

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, July 17, 2012 at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:                   Chairperson Randy Backous  
  Councilmember David Elvig  
  Councilmember Colin McGlone

Also Present:                       Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer  
  Police Chief James Way  
  Interim Engineer Ron Wagner  
  Councilmember Jeff Wise  
  City Attorney William Goodrich  
  Development Manager Darren Lazan

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Backous called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 7:14 p.m.

**2.     CITIZEN INPUT**

There was none.

**3.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember McGlone, seconded by Chairperson Backous, to approve the agenda, as revised to consider Case 5.03 prior to Case 5.01 and reschedule Case 5.04 to a future meeting.

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

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion by Councilmember McGlone, seconded by Councilmember Elvig, to approve the minutes from the May 15, 2012 Public Works Meeting.

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

**5.     COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **5.03: Review Overlay Project 11-05 (157<sup>th</sup> Lane East of Ramsey Boulevard)**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report. He agreed the center line is not the best but any repair options will create a project that does not look as well. He advised that the core samples taken are all within specifications and he thinks the road is structurally sound, noting it shows no signs of stress after being driven on for one year. He recommended leaving the road as is and monitoring it to see if anything happens.

Dale McKusick, 6801 157<sup>th</sup> Lane NW, stated his concern that the asphalt is inconsistent in depth, especially as it approaches the curb, an area that carries water drainage and traffic from plows and garbage trucks. He stated he put in a new driveway for his neighbor and found there was only one-half inch of asphalt at that driveway. He agreed with Public Works Superintendent Riemer that grinding down the center would not be an acceptable repair. Mr. McKusick stated the asphalt mat should be a consistent 1.5 to 2 inches thick from edge of curb to edge of curb, but it is not and he thinks the road edges will come apart within several years. He noted the original road was surfaced only once in 30 years, held up well, and is providing a great base for the sealcoat project. However, as it deteriorates, there will be no recourse against the contractor and everyone will be mad at the City. Mr. McKusick stated there has to be someone accountable and if he is paying taxes, he wants it done right.

Chairperson Backous stated he agrees with Mr. McKusick's concern, noting the City enforces its building codes with strict inspections but he does not know about the inspection process for this project.

Councilmember McGlone noted at the time of this project, the City had two engineers and used the same engineering inspection team so there was not an issue with manpower to inspect the project.

Barb McKusick, 6801 157<sup>th</sup> Lane NW, stated they were told it would be 1.5 to 2 inches thick from curb to curb and that part of the existing bituminous curb would go away. However, along most of the street the bituminous curb remained so people are asking how thin the asphalt is if the curb is still showing.

Councilmember Elvig asked what is the depth of the asphalt.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated he can take additional core samples of the edges and may find some at one inch and others at two inches.

Ms. McKusick stated the issue is that the asphalt mat is not consistent.

Mr. McKusick agreed that most of the bituminous curb remains after the project so it means the matting is not consistent.

Councilmember Elvig stated the struggle is that a concrete curb it is definite but with bituminous curbs, the spreader floats so the mat undulates. He asked Mr. McKusick if he thinks an entire area is substandard.

Mr. McKusick stated he cut part of the asphalt when he installed his driveway and it was 2.5 inches, and today it is still 2.5 inches and you can see four inches of bituminous curbing all along the roadway. His question is how far the contractor slanted the mat as it approached the curb. His concern is that the curb area will deteriorate faster because of the truck traffic.

Councilmember Elvig noted this is an overlay project so it resurfaces the area and the idea is not to build thickness. The old road was stable and not deteriorating and the seal coating project added onto it. He asked if the road is worse now, thinking it can only be better with more and newer bituminous. Councilmember Elvig asked if areas with only one inch of overlay should be corrected.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated the City removed sections of alligatored asphalt from the old roadway prior to the project. He agreed that when on the paver, you are at the mercy of the road surface because the paver follows the bed underneath. He also agreed there are probably edge areas that are not perfectly correct but he believes the road is sound.

Chairperson Backous asked about the scenario where residents are assessed for a road project, the warranty expires, and then the road falls apart.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated if there are problems with the road within the warranty, the contractor would be responsible. If it occurs three years from the project, the contractor would not be responsible.

Chairperson Backous asked if residents would be expected to pay again for a new road.

Councilmember McGlone stated when a contractor's warranty is over, then the City picks up the cost and patches, as needed, so residents would not be reassessed. However, it increases the City's costs and that is covered through taxes.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer pointed out that residents are not assessed for seal coating.

Interim Engineer Wagner advised the general road contract is for a one-year warranty for roads and a longer warranty results in higher project costs.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated there is no problem now or in the past with overlay projects and staff will continue to monitor this roadway.

