

UNAPPROVED

**CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Monday, June 17, 2019**

6:00 p.m.
Cloverleaf Farm Room
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Tom Ryan, Councilmembers Andy Garvais, Wes Hovland (arrived at 7:10 p.m.), Julie Jeppson, Richard Paul, Jess Robertson, and Dick Swanson.

ABSENT: None.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Clark Arneson; Community Development Director Bryan Schafer; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Finance Director Joe Huss; Economic Development Coordinator Erik Thorvig; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Engineer Dan Schluender; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Senior Engineering Technician Jason Sundeen; Communications Coordinator Ben Hayle; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 2019 Capital Improvement Project Update.

Public Works Director Haukaas stated the City of Blaine has initiated a large number of Capital Improvement Projects in 2019. The purpose of this item is to provide an update to the City Council on the status of all these projects including: project summary, budget, schedule, and potential issues. Staff provided an update on the projects for all Public Works Capital Improvement Projects in excess of \$1M. He explained these updates are intended to give the Council a very high level overview of each project including; milestones, issues, general schedule, and a budget summary.

Councilmember Swanson explained he was receiving phone calls regarding the mailboxes along Ball Road. Mr. Haukaas stated he was working with the post office to resolve this situation.

Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Therres updated the Council on the City Hall/Police Department improvement project, along with the Mary Ann Young Senior Center. He explained the senior center project was on schedule and would be completed in December of 2019. He discussed a soil correction issue that had occurred on the project site.

3.2 Potential City Endorsement of Utility Service Partners, Inc. Service Line Warranty Program.

Mr. Haukaas stated staff has been contacted by Utility Service Partners, Inc. to request endorsement by the City of Blaine to market their Service Line Warranty program to our residents. The Service Line Warranty

program is a third party insurance program which provides homeowners with repair protection for leaking, clogged, or broken private water and sewer lines between the city main to the home. This item was briefly discussed on May 20, 2019 and requested to be brought back to another workshop and given more time to discuss. Councilmembers also asked staff to gather information from some of the cities who have endorsed the program. Staff reviewed materials and a draft agreement providing additional information for the Council to review and help determine if this is something the City of Blaine is interested in approving.

Councilmember Hovland explained he struggled with the fact the City was being asked to endorse a single company for this work when there were other companies that could also provide the same service and said he believed this was unfair.

Councilmember Robertson stated she is concerned that letters sent to residents would create confusion if allowed to be printed on City letterhead. Mr. Haukaas stated staff was not proposing to allow the third party insurance company to use City letterhead but perhaps would allow the use of the City's logo.

Councilmember Jeppson indicated she spoke with a Mounds View Councilmember regarding the program and stated the main concern being voiced by their residents was the number of mailers being sent to residents and said she had concerns with this. Mr. Haukaas explained the City could set a limit on the number of mailers sent per year.

Councilmember Jeppson reported she would like the number of mailers limited and that the mailers state the City does not endorse the specific company but does endorse the concept.

Councilmember Hovland suggested the City promote all businesses that provide these types of services and not promote just one.

Councilmember Swanson stated he could support one or more companies providing this service to Blaine residents but recommended the companies be reputable if being placed on the City's website as a recommended vendor.

Councilmember Jeppson explained she could support the City moving forward with the program. She suggested the City consider creating a branding/marketing policy in case the City were to be approached to have its logo used again in the future.

Councilmember Hovland indicated he did not support the City advocating for one business when other businesses also provide this same service. City Manager Arneson reported the vendor would be sending letters to Blaine residents with or without the City's endorsement and that the firm was being offered through the National League of Cities.

City Attorney Sweeney recommended a shorter term be pursued for the contract, due to the fact the proposed contract was for three years.

Council consensus was to direct staff to bring this item forward for formal consideration.

3.3 Rooftop Solar Purchase Power Agreement.

Mr. Haukaas stated staff was approached by Sun Source Energy about options for a rooftop solar Purchase Power Agreement (PPA) that would reduce the City's energy costs at the City Hall and Public Works building by allowing the installation of solar panels on our rooftops and receiving a portion of the energy

produced at a reduced cost. The business model utilizes a 3rd party investor, IPS Solar, which would install and manage the equipment at no cost to the city. A major driver for the timing on this is solar energy credits that will be reduced at the end of 2019. The credit is 30% for systems installed by the end of the year and reduces to 26% in 2020. This agreement works financially at the 2019 levels but not at the 2020 levels. An agreement would need to be finalized by September to meet the program requirements.

Councilmember Hovland asked who would assume the risk if the solar panels were damaged. Mr. Haukaas reported this would be the responsibility of IPS.

Councilmember Hovland questioned what the life of the solar panels would be. Mr. Haukaas stated this was 20 years.

Councilmember Jeppson stated she fully supported this project.

Council consensus was to direct staff to bring this item forward for formal consideration.

3.4 Radisson Road Intersections.

Mr. Haukaas stated Council requested a discussion of the intersections along Radisson Road from 109th Avenue to Main Street NE. Staff reviewed aerial photos of each intersection, discussed traffic flow, and answered questions regarding the City's options for making changes to improve safety.

Councilmember Jeppson questioned what staff recommended for Arnold Palmer Drive. Mr. Haukaas stated he has not fully studied the traffic but understood this intersection could be addressed. Mr. Arneson reported the logical first step for this would be to hire a consultant to complete some analysis on the intersection.

Councilmember Jeppson believed the City had to do something with the east side to better direct traffic to the signal Lakes Parkway. She commented people were going to drive onto 119th Avenue no matter what.

Councilmember Garvais asked why the County was not able to assist in addressing this issue. Mr. Haukaas explained the County had established priorities and funding for projects and this was not one of them at this time.

Councilmember Jeppson questioned if the traffic study would be conducted internally by staff. City Engineer Schluender reported staff would be hiring a consultant to assist with the study.

Councilmember Jeppson asked about the feasibility of a deer crossing sign along Jefferson Street. Mr. Schluender explained MnDOT has removed all these signs with the understanding that drivers should be watching for deer at all times. He commented the County does not install these signs either.

Council consensus was to direct staff to begin a traffic study to identify options for the 116th Avenue intersection.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

ATTEST:

Tom Ryan, Mayor

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