

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Chris Riley
 Councilmember Debra Musgrove
 Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Bruce Westby
 Civil Engineer IV Leonard Linton
 Parks Superintendent/Interim Assistant Public Works Director Mark
 Riverblood
 Utilities Supervisor John Nelson

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Riley 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 Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Musgrove and Woestehoff.
Voting No: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve September 20, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to approve the following minutes:

Regular Meeting Minutes dated September 20, 2022

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove.
Voting No: None.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.01: Review Proposals and Provide Direction on Argon Street Drainage Improvements

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby reviewed the staff report and stated that staff recommends Alternative #2 if the Committee feels the City is responsible for resolving the issue for the property owner, and Alternative #3 if the Committee does not feel that the City is responsible for resolving this issue for the property owner.

Councilmember Musgrove asked the type of method that would be used if the concrete drainage structure were not used.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby replied that was an attempt to develop a quick project and provided some other examples that could be investigated as lower cost alternatives.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if that were something staff would anticipate being able to accomplish in 2022 or spring of 2023.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby stated that by the time the plans were revised and RFP's were submitted and returned it would be a spring 2023 project.

Chairperson Riley asked how much lower the bid could potentially be. He recognized that the original estimate was \$10,000 and this is over \$6,000 higher than that.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby stated that after receiving the quotes they had discussions with field staff and one of the contractors and based on those responses, if they were to bid the same design and provide more time in the spring, they could perhaps lower to \$14,000. He stated that if the structure were revised perhaps, they could reduce to \$11,000 or \$12,000.

Chairperson Riley commented that he would be interested in getting this done to ensure there are not additional problems in the spring.

Councilmember Woestehoff agreed and noted that reducing \$2,000 to \$4,000 would not be enough for the additional time. He stated that while he is not in favor of the City funding this, he does understand that the City has done work on this previously and therefore would support completing this project in attempt to resolve the problem.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to recommend City Council acceptance of the three proposals and authorization to execute the proposal of Dave Perkins Contracting, Inc. in the amount of \$16,760 for construction of the Argon Street Drainage Improvements.

Further discussion: Councilmember Musgrove asked if there is a guarantee that the work would be completed this year. City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby confirmed that the

work would be completed within the project timeline. Chairperson Riley asked if the homeowner would be in favor of the project. Mr. Ridgeway confirmed that he agrees. City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby stated that this is work being completed on private property, therefore a right of entry will need to be signed by Mr. Ridgeway to allow the work to be completed. Mr. Ridgeway agreed to sign the necessary document. Councilmember Musgrove asked if language would need to be added related to the sandbags. Mr. Ridgeway stated that he would appreciate the sandbag removal as well as those are deteriorating. City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby confirmed that will be part of the project.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove. Voting No: None.

5.02: Update on Plans for Wetland 114P Outlet

Civil Engineer IV Linton reviewed the case.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the trail that goes over the drainage and asked if that has any impact on the culvert.

Civil Engineer IV Linton replied that he has no information on when the trail was constructed.

A resident commented that they have been in their home for 45 years and the trail was in place to access the previous location of playground equipment. She stated that the culvert was changed when the development in that area was built, noting that it increased in size at that time.

Civil Engineer IV Linton identified where the wetland begins, the path the ditch flows, and the wetland to the south. He stated that the issue being discussed is that the City has no record of the pipes that were in place as the outlet is on the end of Junkite Court. He commented that residents have stated that there was a smaller pipe at a higher elevation that was lowered at some point. He stated that the DNR reviews the issue and determines where the elevation should be.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that it appears that residents have opinions that the wetland is both too high and too low.

Civil Engineer IV Linton stated that the residents that have concern with high water are on the west side of the wetland, but the actual elevations have not been surveyed in every yard.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked what the problem is that is attempting to be solved.

Civil Engineer IV Linton commented that the wetland is functioning right now, and staff does not receive complaints about high water in backyards. He stated that the problem, over the last two years, is that the water level is lower because of a lack of rainfall. He noted that it would be an aesthetic issue.

Chairperson Riley invited input from the public.

Theresa Moldoff, 147th and Junkite, commented that when the Ponds development was built that is when the culvert was changed and lowered. She stated that she worked with Tom Hovey from the DNR, and they made the developer block that culvert to correct the issue by raising the water level 12 inches. She stated that a few years ago there was an infestation of beavers, and the culvert would be cleared out. She stated that the last time that was cleared, the blockage of the lower culvert was removed. She would like that lower culvert to be blocked again as it had been in the past. She commented that the outlet should be 12 inches higher.

Joe Acre, 5730 142nd Avenue, commented that the problem is not that there is less vegetation but that there is more vegetation because of the lower water levels. He stated that when they first moved into the home you could see the water but then the vegetation grew wild, and you could not even see the water. He believed that if the water level were higher, the vegetation would not be as thick.

Diane Anderson, 5750 142nd Avenue, commented that she has been cutting the cattails and about eight years ago the people on the peninsula were told they could not do anything with their cattails. She commented that ducks and other waterfowl were often on the water but are not anymore. She stated that the water never comes back to a level that kills the vegetation.

