



**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, May 17, 2012

6:30 PM

Cloverleaf Farm Room A

---

Meeting Number 12-32

**NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Kolb at 6:32 p.m.

Quorum Present.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Clark Arneson, City Manager; Bryan Schafer, Community Development Director; Bob Therres, Public Services Manager; Joe Huss, Finance Director; Roark Haver, Communications Technician; Thomas Sweeney, City Attorney; Jane M. Cross, City Clerk; and Recording Secretary Cheryl Felix.

**Present:** 5 - Councilmember Clark, Councilmember Kolb, Councilmember Bourke, Councilmember Herbst, and Councilmember Swanson

**Absent:** 2 - Mayor Ryan, and Councilmember Hovland

1. [WS 12-26](#)

**COMPANION VETERINARY HOSPITAL (CUP COMPLIANCE)**

**Sponsors:** Schafer

**Attachments:** [Companion Vet Attachment.pdf](#)

Community Development Director Schafer presented the request of Companion Veterinary Hospital. In 2011, City Council extended the timeline for items that needed to be done by the hospital. The fire suppression timeline was for one year and given the timeline, Council had requested approval to be provided within six months. He noted a letter from Ms. Sharyl Gandara, co-owner of the hospital, that was given to the Board indicating the cost to do fire suppression is about \$46,000 and there is a fire grant program that would cover one-half. Additionally, her letter states the hospital does not have the financial ability to take on the other one-half and it would be difficult for their business. Staff is seeking direction from Council since the six-month timeline has passed. He offered a couple of options as follows:

1. Seek compliance through legal action by court citations - violation of use permit.
2. Bring the item back to Council and extend the time period for an additional year or two.
3. Provide or consider providing a 50% match from EDA as a loan or a special assessment so there would be no out of pocket upfront expense, then the hospital would begin to make payments back.

Community Development Director Schafer stated he shared the latter concept with Ms. Gandara who indicated she understood the terms and felt they were generous but the business does not have the ability to make any additional payments. The dollars made in summer, their busy season, are banked to get them through winter.

Councilmember Herbst asked if other items were due. Community Development Director Schafer replied yes, but they are relatively minimal and have a timeline of two years.

Councilmember Bourke asked if they owned the building to which Ms. Gandara replied yes. Ms. Gandara stated the monthly payments would be about \$250 per month and she could afford that amount. She added she is just hesitant to take on more debt in a recession.

Councilmember Herbst asked when the building was purchased and how big it is. Ms. Gandara replied the business was purchased in January 2007 and is 3,500 square feet. Councilmember Herbst asked if that was when an extension was give on the sprinkler. Ms. Gandara replied yes, when the building was purchased, they were not aware of a conditional use permit so they got an extension. She added that the previous use was an office building and it became rezoned when opened as a hospital.

Councilmember Bourke asked the use classification. Community Development Director Schafer stated he is not sure.

Councilmember Bourke asked if the building is under the right application. Community Development Director Schafer replied staff has been working on this issue.

Mayor Pro Tem Kolb asked about setting precedence and how this can be done in such a way they will not be forced to do the same for others. Community Development Director Schafer replied businesses get sprinklers every year, some are going through the process now, and only once or twice used the matching grant.

Councilmember Bourke stated he thinks this is a bargain for the hospital and would be in support of a special assessment but is unsure about a loan. City

Manager Arneson replied a matching grant is an existing program that is available, rather than a loan.

Mayor Pro Tem Kolb stated the City needs to be careful how it is written and asked if it could work for other things (i.e., a parking lot) if it works for a sprinkler system. Ms. Gandara stated it is a unique building and cost \$2 per square foot when it was a church and now to retrofit it costs \$15-16 per square foot.

Councilmember Swanson stated in order to sell the building it would have to have sprinklers, so the assessment should go with the building. Ms. Gandara replied she liked that idea.

Councilmember Swanson asked if it saves on insurance. Ms. Gandara replied about \$275 per year.

Mayor Pro Tem Kolb asked about the loan if the assessment would go with the building. Community Development Director Schafer replied they could ask advice from the City Attorney. He noted an assessment is connected to taxes and the payment timeline would be ten years.

Community Development Director Schafer stated if it is consensus, he will meet with Ms. Gandara, fine-tune details, and bring the item back; it will be an EDA item since EDA dollars will be used.

Councilmember Herbst asked why the cost is high. Ms Gandara replied most of the cost is in the underground work. When they converted the building, they did not want a higher ceiling so there is an attic space and it also needs sprinklers.

Councilmember Bourke asked if there was an option of chemical. Ms. Gandara replied she spoke with the fire inspector but they do not like a dry system because it is costly to maintain. The building will have sprinkler lines running throughout the ceiling that will be dried so the lines do not freeze.

Council consensus was to direct staff to provide a 50% match from EDA as a special assessment.

