

CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Monday, October 3, 2022

6:00PM
Cloverleaf Farm Room A
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sanders at 6:00PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Tim Sanders, Councilmembers Wes Hovland, Julie Jeppson, Chris Massoglia (attending remotely from 1636 Imlay City Road, Lapeer MI), Tom Newland, and Richard Paul.

ABSENT: Councilmember Jess Robertson.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Safety Services Manager/Police Chief Brian Podany; Deputy Police Chief Dan Pelkey; Finance Director Joe Huss; Deputy Finance Director Alison Bong; City Engineer Dan Schluender; City Attorney Chris Nelson; Communications Manager Ben Hayle; Community Standards Director Bob Fiske; Finance Analyst Jenna Trittin; Deputy Fire Marshal Todd Miller; Detective Mike Sommer; Sergeant Brad Nordby; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Police Department Armored Rescue Vehicle Discussion.

Safety Services Manager/Police Chief Podany stated in early 2022 the City Council supported the police department in applying for a surplus armored vehicle using the Federal Government's 1033 (Government Military Surplus) Program. The program has undergone some unforeseen changes. As a result of this, the status and delivery of the vehicle is still unknown. The changes that took place to the program have potential impacts to how this equipment may be deployed by the department. Accordingly, the Police Department is not interested in pursuing the 1033 program option for an armored vehicle.

Deputy Police Chief Pelkey provided a presentation on the options available for an armored vehicle, other than using the 1033 program. He commented on the types of events when an armored vehicle could be utilized by the Blaine Police Department and described how staff would be trained to use the vehicle. He then provided an overview of vehicle funding options

that were available for a commercially armored rescue vehicle, noting forfeiture funds were an option. He explained there were no grants available at this time, but grants could be pursued in 2023. He reported it would take one year to receive a Lenco vehicle once ordered, and staff anticipated it would last 25 to 30 years. He asked for feedback from the Council on how to proceed.

Police Chief Podany commented further on the scope of the funds available within the City's forfeiture funds.

City Manager Wolfe explained this purchase has been a moving target and the numbers have changed a bit. She commented she supported the purchase of a four-door Bearcat, and she had a high comfort level using forfeiture funds for this purchase. She stated it was her understanding this purchase had been added to the CIP.

Finance Director Huss stated Deputy Police Chief Pelkey has been working with finance staff to identify funds for this purchase.

Mayor Sanders asked what the police department believed would be best. Deputy Police Chief Pelkey stated he believed the 2022 4-door Bearcat would be the best option for the police department. He reiterated that this vehicle would be a long-term investment for the department.

Mayor Sanders stated he supported the purchase as recommended by staff. Deputy Finance Director Bong explained staff could change and update the 2023 budget to include this purchase.

Councilmember Jeppson commented she would like to see what the maintenance and repair costs would be for this vehicle. She questioned if a two-door option would be safer because it had fewer access points. She inquired if Anoka and the Sheriff's Department charged Blaine to use their armored vehicles. Police Chief Podany reported these departments do not charge for use of their armored vehicle. He commented further on the challenges of having a two-door vehicle noting it was slower to get people in and out of the vehicle.

Councilmember Hovland indicated he did not support the City pursuing the 1033 program. He explained he was much more comfortable with a new vehicle based on the fact there would be an availability of parts. He stated he was not concerned about charging other cities for the use of Blaine's armored vehicle, however, if damage should occur, he would like the City to receive compensation from that city or jurisdiction. He commented he supported the purchase of the 4-door Bearcat.

Councilmember Newland questioned if a Blaine Police Officer would remain with the armored vehicle if deployed to another city. Police Chief Podany reported this was the case.

Councilmember Newland stated he supported the City dropping the 1033 program and pursue a 4-door Bearcat vehicle. He suggested the City define parameters as to how far the armored vehicle would respond to another call or event.

Councilmember Newland asked if payment was due at the time the vehicle was ordered. Deputy Police Chief Pelkey explained the city would not pay for the armored vehicle until it was delivered, which would be in late 2023 or early 2024.

Councilmember Jeppson stated she supported all staff members being trained on how to drive and operate this vehicle. She thanked staff for trying to find other options, but she understood the other options were not in the City's best interest at this time.

Councilmember Paul discussed how there had been an increase in critical incidents in the community and noted he supported the purchase of this vehicle. He inquired if vehicles like this were available on the state bid. Deputy Police Chief Pelkey stated these vehicles were not on the state bid.

Council consensus was to support the purchase of a 2022 4-door armored rescue vehicle (Lenco Bearcat) utilizing forfeiture funds.

3.2 2023 Facilities Fund Budget and Capital Improvement Plan.

Ms. Bong stated in 2019, as part of the City's efforts to stabilize its general levy and provide a mechanism for ensuring long-term funding of facilities improvements, the City Council authorized the creation of an internal service fund to account for facilities management. Internal service funds are used to account for the financing of goods and services provided by one department or activity to other departments or activities of the government on a cost reimbursement basis. To fund facilities, charges are assessed to each department based on the square footage used by each operation. The facilities managed under this fund include city hall and attached garages, public works (PW) and the PW cold storage facility, the police training facility, Mary Ann Young Center, and old fire station #5.

Ms. Bong reported as the city facilities have been evaluated, a history of deferred maintenance has been identified. The facilities team is working towards remedying the impacts of deferred maintenance and performing regular preventative maintenance, but is struggling with insufficient staffing, inflationary costs, and a departmental chargeback system that has not yet caught up to the increased needs of the facilities program. The facilities fund has received several transfers from the General Fund since 2019 to provide the fund with working capital. The startup transfer in 2019 was \$250,000, \$75,000 was transferred in 2021 for an LED light project, and \$1 million was authorized to be transferred in 2022. The long-term goal is to have facilities be sustained through departmental charges; however, rightsizing the fees is a work in progress. Once chargeback fees are stabilized and the fund

becomes self-sustaining, a fund balance to pay for emergency or unforeseen repairs should be maintained with the ideal target fund balance around \$400,000.

Deputy Fire Marshal Todd Miller commented further on the proposed personnel services increases. He explained the City has had its facilities understaffed and noted the new person would allow him to better prioritize his own work.

Councilmember Massoglia asked what the current fund balance was for facilities maintenance. Ms. Bong stated the balance was over \$1 million at this time. She discussed how the City was working to right size its facilities and noted the \$1 million transfer to this fund would assist with maintaining the City's facilities going forward.

Finance Analyst Trittin discussed the age of the council chambers and described the technology upgrades that could be completed in this space. She noted a design study would be completed to further investigate the costs associated with these upgrades.

Councilmember Hovland stated he liked the idea of the facilities fund being more transparent. He indicated his only concern was that cuts may be required in order to balance the budget, and this could be detrimental to the City's facilities over time. He encouraged the Council to really look closely at the needs versus the wants within the City's facilities.

Councilmember Jeppson thanked staff for all of their work on the facilities fund. She looked forward to hearing more from the audit about the rightsizing of the City's facilities and said that based on past building maintenance she anticipated the proposed amount would have to be increased considerably.

Mr. Miller explained the audit was not a wish list but rather maintenance that had been required over time. He described how the boilers were rated by staff to create a proper replacement schedule.

Ms. Bong commented on the safety upgrades needed to keep vehicles from striking the garage door and encouraged Council to contact her with questions regarding the facilities fund prior to the council retreat.

Ms. Wolfe discussed the items that would be discussed at the upcoming council retreat then shared progress being made for the grant that would assist with funding TH65.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:33PM.

Tim Sanders, Mayor

ATTEST:

Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk

Submitted by Minute Maker Secretarial