Councilmember McGlone stated regardless of the outcome in this case, the City needs to consider a road policy for the future in how it is funded, project standards, and contract language. He stated he was at the McKusick property three times and watched him pick off a piece of the road with his finger so there is no arguing that fact; however, the core samples tell the story in the locations they were dug. He stated his opinion there are road areas that are substandard and the City needs to look at how contracts are written, whether thickness or tonnage requirements, to assure residents are getting what they paid for. Councilmember McGlone stated he is not sure

he is comfortable with staff's recommendation because he is sure there are areas that are substandard.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated North Valley was the contractor for this project and also did the Alpine project and other overlays.

Chairperson Backous asked if North Valley will be used for future projects.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer answered they will be if they bid on projects.

Mr. McKusick explained it came up because he installed two concrete driveways and had purposely left the concrete up 1.5 inches so when the overlay was done, the driveway would slant up. However, the concrete is still 1.5 inches above the asphalt. He again stated he felt the asphalt mat should be consistently at 1.5 to 2 inches from curb to curb and asked what the City is going to do differently in future projects.

Chairperson Backous asked if the variance of depth resulted in requiring tonnage instead of mat depth.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated this project required tonnage and was two tons over.

Interim Engineer Wagner advised the specification for this project is standard and used Mn/DOT references, which allow a one-quarter inch tolerance and is measured behind the machine to assure it is laying an adequate mat. Interim Engineer Wagner explained how the road and curb edge is tacked but sometimes the asphalt does not adhere to the curb area because it is rough or dirty. Should that occur, the asphalt could be picked off.

Mr. McKusick noted the paver cannot get directly to the curbing so someone needs to manually spread asphalt to the curbing. If that is not done correctly, the roller compresses it flat to the surface.

Ms. McKusick stated Levi Dargis, 6741 157<sup>th</sup> Lane NW, who works for Mn/DOT, had explained that the paver should have unhooked and readjusted. This did not occur and that is why there are two different road levels.

Councilmember Elvig asked what is the repercussion with the contractor at this point.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated there is not much because the specifications say a 1.5-inch mat and the project met tonnage.

Interim Engineer Wagner explained if none of the core samples are found one-quarter inch below specifications, then it meets the requirements.

Councilmember Elvig noted if a series of cores are taken at the curb, it may find the majority are too thin.

Mr. McKusick stated the cores were not taken where the driveways were milled.

Councilmember McGlone noted the location where Mr. McKusick picked off asphalt was not in a driveway area.

Councilmember Elvig stated if the contention is that all the bituminous is in the middle of the road, he would suggest taking borings from the edge of the road to see if it is an issue.

Mr. McKusick noted the specifications do not say “curb to curb” so he believed it was a “gray area.” He restated he is only bringing this up so specifications for future road projects require consistent matting from curb to curb. He assured the Public Works Committee that if there is cracking, he will come back to the City and say “I told you so.”

Chairperson Backous thanked the McKusicks for bringing this issue forward and noted staff has recommended the City continue to monitor the road. In addition, the Public Works Committee will discuss the contract language.

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Chairperson Backous, to recommend that the City Council accept Overlay Project 11-05, 157<sup>th</sup> Lane east of Ramsey Boulevard and let the warranty period expire, and direct staff to review the policy and propose alternate language.

Future discussion: Councilmember McGlone stated he thinks the road is substandard; however, the core samples tell another story. He stated he has a construction background and if being assessed, would also be upset. Councilmember Elvig stated he had suggested additional cores along the curb but Mr. McKusick stated his intention was to offer suggestions for future road contracts. Councilmember McGlone stated he will use this project as an example in the road standard policy that is to be created. He asked about milling the edge and installing a 1.5-foot wide strip of tar, noting if more core samples are taken the City could go to the contractor about covering the cost. Mr. McKusick stated Public Works Superintendent Riemer is standing behind the road, which is not an attractive road but better than what they had before. Mr. McKusick stated he does not want more holes drilled or strips of asphalt laid unless it is then entirely sealcoated to create a consistent surface. He stated he is concerned for future road projects, that is why he brought forward this issue. Councilmember McGlone stated he was advocating for the resident’s position and if they support accepting the project, he will then support the motion on the floor.

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

#### **5.01: Consider Traffic Control Change for Sunwood Drive / Sapphire Street Intersection**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report and recommended Option 2, restrict on-street parking on Sunwood Drive.

Police Chief Way advised that a fair amount of speeding tickets are written in the 45-50 mph range. In addition, parking of larger vehicles in the first few spots restricts visibility. He noted

constructing a kick-out like on Dysprosium Street, would require vehicles to pull out farther to see past parked vehicles; however, it creates issues with plowing. He stated he understands the concern with removing parking spaces so he does not have a good answer but wanted to raise the issue.

