

UNAPPROVED

CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Thursday, February 1, 2018

6:30 p.m.
Cloverleaf Farm Room
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Tom Ryan, Councilmembers Dave Clark, Julie Jeppson, Jason King, and Dick Swanson.

ABSENT: Councilmembers Andy Garvais and Wes Hovland.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Clark Arneson; Planning and Community Development Director Bryan Schafer; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Safety Services Manager/Police Chief Brian Podany; Sergeant Matt Carlson; Finance Director Joe Huss; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Senior Engineering Technician Jason Sundeen; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Review Proposal by Barr Engineering for Wellhouse Rehabilitation Project Services.

Public Works Director Haukaas stated the water outage issues from the spring of 2017 prompted the City to begin an assessment of not only the water system communication system, but also the City's water system wellhouses. Staff inspected each water supply wellhouse location in June 2017 and the results of the inspection identified a number of deficiencies and recommendations for corrective action. The benefits of standardizing the City's wellhouse equipment was reviewed with the Council. The work Barr has completed throughout the City was discussed and Staff reviewed the work that would be completed through the City's wellhouse rehabilitation project, along with the costs associated with the two-phased project.

Councilmember King stated he supported the proposed project and understood this was a necessity for the City. He encouraged staff not to delay on the life safety issues that had to be addressed through the rehabilitation plan.

Councilmember Jeppson inquired about the condition of the City's current infrastructure. Mr. Haukaas explained how inspection schedules and training have been updated to help address future concerns.

Mayor Ryan asked if the ground reserve tank would require maintenance in the future. Mr. Haukaas reported this structure would be added to the City's maintenance and rehabilitation schedule for the future.

Councilmember Clark asked how many firms had responded to the proposal. Mr. Haukaas stated just two had responded.

Councilmember Clark questioned if the City needed to continue using all wellhouses in their current locations or if an analysis could be completed to further evaluate the City's needs. Mr. Haukaas reported staff would be evaluating all City wellhouses along with their locations. He provided further comment on Wellhouse No. 5 and No. 7. He noted the City's long-term future was being addressed.

Councilmember Clark expressed concern that this contract did not go out for bid as he wanted to have a more public process for this contract.

Councilmember Swanson agreed, especially given the size of the contract. City Manager Arneson commented if this contract were to be bid it would have to be qualification based and not price based because of the required level of expertise.

Councilmember King reported he did not have any concerns moving forward with Barr Engineering and Bolton & Menk given the vast amount of knowledge they had regarding the City's water system. He stated he did not want to waste other bidders' time.

Council consensus was to seek qualification-based RFPs for the proposed project.

3.2 Freestanding Solar Energy Panels Ordinance.

Planning and Community Development Director Schafer commented on the previously discussed Freestanding Solar Energy Panels Ordinance with the Council. He noted that Connexus Energy had withdrawn their application for freestanding solar panels near The Sanctuary and described how this Ordinance could be drafted in order to allow for solar panels with proper setbacks within the City and requested feedback from the Council on how to proceed.

Councilmember King asked if this Ordinance would only apply to freestanding panels and not rooftop units. Mr. Schafer stated this was the case.

Councilmember Jeppson asked if there were model cities that could be contacted in order to see how they have addressed freestanding solar panels. Mr. Schafer stated the City could contact other municipalities to discuss their model ordinances.

Councilmember King provided the Council with a photo of a solar panel system a family member had installed.

Councilmember Clark stated he understood the City wanted to create an Ordinance that would allow for solar panels to be installed, however, he did not support large solar arrays in residential areas.

Council consensus was to bring forward a draft on a freestanding solar energy panel Ordinance at a future workshop meeting for review.

3.3 Police Retail Unit Update.

Sergeant Matt Carlson provided the Council with an update on the Police Retail Unit. He commented on how shoplifting and bus hub police calls had placed stress on patrol units and how the Retail Unit has assisted in removing this stress while also establishing relationships with local retailers. He reported that 17.9% of the City's arrests were occurring in the small portion of the City surrounding the retail node. He provided further comment on the positive aspects of having a police substation at the mall area. He noted that all individuals caught shoplifting were now brought to jail.

Councilmember Jeppson asked where the criminals were coming from or if the majority were Blaine residents. Sergeant Carlson reported the majority of the criminals were coming from nearby cities on the bus.

Councilmember Swanson stated he was pleased to see the Police Department addressing issues at Northtown Mall as he did not want it to become like Brookdale Mall.

Mayor Ryan and the City Council commended the Police Department for their efforts and the positive results of the Police Retail Unit.

OTHER BUSINESS

City Clerk Sorensen reported staff received a request for a distillery and asked if Council would consider such a use in the City. The Council directed staff to bring forward a draft Ordinance that would allow off-sale and on-sale (cocktail room) for distilled spirits.

City Clerk Sorensen questioned if the Council would be available to hold Board/Commission interviews on Monday, February 5th and Tuesday, February 6th. The Council was not available on Tuesday, February 6th due to the Caucus. Council consensus was to meet instead on Monday, February 12th.

City Clerk Sorensen reported the Board of Review meeting has been scheduled for Monday, April 16th at 7:00 p.m.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Tom Ryan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk

Submitted by TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.