

**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a Special City Council Meeting on Tuesday, June 5, 2012, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Bob Ramsey
Councilmember David Elvig
Councilmember Colin McGlone
Councilmember Sarah Strommen
Councilmember Jason Tossey
Councilmember Jeffrey Wise

Members Absent: Councilmember Randy Backous

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Fire Chief Dean Kapler
Parks Supervisor Mark Riverblood
City Engineer Tim Himmer
Street Supervisor Grant Reimer
Administrative Analyst Patrick Brama

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ramsey called the Special City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Wise, seconded by Councilmember Tossey, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Ramsey, Councilmembers Wise, Tossey, Elvig, McGlone, and Strommen. Voting No: None. Absent: Councilmember Backous.

4. COUNCIL BUSINESS

4.01: Continue Discussion of the Public Works Department's Staffing and Structure and Direct Staff to Act Accordingly

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the staff report and recommended recruiting to fill the City Engineer position. He indicated that during the three-month recruiting process, a temporary engineering consultant will be used. City Administrator Ulrich raised the option offered by Park Supervisor Riverblood who proposed fostering a spirit of cooperation during the selection process by reclassifying the Street Supervisor position to Public Works Superintendent and the Parks Supervisor position to Parks Supervisor/Assistant Public Works Superintendent, which would also assure there is support for the Public Works Director.

Mayor Ramsey asked who would be supervising the Engineering Technicians and other staff during the recruitment period.

City Administrator Ulrich suggested supervision of staff and inspections by Civil Engineer Linton or the engineering consultant.

Councilmember Elvig asked how the transition would occur between the consulting engineer and newly hired Public Works Director and suggested that process be structured into the consulting contract or RFP so the City does not end up paying incrementally for that period of time. He noted if a consultant engineer is on staff, there may be three areas of responsibility: project-by-project, staffing supervision, and transition at the end of the three-month recruitment period.

City Administrator Ulrich agreed there will be a transition period at the end of the recruitment between the consulting engineer and new Public Works Director.

Councilmember Tossey asked whether City Engineer Himmer had been asked to suggest who should take over his position.

City Administrator Ulrich stated he did raise that issue with City Engineer Himmer, discussed existing staff, and the opportunity to have existing staff take on the City Engineer position.

Councilmember Tossey stated he made a mistake at the last meeting and should have supported the department head position because he thought it was what staff supported. He indicated if the Council values its Engineering Department, it needs to recruit for a City Engineer and Public Works Director. Councilmember Tossey stated he would support hiring Mr. Himmer as Public Works Director.

Motion by Councilmember Tossey, seconded by Councilmember Elvig, to offer the Public Works Director position to Tim Himmer.

Mayor Ramsey stated if he had known Mr. Himmer was interested in the Public Works Director position, it may have changed his vote.

City Engineer Himmer submitted his formal letter of resignation.

Councilmembers Tossey and Elvig withdrew their motion on the floor.

Councilmember Strommen stated she supports filling the City Engineer position and to provide for a transition period as raised by Councilmember Elvig. She noted that having the consulting engineer at City Hall will help with ease of communication. As to the other option offered to have two Superintendent positions, Councilmember Strommen stated this is the first time she has heard of this option and had no strong feelings one way or the other. Councilmember Strommen stated she wants to be thoughtful and assure the staff structure is correct for the department. She indicated it would be helpful to see job descriptions and budget impacts.

Mayor Ramsey stated the City has a pool of engineers from which City Administrator Ulrich will select based on area of expertise and assure to provide for a transition period.

City Engineer Himmer noted the City still has staff with internal project knowledge and the consulting engineer can be contacted after the transition period, if needed. He stated he intends to summarize all of the items he is working on and City Administrator Ulrich can decide how to allot those responsibilities. City Engineer Himmer noted Fire Chief Kapler has raised the issue of communication between departments and the consultant, which should be affirmed in the scoping process.

Councilmember Elvig asked about the impact of raising staff to Superintendent and then hiring a Public Works Director. He asked if those staff members would then no longer be Superintendents.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that would be a concern if there were individual departments but Superintendent is a level above Supervisor with an umbrella of authority. He indicated the Public Works Director would be in charge of Engineering and other departments and the Superintendent positions could remain in place and the structure would still work.

Councilmember Elvig asked Street Supervisor Reimer if he supports this new proposal.

Street Supervisor Reimer answered in the affirmative.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Mayor Ramsey, to approve staff recommendation to recruit for the position of City Engineer, use a consulting engineer during the recruitment period, and create two Superintendent positions.

Fire Chief Kapler commented on the importance of addressing communication because there is no direct reporting link between the Engineering and Public Works Departments. He indicated the communication piece needs to be addressed when interviewing for City Engineer to assure there is strong communication.

Councilmember Elvig concurred and noted Engineering usually involves a process so that department could be obligated to articulate the process for each step as a means of communication.

Fire Chief Kapler recommended review of the current City Engineer job description since it was written to be under the supervision of a Public Works Director.

Mayor Ramsey concurred and suggested that review be conducted by the Personnel Committee.

Councilmember Strommen asked that the City Engineer be involved with the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization (LRRWMO).

City Engineer Himmer noted Engineer Linton does a lot with storm water and would also be a good resource for the LRRWMO.

