



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

10801 Town Square Dr.
Blaine MN 55449

City Council Workshop

**While this is a public meeting where interested persons are welcome to attend, it is a work session for Council and staff to discuss issues before them. It is not for the purpose of receiving public input.*

Thursday, October 25, 2012

6:30 PM

Cloverleaf Farm Room A

Meeting Number 12-60

NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING

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

ALSO PRESENT: Clark Arneson, City Manager; Thomas Sweeney, City Attorney; Bryan Schafer, Planning and Community Development Director; Bob Therres, Public Services Manager; Ward Brown, Budget/Fiscal Analyst; Chris Olson, Safety Service Manager/Police Chief; Chuck Bradley, Public Works Department; Marc Shippee, Parks Department Supervisor; Al Thorp, Senior Engineering Technician; and Recording Secretary Linda Dahlquist.

Present: 6 - Councilmember Clark, Councilmember Bourke, Councilmember Herbst, Mayor Ryan, Councilmember Hovland, and Councilmember Swanson

Absent: 1 - Councilmember Kolb

[WS 12-48](#)

ASSUMPTION BASED BUDGETING - PUBLIC SERVICES

Sponsors: City Manager Arneson and Huss

Attachments: [2013 Prioritized Budgeting-Public Services](#)

City Manager Arneson announced there will be three staff retiring in 2013 and two of the positions will not be filled and one will be filled part-time. Mayor Ryan asked how many positions have been eliminated over the years. City Manager Arneson stated the City has lost 16 positions since 2008. He noted the loss of these 2.5 jobs could affect City services.

Councilmember Herbst asked for the dollar amounts for the 2011 unrestricted reserves and the 2012 proposed unrestricted reserves. Finance Director Huss replied the 2011 unrestricted reserves were \$1.1 million and for the end of 2012 unrestricted reserves is proposed to be \$1.5 million.

Finance Director Huss stated staff has prepared a 2013 Public Services budget for Council's review. The City of Blaine's Public Services include four divisions: Public Works, Engineering, Geographic Information System (GIS), and Parks and Recreation. He noted the budget was prepared using a prioritized assumption based budgeting method. The prioritized budgeting process included six steps: resources/funding capacity, services to provide, cost of services, evaluate/prioritize services, allocate resources, and reprioritize if necessary.

Finance Director Huss started with an overview of the 2013 - Current Status that shows 2012 Projected, 2013 No Levy Increase and 2014 No Levy Increase.

Finance Director Huss stated the Public Works Division has five sub-divisions: Public Buildings Maintenance, Streets Maintenance, Parks Maintenance, Forestry, and Fleet and Equipment Maintenance. Finance Director Huss stated the Public Buildings Maintenance sub-division is staffed with one full-time and two part-time FTEs and is supplemented through contractual arrangements with three companies for maintaining City Hall and the Senior Center.

Finance Director Huss stated the City lets organizations use meeting space after hours. He noted that the City does not charge for the space use, but does charge a minimal set-up fee for the Cloverleaf room. City Manager Arneson stated the City should consider charging for meeting space.

Finance Director Huss stated the Police Department has their own contracted cleaning person who has contracted with the City for many years. Councilmember Swanson asked why the person is not considered City staff. Finance Director Huss replied the work is done after hours and she provides supplies and is self-insured.

Councilmember Hovland asked if there is a capital plan for equipment and carpet replacement costs. Public Services Manager Therres replied yes, a replacement and maintenance program is established and costs are now being calculated into future budgets.

Finance Director Huss noted the City's generator needs to be retrofitted for emissions in 2013. Public Services Manager Therres stated the generator is used every month and more often in the summer months for peak savings.

Councilmember Hovland asked about building improvements and the replacement of windows and doors. Finance Director Huss replied the garage doors need consistent maintenance. Public Services Manager Therres replied the City has a company that does preventative maintenance and door replacement. He noted doors and lift systems have been repaired and replaced

several times. Councilmember Clark asked about the increase in budget from 2012. Finance Director Huss replied as City Hall approaches its tenth year, maintenance costs are starting to add up. Councilmember Herbst asked about depreciation costs on City Hall. Councilmember Bourke asked about custodial workers' salaries for City Hall. Finance Director Huss noted the custodial staff also manages the grounds.

Finance Director Huss stated the Streets Maintenance sub-division is staffed with ten full-time FTEs and supplemented with seasonal employees. He noted there are 236 miles of roads and the work is categorized by non-winter and winter activities. Council discussion on the Pavement Management Program and the frequency of overlays are done to the roads. Public Services Manager Therres noted some of the roads are not heavily traveled and do not need overlays every 5-7 years. Councilmember Clark stated he would like to see a documented road replacement schedule. Finance Director Huss stated the City is looking at road justification and the City's goal is to have a Pavement Management Program that extends out for 40 years.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of pothole repair and the amount of material and hours worked for the year. Councilmember Swanson asked if Street Maintenance and Engineering discuss street conditions. Chuck Bradley replied yes, Street Maintenance and Engineering discuss road conditions regularly. Councilmember Bourke stated the amount of money used to fill potholes should be put into the Pavement Management Program. Councilmember Hovland commented the City has not been keeping pace with repairs. Finance Director Huss stated the City spends \$240,000 per year for Pavement Management. Chuck Bradley clarified that street patching are for larger repairs than potholes. Councilmember Clark asked if metrics are used in the department. Finance Director Huss replied metrics are not used.

