



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
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.

*To participate in the meeting join the Zoom Webinar at
<https://blainemn.zoom.us/j/97951894637>*

Questions? Email - Communications@BlaineMN.gov

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

6:00 PM

Cloverleaf Farm Room A

NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING - REVISED

1 Call to Order

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

2 Roll Call

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Finance Director Joe Huss; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Engineer Dan Schluender; City Planner Lori Johnson; Community Standards Director Robert Fiske; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Senior Engineering Technician Jason Sundeen; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Communications Coordinator Ben Hayle; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen, Adjunct Member Drew Brown.

Present: 7 - Councilmember Garvais, Councilmember Jeppson, Mayor Ryan, Councilmember Swanson, Councilmember Robertson, Councilmember Paul, and Councilmember Hovland

3 New Business

3-1

DISCUSS FUNDING REQUEST BY 3M OPEN FOR ADDITIONAL PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS AT THE NATIONAL SPORTS CENTER

Attachments: [NSC Improvements](#)
[NSC Improvements - PPT](#)

Community Development Director Thorvig stated at the February 10, 2020 workshop, the city council generally showed support to financially assist in parking lot improvements at the National Sports Center for the benefit of the 3M Open. These improvements included paving of the three gravel parking lots north of 105th Avenue. The City's Fire Inspections Department is also requiring fire protection (water line with hydrants) as part of any project completion as required by Minnesota Fire Code. Anoka County Highway Department estimated the total cost of improvements at \$1,012,005; large middle parking lot (\$534,964), south parking lot (\$118,076), north parking lot (\$83,965), and the water line and hydrants (\$275,000). The county engineer has stated it is unlikely all three lots could be constructed prior to the tournament and suggested phasing. The proposed phasing would be to pave the large parking lot and install the water line in 2020 (\$809,964) and pave the remaining two lots in 2021 (\$202,041).

Mr. Thorvig explained the Council requested additional information to discuss at this workshop before directing staff to proceed with a formal EDA action item. The council also requested information on whether the water line was needed and what financial impact this request would have on other projects identified by the EDA. Any funding is recommended to be provided through the EDA general/redevelopment fund. Staff maintains a spreadsheet that identifies sources and uses for EDA projects. There is approximately \$3,000,000 in the EDA general fund/redevelopment fund with approximately \$1,850,000 of those funds identified for the acquisition of the Nassau Street/105th Avenue redevelopment area and for the townhome project at 102nd Avenue and University Avenue. There is still \$1,150,000 remaining that has not been identified for projects. The EDA also has approximately \$450,000 of pooled TIF that has not been allocated and approximately \$1,500,000 available from wetland credit sales through funds that have not been identified for specific projects. Staff provided further information regarding these accounts and requested direction from the Council on how to proceed.

Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Podany explained State fire code requires fire hydrants to be on this road. He stated even without buildings, fire hydrants were required along the roadway for the parking lot. He commented RVs and coach buses parked in this lot often which were also a fire risk. He reported the NSC was made aware of the need for the water line and hydrants in 2015 and indicated this work was not completed in 2015 or 2016.

Councilmember Hovland questioned if there were water lines in Nassau Street. Community Standards Director Fiske reported water lines were located on Nassau Street.

Councilmember Hovland requested the water lines for the parking lot be pulled

from Nassau Street in order to reduce costs. City Engineer Schluender stated the properties along the west end of Nassau were all private which meant the City would require an easement to run the water line to the parking lot. He explained staff could investigate this further. He indicated another concern was the fact the NSC had an active gravel pit and staff was uncertain when this would close.

Councilmember Jeppson asked if the NSC knew they were out of compliance with the water line. Police Chief Podany stated the NSC was made aware of the requirement in 2015. Mr. Thorvig reported the NSC did not have a funding source for the water line.

Mayor Ryan expressed frustration with the lack of cooperation from the NSC with the City on these issues.

Further discussion ensued regarding the possibility of creating an agreement between the NSC and the City for repayment on the parking lot.

Councilmember Garvais stated the City may need to begin lobbying on behalf of the NSC in order to assist in getting State funding.

Councilmember Robertson questioned what the timeline was for this issue. She indicated it was not the City's job to lobby for funding for the NSC. She expressed frustration with the fact the NSC knew about this water line requirement but neglected to install the required water line. She supported the City drafting an agreement with the NSC to try and receive repayment on paving of the parking lots. Mr. Thorvig understood the concerns that have been voiced but noted immediate action was required.