Councilmember Strommen stated she has no issue with the proposed structure to add two Superintendent positions but would like information on the budget and job descriptions. She expressed concern with making structural changes “on the fly” without that additional information.

Councilmember Tossey asked what will be their specific responsibilities.

City Administrator Ulrich explained responsibilities have not yet been specifically spelled out but will be developed. He noted administrative issues would include grant writing, project management, legislative issues, and to interface with the Park & Recreation Commission and other groups. The other side would be that Street Supervisor Reimer would have day-to-day operational and coordination responsibilities. City Administrator Ulrich stated he will look at salary ranges, which should not involve a major budget impact.

Councilmember Tossey stated he made a decision last week without knowing all of the facts so he would not vote on this recommendation tonight unless he knows exactly what it entails. In addition, as Personnel Committee Chair, he would like the opportunity to know specifics.

Amendment motion by Mayor Ramsey, seconded by Councilmember Elvig, to approve the staff structure as suggested by City Administrator Ulrich and that all jobs descriptions go to the Personnel Committee and budget impacts go to the Finance Committee prior to ratification by the City Council.

Councilmember Strommen suggested holding a Personnel Committee meeting before the next City Council meeting so it can make a recommendation prior to Council ratification.

Councilmember Elvig stated he would prefer the consideration be brought directly to the City Council.

Councilmember Elvig and Mayor Ramsey withdrew the motion and amendment motion.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Mayor Ramsey, to approve starting the process to recruit a new City Engineer, using an engineering pool during the recruitment period, and direct staff to move forward with pertinent job descriptions for approval at the next Council meeting.

City Engineer Himmer noted that regardless of hiring a City Engineer or Public Works Director, there is need for technical assistance if the Council wants to move forward with the road reconstruction initiative.

Councilmember Elvig stated it seems to be the right move to go ahead with the Superintendent proposal because the Council knows the “players” and he wants to show the strength of the Council for the “players” and that they are important to the Council.

Councilmember Tossey noted the motion will bring this matter before the full Council without putting it before the Personnel Committee so all can provide input.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Ramsey, Councilmembers Elvig, McGlone, Strommen, Tossey, and Wise. Voting No: None. Absent: Councilmember Backous.

5. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

5.01: Consider Storm Sewer Pipe Emergency Repairs

City Engineer Himmer presented photographs of a corrugated metal pipe with internal liner and described the breach that had occurred that resulted in water infiltrating into the bluff. It is estimated repair could cost about \$20,000.

Councilmember McGlone asked whether the same type of system will be installed.

City Engineer Himmer explained the intent is not to dig up the pipe section since it is located on a steep bluff and highly wooded area. He explained options to secure the pipe within the structure.

Councilmember McGlone asked why a lined system is being proposed.

City Engineer Himmer explained this is a 200-foot section of pipe and would do more damage to remove it so the project would rehabilitate the pipe. He indicated there is another deteriorated pipe by Lake Itasca with a breach, creating water intrusion and a sinkhole. City Engineer Himmer estimated this repair would cost about \$5,000 and recommended moving forward to correct as soon as possible. He requested authorization to move forward with these two emergency correction projects utilizing Storm Water Utility Funds.

Mayor Ramsey noted the City Administrator can authorize expenditures of up to \$25,000.

City Administrator Ulrich stated staff wanted to inform the Council of these emergency expenditures ahead of time in case it wanted the item placed on a regular meeting agenda.

Councilmember Elvig asked about the option of making the repair with a liquid fill.

City Engineer Himmer indicated that option is being priced as an alternative and described another option to use a sleeve pipe.

Councilmember Elvig requested that options for repair be placed on the Public Works Committee agenda for discussion.

Councilmember McGlone asked if the pipe will be removed instead of lining a plastic pipe.

City Engineer Himmer stated they will not line a plastic pipe and it will either be a lined continuous section or that section would be replaced.

The consensus of the Council was to authorize City Administrator Ulrich to expend Storm Water Utility funds to move forward with the two emergency storm water repair projects as presented.

5.02: 2011 Street Maintenance Project Update

Mayor Ramsey requested an update on the 157th Lane overlay Project.

City Engineer Himmer explained residents did not think the pavement was thick enough and were concerned that the bituminous curb “disappeared” with the overlay. He stated he met with Mayor Ramsey, Councilmember McGlone, Brian Olson and others on site last fall and talked about fixing the curb in the cul-de-sac and drainage flume, which has been done. The remaining item is the offset in the crown of the road, which residents believed got scuffed off when the streets were plowed.

Street Supervisor Reimer clarified the road crown was scuffed by the plow, but not scuffed off. He stated it is similar to what occurs on many City streets, and thought trying to fix it would cause more harm than good.

Mayor Ramsey asked if it was the opinion of the City Engineer and Street Supervisor that the road met specifications.

City Engineer Himmer stated that is correct and the four to five outstanding items have all been addressed.

5.03: Legacy Christian Academy Update

City Administrator Ulrich announced that Legacy Christian Academy will not break ground this fall because fundraising did not reach expected levels.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Wise, seconded by Commissioner Strommen, to adjourn the Special City Council Meeting.

Motion carried.

The Special City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Carla Wirth
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.