Councilmember Elvig stated the City set the speed limit to keep it safe and the idea is to move buildings up to the face of the street, which is different for Ramsey and blocks some visibility. He suggested looking at a greater building setback to address driver visibility. Councilmember Elvig stated he is reluctant to remove the parking spaces on Sunwood Drive because it provides quick and convenient parking and access to the Engineering Department through non-carpeted areas. He suggested the key is speed control.

Councilmember McGlone advocated for Option #1, leave intersection as it is presently, noting a worse sight angle is the PSD building and that has been solved. He agreed that reducing parking impacts zoning and parking requirements and that bump outs are a plowing nightmare, offering no protection. Councilmember McGlone indicated when traffic warrants exist, something else can be considered at that time.

Chairperson Backous agreed that removing parking spaces will not calm traffic and he does not support adding costs or installing stop signs. He raised the option of a flashing yield or speed sign, which would be effective.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated they are expensive and require electric wiring but he would check on the cost. He agreed it may help with speed but not address visibility.

Chairperson Backous suggested using the Police speed trailer in that location more often.

Police Chief Way stated it has been used in that area frequently and been found to be effective to make the driver aware and slow the speed of traffic.

Interim Engineer Wagner suggested a sign that only flashes speed and operates from a solar panel.

Councilmember Elvig stated he would support looking at that option.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated he will get prices for that type of sign.

Police Chief Way stated he thinks the issue of speed will resolve itself as the area develops.

Motion by Councilmember McGlone, seconded by Chairperson Backous, to recommend that the City Council approve Option # 1, leave intersection as it is presently.

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

Councilmember Elvig left the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

**5.02: Tree Removal at 16490 Uranium Street**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report.

Chairperson Backous stated he looked at the tree and agrees the size justifies the cost.

Motion by Councilmember McGlone, seconded by Chairperson Backous, to recommend that the City Council approve the use of Council Contingency Fund to contract with Olson Tree Service for tree removal and clean up at 16490 Uranium Street in an amount not to exceed \$3,300.00.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous and Councilmember McGlone. Voting No: None. Absent: Councilmember Elvig.

**5.03: Review Overlay Project 11-05 (157<sup>th</sup> Lane East of Ramsey Boulevard)**

This item was considered prior to Case 5.01.

**5.04: Review Resident's Concerns with the Sunfish Lake Boulevard / CR116 Project**

This item was removed upon adoption of the agenda and will be rescheduled to a future meeting.

Councilmember Elvig returned at 8:06 p.m.

**5.05: Consider Purchase of AVL System for Public Works Fleet**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report and advised the GPS can be added for \$1,300, which would eliminate the data plan (average \$11/truck/month) for the cellular telephones.

Chairperson Backous noted the costs would be about a "wash."

Councilmember McGlone stated he does not see the value in this system or that the few complaints with snow plowing justifies the cost.

Chairperson Backous noted the Public Works Committee was in favor of this system at an earlier meeting and asked what has changed since then.

Councilmember McGlone stated he was willing to look at the information but now that he sees the cost, he does not see the value.

The Public Works Committee discussed the features offered and considered whether it would result in staff efficiencies. It was noted that staff should already be filling out a daily log and informing Public Works Superintendent Riemer of maintenance issues.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated he had brought forward this information at the Public Works Committee's request and another option is to test the equipment for a period of 30 days at a cost of \$30/month.

Motion by Councilmember McGlone, seconded by Councilmember Elvig, to test the AVL system from Precise MRM for 30 days on the sweeper, starting in October. Staff will then provide a report on what did and did not work, and whether its use resulted in staff efficiencies.

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

## **6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT**

Chairperson Backous advised of complaints he received from the neighborhood on 149<sup>th</sup> Avenue about a deep murky retaining pond next to a front yard and concern with safety.

Interim Engineer Wagner described the reverse grade outlet pipe that provides some skimming.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated this retention pond takes drainage from the road and provides settling prior to discharge.

Chairperson Backous asked staff to conduct additional research and schedule the topic for a future meeting so those residents can be heard.

Councilmember McGlone read an e-mail complaint from a resident on Tonto Street relating to the "horrible job the City did when cutting ditches along the road" and damage to trees.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated he received a call about this matter but the caller did not leave a telephone number. He advised this area has been cleaned up and problem resolved but he will contact the resident.

Chairperson Backous asked about the broken the concrete in front of City Hall.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer explained it is due to the hot weather and that area will be ground down and repaired prior to winter.

Development Manager Lazan suggested cutting expansion joints to avoid this type of damage during hot weather.

The Public Works Committee agreed with the suggestion of Councilmember Elvig to direct staff look into that option and draft specifications/policy to assure it is handled correctly.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilmember Elvig, seconded by Councilmember McGlone, to adjourn the Public Works meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Grant Riemer  
Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Carla Wirth  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*