

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 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:         Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer  
                            City Engineer Bruce Westby  
                            Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood  
                            Utilities Supervisor John Nelson  
                            Community Development Dir./Deputy City Administrator Brian Hagen

**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**

It was suggested to change the order of items 5.1 and 5.2 as well as cases 5.4 and 5.5.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to approve the agenda, as amended.

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

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01: Approve April 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

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

Regular Meeting Minutes dated April 19, 2022

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

## **5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **5.02: Receive Updates on Sound Wall East of State Highway 47, North of Xkimo Street**

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report and provided an update on the progress of the sound wall east of State Highway 47, north of Xkimo Street.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked what should be expected at the next meeting, specifically whether there would be a truer design and cost estimate.

City Engineer Westby confirmed that the plan would be to have options for where the wall could be run. He also hoped to have construction cost estimates.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that if the wall could be put on private property to avoid relocation of utilities, that would be better. She stated that she would like to see the costs for both options. She asked and received confirmation that the cost estimate for the option on private property would include fill if it was needed.

Chairperson Riley invited residents to provide input.

Rick Bailey, 5021 Xkimo Court, expressed his thanks for the City continuing to move this forward. He commented that the noise levels continue to rise with the warmer weather and appreciated the effort.

Chairperson Riley commented that they are doing their best to deal with a bad situation.

Ted Blakely, 5041 Xkimo Court, stated that he was hoping there would be more progress by this time of year. He asked if there is an expectation that there would be a wall constructed this year or whether this will continue to drag on.

City Engineer Westby replied that he would be very surprised if construction could occur this year. He stated that it will take time to develop a design on paper that could be submitted to contractors for bids. He commented on the length of time necessary to bid and award a project along with ordering of materials. He believed this would more than likely be a 2023 project if it were to move forward.

Chairperson Riley commented that all of the administrative work would be completed this year, but the construction would not occur until 2023.

Mr. Blakely recognized that the intent is to present options at the June meeting and asked for information on how the decision-making process would occur.

Chairperson Riley commented that the committee would make a recommendation at the June meeting and that would be forwarded to the City Council for review two weeks after that meeting.

Ms. Blakely asked if there is a cost variance built into the bidding process. She used the example of locking in a bid but then the cost of lumber changes.

City Engineer Westby replied that when the City bids projects, the lowest responsible bidder is awarded the contract and at that time the price is locked in.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for staff feedback on potential signage and/or enforcement in order to provide relief of the noise from the street.

City Engineer Westby replied that staff could bring that information back but noted that it would be a jurisdictional issue because 47 is a State Highway.

Mr. Blakely commented that the developers have built two of the three proposed houses. He asked if the third house has been approved for construction. He stated that if that home has not yet been approved for construction, perhaps the wall could be incorporated into that build.

City Engineer Westby replied that he does not have knowledge of that and would need to verify with the Building Official.

Chairperson Riley commented that this is just a bad situation as the development, including the wall, was approved and additional conditions could not be added.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he would be interested in the cost for what should have been done, rather than extending it further beyond that point. He commented that if the item is not fully ready at the June meeting, he would prefer to save the presentation for the next month with a complete presentation rather than continue to have residents attend for half updates.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she would be interested in seeing the item in June if there is feedback desired by staff, even if the item is not fully ready.

City Engineer Westby commented that it appears there is consensus for staff to wait to bring this item back until the item is fully prepared, which may delay the item until July.

Chairperson Riley agreed that the estimate should be to extend the wall to the end of the plat and not pursue an extension.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she believed that the previous discussion involved extending the wall to the edge of the wetland, which is further than the plat.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that if he recalls, the wall was originally planned to run through part of the third lot.

Chairperson Riley commented that he feels strongly that the City should do what was originally approved on the development plan for the wall. He did not believe they should extend past that point.

#### **5.01: Review Nonconforming Traffic Sign Policy**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report and recommendation to continue the practice of following the MUTCD and not install what are considered nonconforming traffic signs.

Councilmember Musgrove appreciated the work that staff has put into this research. She stated that she does not support changing the policy to install additional signs based on the information in the case.

Chairperson Riley asked if the requesting resident has been provided with this information as well.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer confirmed that the resident was sent this information as well. He stated that if this door were opened, this type of signage could be requested for every block in the city.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that in 2010 the signs were \$200 and asked the cost today.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer estimated about \$250 per sign.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to continue the practice of following the MUTCD and not install what are considered nonconforming traffic signs.

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

#### **5.03: Tennis Court Maintenance; River's Bend, Fox, and Central Parks**

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed the staff report and recommendation to proceed with the reconditioning of the courts at River's Bend and Fox Park as soon as practicable and also proceed with paint-caulking approximately 950 feet of cracks (three colors) at Central Park this spring as well.