#### **Discussed**

2. [MO 12-061](#)

**REQUEST BY THE CITY OF LEXINGTON TO REQUEST  
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
(MNDOT) TO PERFORM A SPEED STUDY ON  
LEXINGTON AVENUE**

**Sponsors:** Therres

**Attachments:** [lexington speed study res..doc](#)

Public Services Manager Therres stated a resolution adopted by the City of Lexington is asking the Anoka County Highway Department to determine one continuous speed on Lexington Avenue from County Road J to 35W/Lexington Avenue Bridge. It is currently controlled by four different speed zones within a 1.5-mile stretch. There is a request to Blaine and to Circle Pines to ask Mn/DOT to do a speed study on Lexington Avenue. Public Services Manager Therres requested Council input.

City Manager Arneson noted that after the study, the speed limit could possibly go higher.

Public Services Manager Therres stated one way is to test out the speed and take the 85th percentile.

Councilmember Clark arrived at 6:50 p.m.

Councilmember Herbst referenced the City of Lino Lakes and noted their speeds are low. He suggested pressure from neighbors may reduce the speed limit.

Councilmember Sweeney left the meeting at 6:52 p.m. and returned at 6:54 p.m.

Council consensus was to direct staff to bring back a resolution for consideration.

#### **Discussed and Forwarded to the City Council**

### **3. [WS 12-28](#)**

City Manager Arneson introduced Tim Hennagir

Tim explained that as of June 1, *Life* will be a free carrier newspaper, meaning free distribution, and will remain the main newspaper for Blaine. *The Focus* will go away effective next week and *The Shopper* will end. Mr. Hennagir explained that elements from the two papers will go into *Life* and be distributed to more people. There will be a notice to the public to let them know what is going on. If people want *The Shopper*, it will be available in Coon Rapids and Ham Lake. If people want a single copy of *Life*, they can pick it up at convenience stores for one dollar. Mr. Hennagir advised there will be notice on the website next Monday with a detailed announcement and contact information. If residents do not want the product, they just need to call to discontinue.

City Manager Arneson noted *Life* will be distributed to 16,500 on the western two-thirds of Blaine. The east side of Blaine will not be getting the paper, but it will be available at several locations.

Mayor Pro Tem Kolb asked if the east side will then get *The Shopper*. Mr. Hennagir replied no.

Councilmember Clark asked what set the cut-off point. Mr. Hennagir replied he would have to look at circulation maps, but knows they are not going to Little Lexington. Councilmember Clark stated that he has heard concern for years that the east side feels it is the forgotten side of Blaine. He suggested they include the more populated areas, if possible. Mr. Hennagir suggested they at least find drop points.

Council consensus was to direct staff to schedule Mr. Hennagir to speak at the regular Council meeting, under Communications, after the paper is distributed on June 1.

#### **Discussed**

#### **Other Business**

Councilmember Herbst stated that girl's basketball courts are rare but it is getting to be a big sport so they want indoor facilities. Councilmember Swanson replied they may be available from the high school or district.

Mayor Pro Tem Kolb stated practice and play facilities have been an issue and the demand is getting bigger.

Councilmember Herbst replied if they could build some type of facility, it would enhance the school district.

Councilmember Clark stated if organizations got together with a funding plan, he would support consideration. Councilmember Swanson replied he thinks they are looking for public assistance, not building a facility on their own.

Councilmember Clark stated if we can lend staff support to the system, he would not be opposed. Mayor Pro Tem Kolb replied they need to go to current organizations and get feedback.

Public Services Manager Therres stated the County is starting to ask about median treatment on University Avenue and is currently doing pre-design. The choices are the following.

1. Nothing and get a concrete median

2. One upgrade - color concrete at an additional cost
3. Landscape the median

It was noted that south on University Avenue has color concrete. Councilmember Swanson stated he was in favor of making it uniform.

Public Services Manager Therres distributed revised Resolutions for Agenda Items 12.6a and 12.6b due to a change order, noting the contingency costs on both has been removed. City Manager Arneson clarified that Agenda Item 12.6a was a “double dip” on contingency and Agenda Item 12.6b removed the contingency.

Councilmember Clark asked if there is a way they can do a citywide assessment for 105th Avenue Councilmember Swanson indicated that would be hard to sell to retirees that never go north of 99th Avenue. Councilmember Clark stated whether the City or the County pays, it is still taxpayer’s dollars to fix the road.

Councilmember Herbst replied there are no private donors on the road and the cost will not be assessed. City Manager Arneson explained several options and indicated Davenport will be coming back in one month for resolution.

Councilmember Swanson cautioned the Council that there is no guarantee the Legislature will appropriate money. City Manager Arneson replied that is correct.

Councilmember Swanson requested an update on Fogerty Arena. City Manager Arneson replied the groundbreaking is planned for Thursday, May 31, 2012. Mayor Pro Tem Kolb suggested the third Thursday instead.

## **ADJOURN**

The workshop was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.