified the Committee reached a consensus to research costs of subcontracting by discussing this option with the City of Plymouth, and look at the viability of using refurbished sweepers.

**Case #5: Consider Priority Streetlight Installation Related to Various 2011 Improvement Projects**

City Engineer Himmer reviewed the staff report.

Chairperson McGlone inquired if this is all the lights the City perceives will be needed.

City Engineer Himmer answered these lights are the carryover from what was purchased last year. Typically, the City receives several calls per year for nonworking street lights. There will be more lights needed in The COR as it develops. He explained there is \$1 million in the lighting fund. These funds can only be used for lights. Some of the funds are paid in by developers and some are used specifically for development lighting. At the same time, some funds are being used for vandalism repair, etc.

Councilmember Tossey stated this is an item that should be brought to the Council. He expressed his desire to see less taken from taxpayers.

Councilmember Elvig suggested a work session be scheduled to talk about the policy.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Councilmember Tossey, to recommend that the City Council direct staff to install all the streetlights referenced in this case with a dedicated funding source for each, which will be determined based upon submission of additional information and discussion.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson McGlone and Councilmembers Elvig and Tossey. Voting No: None.

#### **Case #5: Review Mass Grading Concepts and Import Policy for The Cor**

Development Manager Lazan reviewed the staff report. He noted Steve Sabraska from Landform is present.

City Engineer Himmer pointed out there are still wetlands on the site, and that hurdle needs to be cleared.

Councilmember Elvig stated he is in favor of using the pond for grading. He expressed concern with utilizing the planned access and proposed an access from the north may work better. He questioned what the next step is to formulate a policy.

Chairperson McGlone suggested a model policy be drafted and presented to the HRA.

#### **COMMITTEE INPUT**

Councilmember Elvig raised the issue that residents are commenting that the City does not follow its own Ordinances. The construction on his street is not using the four inches of topsoil as the City directs residents to do. Also, the City has reduced its capacity to maintain grass mowing in parks, which allows weeds to grow, and spread into next door citizens' yards.

City Engineer Himmer indicated the topsoil in that particular capacity is not in the Ordinance. It is new construction that triggers the topsoil requirements. He explained there is no policy in place to help determine what type of seed or sod should be used in certain instances. He stated this issue will be brought to the Public Works Committee in June for discussion.

City Administrator Ulrich noted the mowing issue should be discussed at a future Public Works Committee meeting and be drafted into a policy.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Chairperson McGlone, seconded by Councilmember Tossey to adjourn the Public Works Committee Meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian Olson  
Public Works Director

Drafted by Chris Moksnes  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*