

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2019, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Mark Kuzma
 Councilmember Chris Riley

Members Absent: Councilmember Nadine Heinrich

Also Present: Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
 City Engineer Bruce Westby
 City Administrator Kurt Ulrich
 City Councilmember Debra Musgrove

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Kuzma and Councilmember Riley. Voting No: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve April 16, 2019, Meeting Minutes

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

Regular Meeting Minutes dated April 16, 2019

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Kuzma and Councilmember Riley. Voting No: None.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Recommendation to City Council to Suspend Annual Sealcoating Program

City Engineer Westby stated that the purpose of this case is to consider a recommendation to the City Council to suspend the City's annual sealcoating program temporarily. The City of Ramsey has generally sealcoated between 13 and 23 miles of City streets each year for many years. The purpose of sealcoating is to protect existing bituminous pavement from damage caused by stormwater runoff, ultraviolet rays from the sun, and petroleum deposits left by vehicles using these streets. Over the last two or three years, City staff has received higher than normal numbers of complaints about loose rock along gutters and in the boulevards of properties fronting streets that were sealcoated.

City Engineer Westby stated that this spring, staff has observed damage to the underlying pavement of streets that were sealcoated within the last two to three years. Staff has also heard from numerous other cities throughout the Twin Cities metro area, including several northwest metro cities, about similar recent observations on their sealcoat projects. Locally, the City of Andover stopped sealcoating streets years ago, and the City of Coon Rapids is transitioning from sealcoating all streets to sealcoating only local residential streets and fog sealing higher-volume collector streets. They believe the higher traffic volumes leads to surface stripping and believe fog sealing will provide similar benefits to seal coating at reduced costs.

City Engineer Westby started to present pictures of the damage observed on numerous streets throughout the City this spring, but encountered a problem with his computer and asked that this case be delayed until he could fix the issue.

5.02: Request Authorization to Participate in the MnWARN Mutual Aid Agreement

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that MnWARN is a formal emergency response program in Minnesota. MnWARN is a mutual aid agreement to provide a program whereby water, wastewater, and storm water utilities sustaining physical damage from natural or man-made disasters in the state of Minnesota can obtain emergency assistance, in the form of personnel, equipment, and materials and other associated services necessary to protect the health and welfare of the utilities' customers.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that MnWARN assists member's utilities with: emergency assessment, emergency response, and recovery; Mutual Aid Agreement for sharing emergency resources with members; resources to help recover from a disaster; emergency contact network; and voluntary participation. A Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN) is a network of utilities helping utilities respond to and recover from emergencies. Mutual Aid/Assistance is one agency helping another based on a written agreement. The assistance is provided across jurisdictional boundaries in the event of an emergency. Participation is voluntary.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that there is no cost to participate. MnWARN provides a forum for establishing and maintained emergency contacts. MnWARN program provides a utility with access to specialized, certified, and knowledgeable utility personnel. If

the utility staff were to respond, the associated cost would come out of one of the utility operating budgets, depending on the type of emergency, water, sanitary sewer or storm sewer. Some of these costs are reimbursable from the City receiving emergency aid. Staff recommends entering into a Joint Powers Agreement with the MnWARN emergency response program.

Councilmember Riley commented that it appears this would be for short-term emergencies.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer confirmed that to be true and noted that the City would not be obligated to respond.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Chairperson Kuzma, to recommend that the City Council direct staff to enter into a Joint Powers Agreement with the MnWARN Emergency Response Program.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Kuzma and Councilmember Riley. Voting No: None.

5.03: Discuss 6401 Highway 10 – Drainage Issues/Pavement Discussion

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that the City currently owns 6410 Highway 10 on the corner of Sunfish Lake Boulevard and Highway 10 by Aurelio's Pizza and Willy McCoy's. The site is currently gravel and dirt, with smaller pieces of pavement onsite. A neighboring tenant has requested the City pave or improve the site because the gravel is not maintained and the dust blows when it is windy. Also, the gravel is running into a storm drain onsite. The tenant has shared photos of this with the City, who is awaiting receipt of the photos from the tenant.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that because of the prohibitive cost of paving the area temporarily, staff would suggest obtaining quotes for chemical dust control. Chemical treatment would likely be an annual expense, until construction began on the Sunfish Lake Boulevard interchange. He stated that he did receive an estimate from a contractor that stated the chemical spraying would have a cost of about \$1,600. He believed that this would be a good short-term solution.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that it seemed the business wanted additional parking and asked if there could be a possibility to lease some of that area for parking.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that the business is interested in removing a few parking stalls to construct a patio area. He noted that staff can talk with the business owner to determine if there would be interest in leasing additional parking area.