Councilmember Paul asked how much Anoka County was willing to pay for the parking lots. Mr. Thorvig stated the County has pledged to pay half of the costs for paving the parking lots in 2020.

Councilmember Hovland stated this item had to move forward and the water line would have to be completed. Mr. Thorvig clarified that the street and water line would be private and not City-owned.

Councilmember Hovland supported the City lobbying on behalf of the NSC in order to get further funding and attention from the State of Minnesota. He explained the City had done more than its fair share to assist with maintaining this property and he wanted to see the State assist with future maintenance.

City Manager Wolfe stated the NSC was trying to get dollars to assist with maintenance and site needs however these dollars were limited. She explained after speaking with the lobbyists she understood there was a misconception from

legislators that when dollars were granted to the NSC these dollars were going to the City of Blaine and this was not the case. She commented further on the NSC's bonding request and indicated there was an overall challenge surrounding the strategy for the NSC going forward.

Mayor Ryan commented he did not have a problem paying for the pavement but wanted an agreement in place with the NSC to ensure they pay the City back for the water line.

Councilmember Garvais anticipated this would be difficult for the City to achieve. He suggested the City create some sort of presentation in order to assist the NSC with lobbying efforts.

Councilmember Robertson stated she could move forward with the parking lot only because she wanted the golf tournament to be a tremendous success.

Mayor Ryan asked if Anoka County would be willing to pay for half of the water line along with half of the parking lot. Mr. Thorvig explained he had not discussed the specifics but he anticipated the County would be willing to cover half of the water line expense as well. He indicated staff would confirm this topic with the County. He shared examples of other requests the PGA has required from other cities and noted in comparison this was a relatively small ask.

Mayor Ryan understood this to be the case but stated in the end the benefitting party was the NSC with the City paying the costs. He suggested the Council meet with Senator Newton to better gauge support by the State of the NSC, adding he wanted to see this issue addressed.

Council consensus was to direct staff to bring this item forward to the EDA on March 2, 2020.

30 Minute Discussion

3-2

93rd AVENUE/I35W SERVICE DRIVE SEWER REPAIR UPDATE

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Public Works Director Haukaas provided an update on progress toward the final repair of the collapsed sewer at the intersection of 93rd Avenue and the I35W Service Drive. Material procurement, permitting, and work scheduling are already taking longer than originally anticipated with completion extending into early March. Staff reviewed pictures of the work to date, a revised construction schedule, and costs incurred so far and estimated costs for completion. It was noted staff anticipated a need to extend the Emergency Declaration for an additional time

period. Staff commented the total project repair cost was around \$1.1 million.

Councilmember Hovland asked what was being done with the frozen dirt. Mr. Haukaas stated it was being hauled out at this time. He commented the City was spending \$25,000 per week on pumping.

Mayor Ryan questioned if any damage had occurred to the nearby homes. Mr. Haukaas reported no damaged has occurred, which was a positive from this entire project.

Councilmember Garvais thanked the City staff for their fast response to this situation.

Council consensus was to direct staff to bring forward a request to extend the local emergency declaration.

15 Minute Discussion

3-3

REVIEW THE CITY'S MISSION STATEMENT

Ms. Wolfe stated based on Council direction at the January 22 council workshop, staff has made some suggested revisions to the city's mission and vision statements. The City first adopted a mission statement in 1985. During the strategic planning discussions in 2019, City Council reviewed the current Mission Statement and discussed vision and values statements. It was agreed that the mission, vision and values statements needed updating and/or creation. A brainstorming process resulted in the identification of key concepts the group favored for both the vision and mission. These were then used by the consultant to create draft statements. The City Council also identified a potential list of values, which the consultant used to prepare a draft set of values for consideration. Staff reported following the workshop discussion, staff made some proposed modifications to the Mission and Values; work continues on the Vision Statement. The proposed mission, vision and value statements were discussed with the Council.

Mayor Ryan stated he liked the suggested mission statement. The Council was in agreement.

Councilmember Jeppson questioned how the values were incorporated into the City. Communications Coordinator Hayle stated currently the values are not incorporated into any portion of the City. He explained the plan would be to incorporate the values into the City's strategic plan and posted on the website.

Councilmember Jeppson stated she liked the terms open and transparent along with fair and impartial. She suggested the verbs be more fine-tuned instead of being so general.

