

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, June 18, 2019, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Mark Kuzma
 Councilmember Nadine Heinrich
 Councilmember Chris Riley

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Kuzma called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve May 21, 2019, Meeting Minutes

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

Regular Meeting Minutes dated May 21, 2019

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

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.01: Review Plan to Spend Unencumbered Pavement Management Program Funds

City Engineer Westby stated that during the May Public Works Committee meeting, staff was directed to present a case at tonight's meeting explaining the amount and sources of the unexpended pavement management program funds, why these funds were not spent earlier and the plan for spending the funds. The current balance of the unencumbered funds is approximately \$901,000. This includes \$872,500 from 2013 budgeted pavement management project funds that went unspent (\$1,327,500 was budgeted and only \$455,000 was spent) and \$28,500 from five years of bond premiums and interest earnings.

City Engineer Westby stated that staff chose not to expend the funds earlier because street reconstruction bonds cannot be used to fund improvements that did not previously exist. For example, if curb and gutter or sidewalk did not exist before a street was reconstructed but was to be constructed as part of a street reconstruction project, street reconstruction bonds could not fund such improvements. In addition, when the City widens or strengthens (thicker pavement section) a street, the extra costs for widening or strengthening cannot come from street reconstruction bonds. The City therefore used some of the excess funds to cover such improvements on previous projects. Given the City's long-term pavement management plan and current funding policy, these funds were retained for "un-bondable" costs that may have arisen.

City Engineer Westby stated that staff plans to expend the unencumbered funds using approximately \$698,000 to cover City Improvement Project #19-01, Ford Brook Estates Street Reconstructions, and #19-03, Wood Pond Hills & Chestnut Ridge Street Reconstructions. In addition, since the City is currently considering the implementation of franchise fees, including potential rebates of these fees to offset special assessments on properties previously assessed for street reconstruction and overlay improvements, staff did not want to add another year of debt to the tax levy if the franchise fee were to be implemented. This will leave a balance of roughly \$203,000 that could be used to fund franchise fee rebates if franchise fees are implemented or could be used to fund a portion of the 2020 street reconstruction or overlay improvement projects. He stated that staff plans to bring a plan forward to the Council in July for a 2020 pavement management plan.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that the City would set itself up for some difficulty if Variolite is improved without assessments. He acknowledged that if the assessments are too high, the residents would most likely object to the project.

City Engineer Westby stated that the other projects within the current 10-year CIP are proposed to be completed with assessments and have a large number of properties that would be assessed. He explained that in order to do one of those roads, staff would need to propose another five-year plan. He stated that Variolite has the smallest number of residents that would be assessed.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that if the franchise fee method is not chosen, the City would most likely have to go back to bonding.

Councilmember Riley stated that during the franchise fee meetings, one of the biggest factors for him was the cost savings the City would receive because the assessment process would be eliminated and asked for additional details.

City Engineer Westby confirmed that the requirements for assessments would be eliminated including the cost for staff to prepare and publish notifications for public hearings, pay an appraiser to prepare a special benefit consultation report, etc. He confirmed that there would be MSA funds available for reconstructing Variolite Street.

Councilmember Heinrich asked the number of MSA roads in Ramsey. She asked the number of MSA projects that have been completed.

City Engineer Westby replied that about 20 percent of roads are MSA roads in Ramsey. He explained that the City has been working under the five-year Street Reconstruction and Overlay Program, which expires in 2019, and utilized the assessment and bonding process for MSA reconstruction projects. He provided an example of an MSA road, Andrie Street, which was reconstructed in 2016.

Councilmember Riley stated that the Andrie Street project did not use MSA funds because the funds had been allocated to repay bonds for other MSA projects previously completed.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she would prefer to use the MSA funds for reconstructing Variolite Street.

Councilmember Riley agreed. He referenced the unexpended sealcoating budgeted funds for 2019, noting that he considers those as maintenance funds that were budgeted to spend this year. He stated that he would not want to see those funds used for reconstruction projects, as it does not appear the City is keeping up on maintenance and wants to see those funds used in 2019.

City Engineer Westby stated that the crackseal project is currently out for bids. He explained that there is a lengthy process to develop, bid, and construct a new project so there may not be sufficient time to prepare another crackseal project for completion in 2019.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that perhaps another \$50,000 could be spent on spray patching but noted that is a slow process and therefore would not want to commit to more than that.

City Engineer Westby noted that the excess budgeted funds for 2019 is due to the decision not to sealcoat this year. He stated that perhaps additional cracksealing could be completed in 2019 but was unsure if another \$200,000 could be spent this year. He stated the City is hitting the targeted maintenance schedule for cracksealing in 2019, but noted Engineering would explore this and present options to spend some or all of the excess budgeted funds to Council on July 9, 2019.

Councilmember Heinrich asked for additional details on why additional cracksealing projects could not be completed in 2019.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer explained that not all roads are eligible for cracksealing. He noted that some roads may be beyond that type of repair and therefore it would be a waste of time and money.

City Engineer Westby stated that the restriction is due to time, as work needs to be completed by September so projects are typically completed in August. He explained the process required to prepare plans, advertise for bids, approve and execute a contract, then construct the improvements, which would likely not allow the work to be completed by September.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that if the franchise fees are approved, it would be helpful to have the excess funds available in 2020. He stated that he would like to see how the road funding discussions move forward before attempting to spend additional road funds.

Councilmember Riley asked if the issue of un-bondable expenses from 2013 has been solved.

