

UNAPPROVED

CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Thursday, February 18, 2016

6:30 P.M.
Council Chambers
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 Mike Bourke, Dave Clark, Russ Herbst, Wes Hovland, Jason King, and Dick Swanson.

ABSENT: None.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Clark Arneson; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Planning and Community Development Director Bryan Schafer; Public Services Manager Bob Therres; Finance Director Joe Huss; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Chris Olson; Public Works Director Mike Ulrich, Economic Development Coordinator Erik Thorvig; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Senior Engineering Technician Al Thorp; City Clerk Catherine Sorensen; and Recording Secretary Linda Dahlquist.

NEW BUSINESS

3.1 16-10, North Metro TV Joint Powers Agreement Amendment and Financing for Cable TV Improvement.

Finance Director Huss stated North Metro TV is proposing to replace major components, video systems, and upgrade to high definition standards. He stated the Cable Commission considered the issuance of bonds by NMTV; although in order for this to occur, the Joint Powers Agreement governing the members of NMTV would need to be amended to allow for a debt issuance. He noted members are seeking an amendment to the JPA that would expand all members' authority to use franchise fees beyond cable-related expenses and include communication expenses. He stated the Commission will seek to finance the project through the issuance of a capital note or equipment certificate payable to the City of Circle Pines. He noted it is expected that franchise fees will be sufficient to cover the debt repayment and all operating costs of NMTV.

Heidi Arnson, Executive Director for North Metro Cable Commission, stated the upgrade project has been progressing for over a year. She stated the majority of the equipment is in need of replacement. She stated an agreement with Comcast will allow NMTV to have HD channels and Century Link will provide HD channels as well. She stated the change to the Joint Powers Agreement will allow the City to use the franchise fees for any citizen communication cost.

Councilmember Herbst commented the City could use the funds for the City's newsletter, website and possibly a portion of a staff position.

City Manager Arneson stated the funds will go for the debt service. Ms. Arnsen commented the bond payment will be less than the building payment.

City Manager Arneson commented the City received the franchise fee check today and those funds will be used for staff time, HD upgrade, and other items.

Ms. Arnsen stated bonding over 10-year period and spreading the cost over a period of time where the franchise fees and subscribers will increase. She noted that she has been in contact with other cities about having two competing cable companies and most cities experience increases in franchise fees when another provider entered the market.

Councilmember Swanson asked about tape transfer service. Ms. Arnsen replied in January over 100 people and over 800 hours of tape was transferred. She noted if Blaine resident do their own transfer there is no cost otherwise there is a \$10 per hour charge.

Ms. Arnsen noted NMTV will save money by bonding with Circle Pines and equipment will be purchased tax free.

3.2 16-11, Discuss Seasonal Mowing.

Public Services Manager Therres stated the City mows/maintains 603 acres of parkland, 14 EDA properties (16 acres), 43 wells, water plants, lift stations and water towers, 32 trails, boulevards, sound barriers, and 46 miles of roadway ditches. He stated City Park Maintenance staff includes 13 full time employees, 22 seasonal employees, and one utility seasonal employee. He gave an overview of the City's mowing equipment that includes three large mowers, one gang mower, five Groundmasters, 11 zero turn mowers, three John Deere riding mowers, and one slope mower. He gave an overview of the five year capital projection for mowers that include the purchase of one mower in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. He gave an overview of the costs to do seasonal mowing. He noted that the City would have to require a contractor to have the same level of insurance and have a non-performance requirement.

Councilmember Bourke commented contractors would have multi-use equipment as well and asked if trucks and trailers and fuel costs are included in the cost estimates. Public Services Manager Therres said fuel estimates were included.

Councilmember Swanson stated if the City contracts the work how would performance levels be set. Public Services Manager Therres replied standards would need to be written.

Councilmember Clark asked for the labor rate for seasonal staff. Public Services Manager Therres replied \$11.00 per hour.

Councilmember Clark suggested keeping the full time staff on City work and utilize the seasonal staff or contractor for mowing.

Councilmember Bourke confirmed the contractor he spoke with uses trucks and trailers year round.

Public Works Director Ulrich gave an overview of staff responsibilities with mowing and park maintenance. He noted the full time staff does not clean the bathrooms as those types of duties are done by the seasonal staff.

Councilmember Bourke asked if the full time staff mow. Public Works Director Ulrich replied staff are on a three week rotation.

Councilmember Bourke requested further discussion on mowing and plowing at a future Workshop.

Councilmember Swanson commented he is opposed to any contract plowing of City streets.

3.3 16-12, Prosecution Transition Status.

Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Olson stated prosecuting attorneys Mark Berglund and Michael Scott commenced prosecutor responsibilities for the City effective September 1, 2015. He stated the transition has been smooth with no issues. He noted that the City has approximately 100 arraignments in a three-month period.

Mark Berglund commented the transition over the past six months has been smooth.

Michael Scott stated he is impressed with Blaine police officers and thanked the City for the opportunity.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

The Workshop adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Tom Ryan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Catherine Sorensen, City Clerk

Submitted by TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.