

**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Special Work Session on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor John LeTourneau
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Jeff Menth
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Deputy City Administrator Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor LeTourneau called the City Council Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Review Draft Feasibility Study for Centralized Water Treatment Plant

Chris Larson, SEH, reviewed the results of the Water Treatment Plant Feasibility Study. He reviewed the City's existing water infrastructure, distribution modeling, water quality and (manganese, iron, and hardness), future regulations, and water demand.

Additional information was provided on the use of wells one/two.

Mr. Larson provided details on groundwater pumping, noting that Ramsey appears to have sufficient capacity to meet its demands. He identified areas in which new wells could be placed, noting that if the treatment plant is constructed, three additional wells would be needed by 2040. He reviewed the different options that could be used for water treatment and reviewed recommendations related to capacity, filter options, generator, and space needs, should the City choose to construct a water treatment facility. He also provided details on backwash options, gravity filter layout, pressure filter layout, and architectural elevations of the different filter layouts. He identified treatment plant site alternatives and the watermain for each option. He reviewed the site evaluation for the three identified options noting that the public works site would be the most cost effective and efficient option.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there is any concern with computer technology and the location to the train tracks, noting the impact train vibration can have on sensitive equipment.

Mr. Larson replied that he was not aware of any issues of that nature. He provided additional details on the system that would be needed and how the communication with the wells would occur.

Councilmember Riley commented that the excess public works land has been under contract twice in the last two years and therefore that should be considered in this discussion.

Mayor LeTourneau confirmed that this should be reviewed by the EDA and Planning Commission.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that there has been interest three times in that land. He noted that efficiency would be provided by using the public works land. He stated that when the land was purchased, it was purchased solely for use by public works and the urgency of that economic development need is not as urgent as it was in the past because of the new industrial parks.

Councilmember Menth asked and received confirmation that the excess public works land is not under contract at this time.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for some of the reasons those contracts did not move forward, as that may help to support the use of the land for this purpose.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill explained that typically the contracts did not move forward because of developer proforma. He stated that the problems have not been site related. He noted that most of those projects were successful in the Bunker Lake Industrial Park.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for staff to review some positives and negatives about the public works space and railroad site.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed some of the plus/minus of the public works space and the parcel by the railroad.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented on how the Highway 10 project could have some impact on the Jasper Street location.

Mr. Larson reviewed the capital costs for the gravity filter treatment plant and pressure filter treatment plant along with life cycle costs for both options. He noted that gravity filters are more flexible and operator friendly and could also be converted into surface water treatment. He stated that the recommendation would be for a gravity filter plant at the public works site.

Councilmember Musgrove noted that it was stated that the garage was not included in the cost estimate but asked if the generator and other elements were included.

Mr. Larson stated that he attempted to provide similar comparisons for each site but recognized that there could be cost savings for the public works site because of some features that could be shared. He stated that the City is already adding some chlorine and fluoride, therefore some of those elements could be savings.

City Engineer Westby provided details on the driving force behind this recommendation, noting that the manganese issue is taxing the current infrastructure and capacity.

Councilmember Riley asked if a pressure filter system could also be used for surface water treatment.

Mr. Larson replied that a pressure filter is typically not used for surface water. He noted that the City has been saving for this purpose and therefore has funding set aside. He reviewed the current rate charges of the City, noting that the City currently raises the rates two percent per year and stated that in order to raise the \$9,000,000 bond the City would need to raise its rate at five percent for a few years.

City Engineer Westby stated that the \$23,000,000 collected over the years was paid by water users over the years in anticipation of future infrastructure needs.

Councilmember Riley commented that the City saved those funds in anticipation of additional infrastructure and asked for details on the five percent rate.

Mr. Larson stated that he got that figure from the Finance Director and therefore cannot provide additional explanation.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if both water and sewer rates would increase.

City Engineer Westby replied that he believed it was just the water rate.

Mr. Larson provided details on different options for funding. He reviewed the public engagement process going forward and the different methods that could be used. He reviewed the regional surface water study findings and commented on the likelihood that would move forward. He noted that the gravity filter option would allow the City to use it for surface water if ultimately desired.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that one the reasons surface water treatment was reviewed was because of direction from the DNR related to possible capacity concerns. He stated that this study showed that the groundwater has the capacity to sustain Ramsey through full build out. He noted that as neighboring communities continue to expand, the groundwater would be more likely to impact those cities more than Ramsey if Ramsey has drilled its wells.

Mr. Larson agreed and noted that the river acts as a buffer from some communities.

The consensus of the Council was to further investigate the public works site and gravity filter option. It was the consensus of the Council to direct staff to continue to move forward.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.