Chairperson Riley recognized that River's Bend and Central Park get a lot of use. He asked for details on the usage of Fox Park and whether that should be considered for removal.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood replied that part of the approved strategic plan included developing a plan to address the infrastructure. He noted that all courts would be evaluated for use in 2031. He noted that the court is used semi-regularly and there is a basketball hoop as well. He stated that staff believes that this investment is warranted and that it could be evaluated in the future for use.

Chairperson Riley asked if there would be more care taken of the court.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood confirmed that they would work on ongoing maintenance.

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced River's Bend, which has four courts, and asked if this would be an opportunity to split the court with two tennis courts and two pickleball courts.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood confirmed that was his thought as well, but he has received resident feedback requesting all the tennis courts to remain. He stated that Riverdale Park would be a good opportunity to look at that conversion.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the bids within the case and asked if the base is included on both alternates one and two.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood replied that the contractor's recommendation was to remove all the posts, but staff believes that only two need removal. He explained the elements that would be included in the not to exceed cost.

Councilmember Musgrove noted the one-year warranty for the work with the exception of cracks. She asked if the same warranty would be included for all projects and asked if the fill would need to be done every year.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood replied that the pickleball players are very particular and the cracks really bother them. He confirmed that cracks will continue to occur on all the courts each year, but it is basically an aesthetic concern.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to recommend to City Council, the reconditioning of the courts at River's Bend, Fox Park, and crack filling Central Park in the amount of \$38,400 to be funded by the Capital Maintenance Fund.

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

Chairperson Riley suggested again amending the agenda to consider Item 5.04 next.

#### **5.04: Progress Update on Water Treatment Plant**

Steve Nelson, AE2S, reviewed the project schedule and noted that the bidding documents have been updated with the most recent bidding market information. He noted an adjustment to the construction schedule as well due to the market and difficulty in obtaining certain materials. He stated that the material costs have also been adjusted to match the known market costs. He reviewed alternate renderings based on the input received from the Planning Commission but noted the additional cost those elements would add. He reviewed additional design details for the interior of the space.

Chairperson Riley asked if these are based on real and current values.

Mr. Nelson confirmed that they are using data from recent real-world bids on similar projects. He noted that they are still including a 15 percent contingency as well, which is a bit high at this stage to allow for a conservative estimate.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she does not support the addition of the bump outs. She noted that during the tour of the Andover facility, it was noticed that they were missing a way to get into a certain space and asked if that has been incorporated into this design.

Mr. Nelson provided additional details on that access point within the plans.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the monitors and asked the cost to have two sets versus one set as well as the frequency of use that would be estimated. She did not believe that people tour water plants very often and therefore perhaps one monitor would be enough.

Mr. Nelson agreed that seems like a bit of overkill. He stated that having two monitors would be good but perhaps they both be placed on the left side. He stated that the monitors would be recommended over art that becomes outdated.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the wall it would be mounted to would be concrete or paneled. He suggested that the cable be run during construction as that would provide a cost savings compared to adding those later. He asked if there are zero offices in the building.

Mr. Nelson confirmed that there are no offices as there would not be a person in the building at all times.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that the monitors are great as they provide a method of gaining information quickly and could also be used for tours. He referenced areas mentioned for storage and asked if that is for water storage.

Mr. Nelson confirmed that is for backwash water storage. He commented on the progressive things they have done with design to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

Chairperson Riley commented that he does like breaking up the large wall and suggested that the funds be found to do that.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the lights in the building would be motion based, as the building would not be occupied at all times in order to save energy costs. He asked if the internet services and such would be connected to the public works facility for efficiency.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the bump outs would be on all four sides, or just one side.

Mr. Nelson replied that the bump outs would be on just one side to break up the façade.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that without lights you could not really see the bumps outs. She noted that this is a functional building, and she would prefer to spend that money inside rather than on the outside.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that he agrees that something should be added to break it up because of the height of the facility.

Chairperson Riley noted that this is not something that needs to be discussed in depth at this time and the cost is marginal compared to the entire project cost. He stated that he does not believe the lighting will be necessary, just the bump outs. He appreciated that this is still moving forward, and progress is being made. He noted that the increased cost would be funded through bonding. He asked when the piping project would be next discussed.

City Engineer Westby commented that will come back in the next few months.

#### **5.05: Selection of a Backup Power Supply for Water Treatment Plant**

Utilities Supervisor Nelson reviewed the staff report and recommendation to select Option 1 to purchase the tier #2 generator for emergency use only and not participate in the Peak Shaving Program offered by Connexus Energy.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there would be potential that the generator could also backup the public works building.

Utilities Supervisor Nelson commented that it would cost more to run the wire to public works than it would to get a small generator for the public works building, as that building would require a much smaller generator.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to recommend to City Council to selection Option 1 to purchase the tier #2 generator for emergency use only and not participate in the Peak Shaving Program offered by Connexus Energy.