Councilmember Riley commented that the decision had previously been made not to improve that property by paving. He stated that this seems to be a good solution for the short-term to control the dust issue.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer confirmed the consensus that this item should be treated as maintenance so that it can move forward as soon as possible.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if planting grass would be an option.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that the existing material would need to be dug out and even if grass was then planted, it would be very labor intensive.

City Engineer Westby stated that the City received bids in the past to install curb and gutter, concrete median improvements, paving and striping at a cost of about \$109,000. He stated that if improvements at the intersection of Sunfish Lake Boulevard and Highway 10 do not move forward in the next few years, the City could choose to do a lesser option to pave the area.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that the site currently looks better than the boarded-up gas station that previously existed.

Councilmember Riley stated that if that area was going to be improved, he would want to see that funded by the strip mall and businesses within.

5.01: Consider Recommendation to City Council to Suspend Annual Sealcoating Program (Continued)

City Engineer Westby displayed photographs from different streets that have had similar issues after sealcoating, which includes local streets as well as higher volume collector streets. He stated that the City annually budgets \$500,000 for crack sealing and sealcoating projects. Staff still recommends completing cracksealing projects in an estimated amount of \$200,000 annually. He stated that staff recommends that the Committee recommend that the City Council suspend the City's annual sealcoating program to allow for further observation of previously sealcoated City streets to make sure further degradation does not occur and to research the practices and findings of other cities that are trying alternative treatments to sealcoating.

Chairperson Kuzma asked if it would make sense to cut a strip out of the road that has the damage and replacing that segment.

City Engineer Westby replied that could be done and staff could investigate that option along with patching.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer explained that the paver is eight to ten feet in width and therefore a lesser width could not be completed.

City Engineer Westby explained that if the sealcoating program is suspended and only cracksealing is completed, the budgeted funds that would be saved from not sealcoating could be used to repair other roadways, such as Variolite Street.

Councilmember Riley stated that he is torn as sealcoating has been done for the past 60 years. He recognized that there clearly is an issue and it would not make sense to spend money to make roads worse. He asked if Ramsey should look into fog sealing.

City Engineer Westby replied that Staff would look into this as an option but Staff first wanted to see if Coon Rapids fog sealing program was successful.

City Administrator Ulrich asked if Ramsey has done fog sealing in the past.

City Engineer Westby confirmed that a few years ago the City fogsealed over sealcoating but noted that there did not seem to be long-term value to this approach. He advised that last year the City fogsealed a few cul-de-sacs but noted that staff is still evaluating the cul-de-sacs. He stated that Coon Rapids will be completing more fog sealing this year and the City could gain information from that without spending additional funds.

Councilmember Riley asked if the City would be ready for sealcoating this year if that is the desired outcome.

City Engineer Westby stated that streets have been identified and staff could put together plans within the necessary timeline to have the sealcoating completed, if desired. He confirmed that cracksealing continues to be the most cost effective pavement management improvement available.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that he is also torn on the decision. He suggested following the staff recommendation to hold off on sealcoating this year.

City Engineer Westby stated that it would be helpful to have at least this year to pull back and speak with other cities to gain additional information. He stated that St. Michael has been fog sealing for many years and he felt that he could gain valuable information from speaking with staff from that city on how their process has worked.

Councilmember Riley stated that he would support taking a break for one year, which would mean that the City is committed to finding a better option for next year.

City Engineer Westby agreed that the faster staff can figure this out, the better. He explained that staff does want to continue proactive maintenance but wants to take the time to figure out what is causing this problem and prevent it from continuing.

Councilmember Riley asked if improving Variolite Street would be the best use for the remaining maintenance dollars that would be saved from not sealcoating.

City Engineer Westby stated that the funds could be spent on additional overlays instead, but noted that staff is unsure if Variolite Street can make it to its projected reconstruction date in 2022, and noted that this project may not involve assessments.