Finance Director Huss stated the City spent 1,147 hours in 2011 filling cracks in the roads. He noted crack filling material is expensive.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of median, boulevard, and right-of-way maintenance, 3,286 hours worked for the year and the initiation of job tickets for tracking costs. Councilmember Clark questioned the use of paper job tickets.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of the pavement markings program and the goal of all markings repainted each year, which is an MSA requirement. Councilmember Clark asked if the City could cut the City's pavement markings in half instead of doing the entire City every year. Public Services Manager Therres replied some roads need to be marked every year. Finance Director Huss stated the City is required to mark MSA streets to meet reflectivity every year. He noted the City receives maintenance funds from MSA. Councilmember Hovland commented that the markings can be

slippery when it rains. Public Services Manager Therres replied there are several products that are used on the roads.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of Street Plowing. He noted the City has 26 routes with 15 streets and 11 cul-de-sacs. He noted the snow season has 12 events annually. Councilmember Swanson asked how holiday storms impact the City. Chuck Bradley replied labor costs go up dramatically on holidays. He noted weekends are paid at time and a half. City Manager Arneson noted the Union preferred staff to have comp time. Councilmember Herbst asked if the snowplows could wait and plow during daytime hours for a cost savings. Chuck Bradley stated the snowplows do not plow during rush hours for safety reasons. Councilmember Hovland suggested plowing for 3 to 4 inches instead of 2 inches. Mayor Ryan replied the City's streets would be washboards like in the City of St. Paul. Public Services Manager Therres stated plow routes average 17 miles and cul-de-sacs are more difficult. Chuck Bradley noted plowing is curb to curb. Council discussion on plowing took place. Councilmember Herbst asked if the Council wants to change the policy from 2 inches to 3 inches and change the 7 hours to 9 hours for a cost savings. He asked staff to do a cost analysis. Councilmember Swanson noted that future development needs to take into account snow plowing. Finance Director Huss stated the goal is to maintain safe roads for the residents. Mayor Ryan commented wind also plays a huge factor with plowing and re-plowing the roads. City Manager Arneson commented the City tries to wait until it stops snowing to plow. Chuck Bradley replied the City may be out salting and it turns into a plowing event.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of sidewalk snow removal. He noted that sidewalks are a lower priority than the roads except for schools, business and business routes. Council discussion on sidewalk plowing took place.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of trails snow removal. Public Services Manager Therres noted there is no overtime for the trails snow removal. Councilmember Clark asked if costs are just for labor. Finance Director Huss replied the cost includes labor and fuel. Chuck Bradley stated the staff uses Bobcats and pickup trucks to plow the trails.

Councilmember Hovland left at 8:24 p.m. and returned at 8:27 p.m.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of Street De-icing (salting) and noted the City has 15 routes that are completed in 4 hours. Finance Director Huss gave an overview of Street Anti-icing (pre-wetting) and noted the City does 2 routes in 8 hours.

Councilmember Herbst left at 8:27 p.m. and returned at 8:31 p.m.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of Sign Maintenance and noted the City has 66 signs to maintain. He commented that reflectivity standards are changing and would require replacement signs. Councilmember Swanson suggested working with other cities to get the costs down. Finance Director Huss replied the majority of the cost is labor for hanging the signs.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of Traffic Signals Maintenance of 9 City owned and 57 MnDOT owned signs. Council discussion was held on the maintenance costs.

Councilmember Swanson left at 8:38 p.m. and returned at 8:40 p.m.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of the Street Lights Maintenance and noted there are 2,400 in the City and the majority are owned by Xcel and Connexus. He commented the City is looking to replace the lights with LED lights.

Councilmember Herbst left at 8:48 p.m. and returned at 8:49 p.m.

Finance Director Huss stated the Parks Maintenance sub-division is responsible for 63 parks that are over 707 acres. He noted parks are calculated based upon the type and use of the park (Athletic Facilities/Complexes/ Special Use, or Neighborhood). Councilmember Swanson commented there are dead trees in the wooded area in Aquatore Park. Councilmember Bourke asked if rent is included with the cost of maintenance of Airport Park & Soccer Complex. Finance Director Huss replied no the cost is just for maintenance. Mayor Ryan commented Coon Rapids had cut back their park maintenance so far, that they ended up closing two parks that were too far gone and replacement would be too expensive.

Councilmember Herbst left at 8:52 p.m. and returned at 8:53 p.m.

Finance Director Huss stated the Forestry sub-division was established to ensure healthy and diverse tree population is maintained by the Parks Maintenance Supervisor. City Manager Arneson stated the City contracts for tree removal.

Finance Director Huss gave an overview of the Vehicle/Equipment Maintenance and noted the division has 4 mechanics on staff. He stated the City Fleet consists of 64 police passenger vehicles, 81 passenger vehicles for other staff, 35 heavy equipment, and 285 miscellaneous equipment. Council discussion on the use and repurpose of City vehicles.

Discussed

Other

City Manager Arneson stated the Council needs to review several more budgeting departments and time is a concern.

ADJOURN

The Workshop adjourned at 9:25 p.m.