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

#### **5.06: Discuss Short Term Need to Increase Funding of Pavement Management Program**

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report and recommendation to increase the number of streets reconstructed each year to address the upcoming bubble of streets reaching the end of their useful lives, which were constructed between 1975 and 1985.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer provided photos of a project staff recently completed that used 30 tons of asphalt in three days. He stated that there were 97 work orders to begin the season with and 47 of those are similar patching jobs. He stated that these are the same staff members that need to handle other public works duties and the asphalt work is overwhelming. He noted that those patching improvements also only provide temporary improvement. He stated that the budget

for asphalt is \$24,000 and noted that the material alone for the one job was \$2,000. He stated that there are many areas in the city in similar condition that cannot be fixed by shoveling material out of a truck.

Chairperson Riley commented that this does seem very inefficient and asked what else could have been done.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer replied that this work should have been done 20 years ago. He stated that those roads are all due for reconstruction. He commented that the workload and number of continued calls from residents is overwhelming.

Chairperson Riley commented that more recently they have switched to reconstruction of roads in poor condition rather than overlay. He asked staff to provide more information on mill and overlay.

City Engineer Westby reviewed the general costs for mill and overlay projects versus reconstructions. He reviewed the criteria used to determine when an overlay would work or whether reconstruction is needed. He stated that if you mill and overlay a road in too poor of a condition, the cracks would just come back through and the life of that improvement would not be realized. He stated that he would never recommend a mill and overlay for streets needing reconstruction. He noted that they are attempting to do more mill and overlay projects on the roads that would benefit in order to fulfill the full life of those roads, and the roads needing reconstruction are simply waiting for their time. He noted another option may be to add a light reconstruction option to reduce project costs while achieving a twenty to forty-year design life, allowing more streets to be reconstructed each year to reduce annual maintenance needs.

Councilmember Woestehoff recognized that about \$20,000,000 is needed in the next five to ten years to fund these needed reconstruction improvements. He stated that he would prefer to stick with the reconstruct and overlay options and not gamble on the light reconstruction option.

Chairperson Riley asked what has changed from six years ago when the original estimate and plan was developed.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for, and obtained, clarification on roads included on the list that she believed did not need reconstruction. Staff confirmed that all those roads are accurate.

Chairperson Riley commented on the potential to borrow against MSA funds but recognized that would impact the availability of funds in the future as well.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked that a map be provided showing both the reconstructs and overlays.

Chairperson Riley noted that it was mentioned that some of the further out roads on the plan could be overlaid earlier to extend the lifespan and asked if that would help.

City Engineer Westby replied that staff could look at that to see if that could help in the area of funding but did not believe much hope should be placed in that option.

Chairperson Riley recognized that these are problems and asked if there are possible answers as well.

City Engineer Westby replied that the intent was to bring this forward for discussion. He stated that the \$3,000,000 available in ARPA funds would help to address a portion of this, and staff can review the CIP to determine if any adjustments could be made based on today's discussions. He stated that bonding is an option. He reviewed the available options to fund road improvements noting that if they are going to stay with the levy option for financing, they could look at advancing MSA funds with additional bonding.

Chairperson Riley asked if they could bond without assessing.

Community Development Director/Deputy City Administrator Hagen stated that the biggest thing that sticks out to him is that 40 percent of the roads were constructed during a 10-year time period. He asked if there would be an opportunity to push a few roads out ten years. He stated that perhaps that would be a scenario where the light reconstruct would work as well. He noted that it would be helpful to prevent this same scenario from happening again in 30 to 40 years.

Councilmember Woestehoff agreed that perhaps doing overlays on the better-quality roads in the list would help to push those lifespans and stagger future improvements. He stated that he has always believed that ARPA funds would be better used by the water treatment facility but noted that he would rather bond more for the water treatment facility than to bond for both types of improvements.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the roads marked in black and grey on the map could be further broken down by priority and whether they could receive an overlay to reflect a better cost projection. She commented that roads and clean water are a priority, and we need to figure out a way to make it work.

City Engineer Westby replied that the roads marked in black and grey would not be recommended for overlay. He agreed that the intention would not be to setup another bubble for future maintenance needs. He noted that staff can complete field reviews and the complaints that have been received.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he would love to see a "if money were no object" plan. He stated that he would also like to see a map showing the number of complaints received.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for an update on the change in rating system that had been mentioned in the past.

City Engineer Westby replied that staff plans to bring that case forward to a Council worksession in June for further discussion.

## 6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT

### 6.01: Staff Updates on Improvement Projects and Items of Interest

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

### 6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar

City Engineer Westby reviewed the future topics calendar. He commented that City staff have been incredibly busy this year with all the projects going on and complaints being received. He noted that staff is attempting to address some of the additional items on the list but recognized that they may be delayed.

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced the signs that say City of Ramsey with the population and asked when those would be updated with the new census numbers.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer replied that MnDOT updates the signs on their roadways. He commented on the difficulty in accessing some of the sign locations.

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Grant Riemer  
Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*