Councilmember Riley asked for an update on pothole maintenance.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer confirmed that staff is continuing pothole maintenance and continues to work on it.

Motion by Councilmember Riley, seconded by Chairperson Kuzma, to recommend that the City Council suspend the City's annual sealcoating program for one year to allow for further observation of previously sealcoated City streets, and to research the practices and findings of other cities.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Kuzma and Councilmember Riley. Voting No: None.

6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT

6.01: Staff Updates on Improvement Projects and Items of Interest

City Engineer Westby provided an update on City improvement projects, Anoka County improvement projects, and MnDOT improvement projects, and other items of interest.

Chairperson Kuzma asked the City policy for sprinklers on roads with reconstruction projects.

City Engineer Westby stated that the City is not responsible for the sprinkler systems. He noted that staff will provide information to homeowners and work with them to determine where the sprinklers should be pulled back to.

Councilmember Riley asked for an update on the pond lining for RTC 9th Addition.

City Engineer Westby replied that there were two ponds as part of that development that were constructed and were intended for infiltration. He stated that the ponds are currently infiltrating and within the wellhead protection area. He stated that a new developer has picked up the project and this was identified during that review. He stated that because the plat was previously approved, staff believed that the City should take the initiative to design plans and fund the pond lining work. He estimated about \$50,000 for that work and noted that the improvement would be funded through the stormwater utility fund. He confirmed that filling in the ponds was discussed as an option to the developer but the cost to fill the ponds and complete the necessary stormwater improvements would be much higher than lining the ponds.

City Administrator Ulrich reported that the Highway 10 business owner meetings begin this week. He stated that the advisory letters for the manganese in the water should arrive in mailboxes tomorrow and advised of the upcoming open house with the Department of Health next week. He discussed the possibility of water testing for residents.

Councilmember Musgrove noted that a test completed would only be good for one day and the level could be higher or lower the next day.

Councilmember Riley suggested that the City complete testing periodically and share those results instead.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that perhaps samples could be taken from different points in the city.

Councilmember Riley stated that it would seem to make more sense and would be more cost efficient for the City to do sampling and share that information.

6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar

City Engineer Westby noted that an updated calendar was included in the case.

There was discussion on future well location and possibilities for water treatment.

Councilmember Riley asked for additional details on the increase in costs for road improvements and how that translates to the increase in an assessment.

City Engineer Westby stated that he will provide a detailed response to Councilmember Riley.

Councilmember Riley stated that he was surprised to hear that there are unexpended funds and asked why those have not been used.

City Engineer Westby replied that Finance Director Lund could provide a better response.

Councilmember Riley asked why a project has not yet been identified to use those funds.

City Engineer Westby stated that he would have to defer to Finance Director Lund. He noted that he was just made aware of the unexpended funds.

Councilmember Riley suggested that item be added as a case for the next month. He stated that if there are funds available, he would think it would make sense to complete a project with those funds.

City Engineer Westby explained that those funds are being used to fund the two improvement projects this year, rather than bonding for those projects. He confirmed that he would bring back additional details to the next meeting.

Councilmember Riley referenced the comment that the benefit appraisals will not be completed for the two road construction projects. He commented that it did not seem to make sense to apply that cost savings to the assessment amount.

City Engineer Westby stated that a benefit appraisal would only be done because projects are being assessed and therefore that cost is directly attributed to assessments.

Councilmember Riley agreed that these were good opportunities to not complete the benefit appraisals but noted that it did not make sense to apply that to the residents and it should instead just lessen the project cost.

Chairperson Kuzma agreed that the cost savings should just reduce the overall project cost.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that there would be a policy discussion as the engineer's estimate was lower than the construction costs so the decision would need to be made on whether the difference in cost would be passed to the residents or whether the City would provide some relief.

Chairperson Kuzma and Councilmember Riley confirmed their consensus that the construction cost is the cost and that should be passed to residents through assessments.

Councilmember Riley stated that perhaps Ford Brook Estates would make sense to complete a benefit analysis to determine the amount that could be assessed.

City Engineer Westby explained that because the City is not bonding for the two road projects this year, the minimum assessment amount of 20 percent could be relaxed as that is a requirement of bonding.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Riemer
Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.