City Engineer Westby confirmed that has not been an issue and provided additional details. He stated that moving forward staff does not believe it is necessary to keep the unexpended funds for that purpose.

5.02: Update on Drainage Concern Findings at 17290 Germanium Street NW

City Engineer Westby reported that in 1992 the property owner built a home on the property, and then in 1998 a garage was built in the southwest corner of the property. A new garage was subsequently built in 2005 after the original was destroyed by fire. The home was constructed north of an existing depression that can hold slightly less than a foot of water during heavy rain events. The garage was constructed within a low area of the lot with the garage door facing toward a private property to the south, which was used to access Germanium Street approximately 300 feet to the west. In 2017, construction began on the Covenant Meadows residential development, which included construction of a new public street, 172nd Lane NW, which abuts the south property line of 17290 Germanium Street NW. During construction of this development, the property owner contacted staff and the developer on numerous occasions to request modifications to the new driveway installed between his garage and 172nd Lane NW. The property owner also requested some grading modifications around the garage to prevent drainage from entering the property from the north and west. On more than one occasion, the property owner stated that there were existing standing water issues on this property.

City Engineer Westby stated that on November 13, 2018, the property owner at 17290 Germanium Street NW, Mr. Rick Aberle, informed the City Council of his concerns that runoff from the Covenant Meadows development was flooding his property. On December 18, 2018, Mr. Aberle attended the Public Works Committee meeting to again present his concerns that runoff from the Covenant Meadows development is flooding his property. Also in attendance were City Engineer Westby, Senior Engineering Technician McDowall, Civil Engineer IV Linton, and the developer of Covenant Meadows, Mr. Eric Thomsen. After much discussion, consensus was reached that Mr. Thomsen would complete the driveway improvements including grading and two eight-inch culverts and Mr. Aberle provided his permission for staff to enter his property to collect topographic data along his west property line and around and adjacent to his

garage and driveway. Based on the consensus reached at the Public Works Committee meeting, staff obtained survey grade topographic data along the west edge of Mr. Aberle's property and along the south edge of the property and reviewed the data to reach the following findings:

- Before Covenant Meadows was development, 11.125 acres of land drained onto Mr. Aberle's property from the north and west, contributing 3.1 cubic feet per second of runoff from a 100-year storm event.
- After Covenant Meadows was developed, 1.306 acres of land drain onto Mr. Aberle's property from the north and west, contributing 0.75 cubic feet per second of runoff from a 100-year storm event.
- The Covenant Meadows development did not alter drainage patterns along the west or south sides of Mr. Aberle's property.
- The low areas in the interior of Mr. Aberle's property existed before the Covenant Meadows development was constructed.
- Mr. Aberle's concerns with drainage in and around his garage resulted from the grading modifications Mr. Aberle completed during construction of the Covenant Meadows development.
- Lastly, staff recommended filling the low area to allow stormwater runoff to drain to the south and east without ponding.

City Engineer Westby reported that Mr. Thomsen installed the two eight-inch culverts and re-graded Mr. Aberle's driveway this spring as promised. Staff believes that the property owner's concerns as stated are unfounded. He noted that the property owner has not responded to the letter sent by City staff over one month ago.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that it appears the City has done everything it could, and the matter should be considered closed.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that in her opinion the letter was an opportunity for the resident to reply and agrees that the matter should be considered closed.

Councilmember Riley confirmed that the City has done its work.

It was the consensus of the Committee that this issue is closed, that no further contact with the property owner is required in regard to this matter, and that the property owner does not need to be invited back to address the Committee on this matter.

City Engineer Westby stated that the property owner on the other side of 172nd Lane NW has come to City staff with concern over standing water on his property this spring. He stated that staff worked with that property owner a lot during the Covenant Meadows project to ensure that the desired access to his shed could be provided. He stated that he did go to the resident's property and staff is going to look at the ditch line along that property to further investigate if something needs to be done to resolve his concerns.

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, MnDOT improvement projects, and other items of interest.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer provided an update on manganese testing that has recently been completed at 15 different locations, noting that the levels at each location were below the required threshold for bottle feeding infants of 100 ppb.

Councilmember Riley asked if something could be publicized showing the updated testing results.

City Administrator Ulrich confirmed that an update would be provided on the City website and social media sites and noted that a press release could also be developed.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer provided an update on patching, noting that 74 tons have been shoveled off trucks so far this season.

Chairperson Kuzma stated that public works is doing a great job in response to resident concerns that he has received and referred to City staff.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that perhaps the process required for staff to fill potholes would be a good public education item, noting that she was unaware of the lengthy process.

City Engineer Westby stated that he was contacted by a resident on Waco Street between Sunwood and 150th about the condition of that roadway. He noted that segment of roadway is very wide and is in very poor shape. He believed the road is on the CIP for 2023. He noted that the resident did ask for a sample petition to ask the City to reconstruct that one block segment. He stated that he is unaware if that will move forward but wanted to advise the Committee about the possibility of a petition coming forward.

Councilmember Riley referenced the Armstrong roundabout at Alpine Drive and asked why construction is proposed in three to four years if the County has already received the funds.

City Engineer Westby stated that it is due to the type of funds, noting that the funds will not be available until that time. He explained that the County will start designing the project prior to that time and then begin construction when the funds are made available.

6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar

City Engineer Westby reviewed the future topics calendar.

Councilmember Riley asked if updates regarding manganese would come to the Committee or full Council.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that the City is preparing an RFP to study the water system and the recommended treatment system. He stated that once proposals are received, three proposals would be brought back to the full Council for review.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Riemer
Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.