

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 17, 2013 at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Randy Backous  
                            Councilmember Mark Kuzma  
                            Councilmember Chris Riley

Also Present:         City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich  
                            Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer  
                            Human Resources Manager Colleen Lasher  
                            Public Works Utility Supervisor John Nelson

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Backous called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 5:50 p.m.

**2.     CITIZEN INPUT**

There was none.

**3.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember Kuzma, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers Kuzma and Riley. Voting No: None.

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01:   Approve July 16, 2013, Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Kuzma, to approve the following minutes:

Regular Meeting Minutes dated July 16, 2013

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers Riley and Kuzma. Voting No: None.

## **5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **5.01: Consider Allowing the Use of High Density Polyethylene Pipe for Water Service Line**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report and recommendation the City Council amend City Code Section 58-113(a) to allow the use of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) pipe in lieu of soft copper for water service lines from the curb stop to the residence. He reviewed the benefits of using HDPE including lower cost, less likelihood of theft, and ease of splicing. He indicated HDPE has a longer life than copper and involves no health risks. Public Works Superintendent Riemer explained that copper will still be used from the main to the curb stop for ease of locating.

Councilmember Riley asked if there is any argument to not use HDPE.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated he cannot think of one, noting it saves contractors thousands of dollars. He stated it will be wrapped with 12-gauge wire so it can be located.

Councilmember Kuzma stated his question was how long it would last and staff has indicated 100 years or longer, which is a longer life than copper.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Councilmember Kuzma, to recommend that the City Council amend City Code Section 58-113(a) to allow the use of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) pipe in lieu of soft copper for water service lines from the curb stop to the residence.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Councilmembers Riley and Kuzma. Voting No: None.

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

### **6.01: Signal Timing on Highway 10 Corridor**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer provided a traffic simulation of Highway 10 and its intersections at Ramsey Boulevard NW, Armstrong Boulevard NW, Sunfish Lake Boulevard, Main Street, Fair Oak Avenue, and Thurston Avenue that was developed based on traffic counts. He reviewed the staff report and response of Kevin Schwartz of Mn/DOT indicating a limited number of cars are allowed to enter the Highway corridor from intersecting roads because the corridor is over capacity and any changes to the timing at one signal effects the traffic volumes on the whole corridor.

Chairperson Backous asked why traffic timing is not changed in Big Lake and/or Elk River to allow Ramsey traffic to access Highway 10 more quickly, noting the wait can be over six minutes.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer advised that Mn/DOT has hired a consultant to study the signal timing on Highway 10 to see if any improvement could be made. But if changes are made, it is most likely to be during non-rush hour periods.

Chairperson Backous stated it appears Mn/DOT is saying they cannot do anything.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated the road is over capacity and needs to be improved.

Chairperson Backous stated he thinks something can be done farther west in Elk River or beyond.

Informational; no action required.

### **6.02: 2013 Public Works Department Operations and Staffing Survey Results**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report and presented survey results of neighboring communities relating to Public Works staffing levels. He stated Ramsey is operating at the top with efficiencies and staff is not currently working over-time hours.

Chairperson Backous stated this survey does not taking into account work of prisoners or contractor services so it is difficult to compare “apples to apples.”

Public Works Superintendent completed presentation of the survey results and indicated it has become difficult for Ramsey to find people for fall seasonal work.

Human Resources Manager Lasher agreed and stated it will continue to be a challenge.

Councilmember Riley complemented staff for running a lean operation.

Public Works Utility Supervisor Nelson commented on the high water use during summer months.

Chairperson Backous asked Public Works Superintendent Riemer if he will be asking to hire additional staff.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated the 2014 budget includes hiring a Utility Operator so that position will be brought forward. He commented that some residents want to live on dirt roads of a rural design.

Chairperson Backous asked about the cost to maintain gravel roads.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated gravel roads may not be more costly to maintain but the City receives more complaints relating to dust during summer months.

Chairperson Backous congratulated Public Works Superintendent Reimer for making it work with a lean level of staffing.

Informational; no action required.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer answered questions of the Committee relating to the condition and rating of several roads.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilmember Kuzma, seconded by Councilmember Riley, to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Grant Riemer  
Public Works Superintendent

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