

CITY OF BLAINE  
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP  
Thursday, April 6, 2017

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:31 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Tom Ryan, Councilmembers Dave Clark (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), Andy Garvais, Julie Jeppson, Jason King, and Dick Swanson.

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Wes Hovland.

Quorum Present.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Planning and Community Development Director Bryan Schafer; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Chris Olson; Public Services Manager Bob Therres; Project Coordinator Tom Scott; Lieutenant Dan Pelkey; Fire Chief Charlie Smith; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Senior Engineering Technician Al Thorp; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Connexus/NSC Solar Farm.

Planning and Community Development Director Schafer explained Connexus Energy and the National Sports Center have been working on a potential solar energy farm for the former Herbst landfill (just south and east of the Sanctuary development-see map). The National Sports Center has owned the 40-acre parcel for many years and has floated many different land use proposals for use of the land. This proposal would seem to have the most long lasting value to the NSC as well as likely create the least amount of off-site impact to the area residents. Under this proposal Connexus would make long term land lease payments to the NSC.

Planning and Community Development Director Schafer reported the solar farm would include a large field of solar panels on the top of the hill with an energy storage facility (building with large capacity batteries) on the east side, towards Flanders Street, to release the electricity later in the afternoon and evening when community energy use hits peak demand. The area would be fenced and would be served by access from Flanders Street, though it would only generate a few weekly trips for maintenance. Staff requested the Council provide direction to staff and Connexus as to whether this proposal has merit and should be explored further in terms of process, public notice and involvement, building type and appearance as well as other site plan review details.

Brian Burandt, Connexus, provided the Council with a further high-level overview on the proposed solar farm. He stated there was a push for renewable energy from Connexus members which led Connexus to consider building additional solar farms. He explained the NSC property would create solar generation that would support 700 homes in Blaine and that it was his hope to construct the solar farm in 2018. Mayor Ryan said he believed the solar farm made more sense than a wind farm and questioned how the solar farm would be wired. Mr. Burandt discussed how the site would be wired underground to the southeast

corner of the property. He then provided the Council with further information on the Phase 2 portion of this project for power storage.

Councilmember Swanson asked if the solar farm would impact the landfill in any way. Mr. Burandt reported geotechnical studies would be completed prior to construction of the solar farm to ensure the property could support the solar farm.

Councilmember King said he supported the proposed solar farm and inquired how long it would take Connexus to receive a return on their investment for this project. Mr. Burandt explained the solar farm would be owned by a third party and anticipated the solar farm would assist in lowering power rates.

Councilmember Jeppson questioned how much the immediate neighborhood would be impacted by the solar farm installation. Mr. Burandt commented the disruption would be minimal and noted the solar farm requires little maintenance.

Councilmember Swanson stated he supported the proposed project.

Council consensus was to direct staff to move forward with the proposal.

### 3.2 A Review of the Anoka County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and a Review of the City of Blaine Emergency Operation Plan.

Lieutenant Dan Pelkey, Emergency Manager, reviewed the City's Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) in detail with the Council. He stated on June 24, 2014, the Anoka County Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution No. 2014-73 adopting amendments to the Multi-Jurisdictional Plan for Anoka County and additional text was added to the Anoka County All Hazard Mitigation Plan. These amendments include all jurisdictions in Anoka County participating in the All Hazards Mitigation Plan. He stated Anoka County Risk Management Director Terry Stoltzman was present to address the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan in more detail with the Council and that both items were scheduled for adoption at tonight's City Council meeting.

Mayor Ryan discussed the two tornadoes that occurred in the past 10 years and said he was pleased by how well the City managed these serious events.

Terry Stoltzman, Anoka County Risk Management Director, thanked the Council for their time. He discussed the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan with the Council noting this plan was a requirement and reviewed every five years. He commented on the cooperation and collaboration that occurred between all agencies and organizations in Anoka County, along with the funding available to cities that opted to support the plan.

Councilmember Garvais requested further information regarding how the County would manage pets during an emergency. Mr. Stoltzman described the County's pet disaster shelter.

Lieutenant Pelkey commented on the MNWalk portion of the EOP.

Fire Board Member Andy Westerberg asked if the City had a separate warning system for chemical spills for other such hazards. Lieutenant Pelkey stated the City did not have a separate warning system for chemical spills. He provided further comment on the warning systems available to the City of Blaine.

Councilmember Garvais stated he would like to see the full plans prior to approving the EOP and Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and asked if these items were date sensitive. Lieutenant Pelkey stated these items were not date sensitive but were recommended for Council approval.

Councilmember Swanson questioned if the Council would be able to review the full plan from the County. Mr. Stoltzman indicated this information could be provided to the Council but could not be released to the public or the media as they included nonpublic data.

Councilmember Swanson and Councilmember Garvais said they supported action on these plans being delayed for two weeks in order to allow the City Council to receive full plans from the City and County for review.

Council consensus was to direct staff to provide the Council with a full plan, including the nonpublic portions, and bring this item back for consideration at the April 20 Council meeting.

### 3.3 Second Ladder Truck Purchase Proposal.

Fire Chief Charlie Smith reviewed a proposal for the purchase of a second ladder truck for the SBM Fire Department. He reported a ladder truck purchase was recently approved by the City Council and recommended a second truck be ordered at this time for a reduced rate. He discussed the new safety features that were offered within new rigs. He commented on the SWOT analysis that was conducted by the department regarding the department's equipment. The department's area of focus for 2017 through 2022 was explained in detail.

Fire Chief Smith described the proposed design of the new quint, noting the rig would have five functions. He commented on the numerous reasons why the department was looking to purchase a new quint, noting fire capabilities within the department would be greatly enhanced. He reported how the City's ISO rating would improve if the department had two ladder trucks. He noted the individual ISO ratings for Blaine, Spring Lake Park and Mounds View, along with how these rates impacted insurance rates. He stated his goal would be to get the City to a Class 3 ISO rating and reviewed the positive impacts of this rating for the City of Blaine.

Fire Chief Smith began to address the cost for the second for the second quint stating the expense would be \$880,000. Mayor Ryan thanked Fire Chief Smith for his report but noted the Council had to adjourn to convene the regular meeting.

Councilmember Clark requested Fire Chief Smith to forward the Council ISO rates for neighboring communities. Fire Chief Smith stated he would forward this information on to the City Council.

Council consensus was that due to time restraints to direct Fire Chief Smith to forward information regarding the second quint fire truck to the Council for future consideration.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Tom Ryan, Mayor

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Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk  
*Submitted by TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*