Chairperson Riley commented that he understands that as it occurs on Lake Itasca as well. He stated that the homeowners are creating a lake association and is working with the DNR and the City in attempt to solve their issue.

Ms. Anderson commented that there is buckthorn in the culvert area as well that should be removed.

Chairperson Riley asked if that is City land.

Ms. Anderson commented that it is City land that was previously mowed but is no longer mowed. She stated that it was a park previously and now is just overgrown with invasive species.

Rodney Allen, 5730 142nd Avenue, commented that the boardwalk needs to be repaired and asked if that has been approved in the budget.

Parks Superintendent/Interim Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that the boardwalk was put in to reach the sanitary sewer manhole and that project will be discussed by this group and the Park and Recreation Commission. He stated that the cost to fully replace the boardwalk would exceed \$90,000 and therefore that will be a separate discussion as they would need to determine if there is that level of recreational value to the boardwalk.

Conrad Peterson, 5730 142nd Avenue, referenced the comment that the DNR does not have an elevation on record for the lake. He asked if the highest level of the wetland has been for 100 years, similar to what is required for a septic system.

Civil Engineer IV Linton replied that the DNR does have an elevation of record. He explained the difference between the readings for septic and a wetland. He stated that water levels fluctuate in

a wetland and explained what the DNR uses to determine an elevation for a wetland, noting that it is not as clear cut as determining the level for groundwater.

Mr. Peterson asked if that would be discussed with the DNR.

Civil Engineer IV Linton confirmed that he would be discussing that with the DNR. He commented that the water level is lower than the established water level, but higher than the bottom of the pipe which is why they are putting an outlet structure in higher than that pipe. He commented that there has been decreased precipitation in the last two years and in the last ten years there are more years below average rainfall than above. He explained that if you consistently run below average, the average is lowered. He stated that he recently did some work with residents on Lake Itasca and over the past 30 years, the average rainfall amounts are lower, even though there are storm events with higher levels of rain.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that the difference between the water line in 2005 and 2020 is clear. He stated that level has naturally been receding since that time and therefore part of this would be that there is just not enough water coming in.

Civil Engineer IV Linton commented that the height of the pipe is below the water level the DNR would like to see and therefore this case would propose to raise the level to where the water level should be.

Chairperson Riley commented that the City would then take that action and the rest would be up to the level of precipitation that is received.

A resident asked if there is blockage coming into the pond, noting that some ditches in the area hold water at a constant level.

Civil Engineer IV Linton replied that ditch mentioned does not flow to the wetland. He stated that the soils in that area could have more clay and this area could have more gravel/sand.

Chairperson Riley stated that this would propose to fix the outlet and associated manholes. He stated that the boardwalk would be a different topic for a different day.

Civil Engineer IV Linton reviewed the next steps and provided details on when the project would be completed.

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby replied that once staff speaks with the DNR they would complete the plans and bring those back to the Committee and Council for review.

6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT

6.01: Staff Updates on Improvement Projects, Studies, and Items of Interest

City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director Westby provided an update on current and proposed City, County, and MnDOT improvement projects, studies and on other items of interest to the Committee.

Chairperson Riley commented that he would like Ramsey identified on the overpass bridges, noting that he has seen that in many other communities.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she would also like to see highway signs alerting drivers that Ramsey is coming up.

Utilities Supervisor Nelson provided information on the City's program that runs the water system, SCADA, and the backup methods that exist in the case that SCADA goes down. He also provided explanation on the recent water related issue that occurred in the City of Andover. He provided additional redundancies that Ramsey has installed in its water system.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked the number of staff people that have authority to turn the system on and off.

Utilities Supervisor Nelson provided details on the staff members that have access to make changes to that system and the security that exists. He provided additional information on the lift stations and challenges they encounter.

Chairperson Riley commented that education on the costs to the City and its taxpayers would be helpful information to share.

6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar

Chairperson Riley appreciated that dates have been added to the items.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she is interested to know why the trail connection from Holiday to Riversbend is not being pursued. She commented that is an important discussion to continue to bring forward and would be interested in finding out the barriers to completing that as she believes it to be a safety issue.

Parks Superintendent/ Interim Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that is included in the 2022 CIP and some cost estimates were obtained. He reviewed some of the challenges that prevented that from moving forward. He commented that there was a party actively pursuing one of those parcels for development, which would obligate that segment of trail and the City could move forward with the remainder.

Chairperson Riley commented that segment has been discussed on and off for over ten years and that is the segment that comes up when that topic is mentioned.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she would also like information on the use of parks dedication for trails creation when that item comes forward.

Chairperson Riley commented that the residents along Lake Itasca are forming an association to discuss the water status and cattails.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the boardwalks have experienced more damage from vegetation because of the low water conditions.

Parks Superintendent/Interim Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that the boardwalks are not being damaged from that vegetation because of the low water levels and provided more details on cattails.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Westby
City Engineer/Interim Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.