Council consensus was to direct staff to further revise the City's values and vision statement to include more verbs with specifics instead of generalities and to report back to the Council at a future workshop meeting.

15 Minute Discussion

3-4

FACEBOOK LIVE TOWN HALL

Mr. Hayle stated as staff have continued to look for ways to increase communication efforts with the community, one potential new method is live video interactions. Staff was approached by a councilmember about conducting a town hall meeting via Facebook Live. Staff has researched the idea and is supportive. Staff wants to engage the entire council regarding next steps to implement this program. Facebook Live is a live video feed that is broadcast through a Facebook page. We would broadcast the feed through the city's Facebook page and users who have enabled notifications for the page would receive an alert when we go live. In addition the live video feed can be shared into other Facebook groups. The live video is also archived and remains on our Facebook page so that it can be watched at a later date. The Facebook town halls would also be open to the public to attend in person to allow individuals that do not have a Facebook account or computer access to participate and to fulfill open meeting law requirements.

Councilmember Robertson stated she understood there was a few bugs that would have to be worked out but believed this would be a new and interesting way for the City to reach out to the public.

Councilmember Hovland questioned how often the City was proposing to have the meetings and asked if any filters would be put in place. Mr. Hayle stated the number of meetings has not been determined yet and reported filters would be put in place. He commented further on how staff would host and monitor the Live Town Hall meetings.

Mayor Ryan indicated he would opt out from this type of meeting given the negative interactions he has had on Facebook.

Councilmember Hovland stated this would be a new way for the City to interact with the public. He commented he was leery about the comments and innuendo that would be posted on Facebook.

Councilmember Garvais indicated he could support this type of meeting so long as there was a heavy emphasis on the moderating and questions that get asked. He suggested the Town Hall Live meeting not be held on a Tuesday.

Councilmember Jeppson supported the City trying a Town Hall Live meeting and suggested a prepared topic be selected. She recommended no more than four Live

meetings be held each year.

Councilmember Robertson suggested only two Live meetings be held each year.

Councilmember Paul stated he supported this idea.

Councilmember Robertson questioned where staff was proposing to hold the Town Hall Live meeting. Mr. Hayle explained the location would have to be connected to the control room, which meant either the Council Chambers or the conference room. He suggested the meeting be approximately 30 minutes long.

Further discussion ensued regarding how comments would be managed during the Town Hall Live meeting.

Councilmember Garvais asked if the Town Hall Live meeting could be held on April 15. The Council supported this suggestion.

Mayor Ryan asked what the cost would be to put on this type of meeting. Mr. Hayle reported the cost would be very low.

Council consensus was to direct staff to hold a Town Hall Live meeting on April 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. The topics to be addressed at this meeting will be development focused. The Council supported the City hosting two Town Hall Live meetings per year.

15 Minute Discussion

3-5

BOARD/COMMISSION POLICY REVIEW

Attachments: [BOARD/COMMISSION POLICY - Appointment Revision](#)

City Clerk Sorensen stated she spoke with the Mayor regarding the Board/Commission Policy. She explained this policy was being brought to the Council for consideration and changes.

Mayor Ryan indicated he would support changing the process.

Councilmember Jeppson hoped that when this policy was approved that incumbents are reapproved which would mean the number of applications and interviews in the future can be reduced. Ms. Sorensen stated the process could be streamlined by having incumbents complete the shortened application and not require an interview.

Councilmember Robertson supported Councilmember Jeppson's recommendations but indicated she did not mind the interview process because it offered more insight into the candidates.

Mayor Ryan stated the Council and staff would have to work to stagger the members on the Park Board.

Councilmember Garvais supported Commission members being allowed to serve up to six years.

Councilmember Hovland indicated he could support Commission members being automatically reappointed unless they request to step down from their seat. He commented the Council may benefit by holding more joint meetings with the Commissions and Boards.

Councilmember Robertson supported the Council further discussion this policy at a future meeting. Ms. Wolfe commented the Council could approve the policy and move forward with the proposed appointments. She indicated the proposed changes were a step in the right direction and staggered terms and joint meetings could be further discussed in the future.

Council consensus was to amend the Board/Commission Policy in order for the Council appointments to be made in one meeting rather than with Council confirmation over two meetings. In addition, the Council would like to further review the Board/Commission appointment process including joint Commission meetings with the Council and positions would only be advertised if a vacancy exists as incumbents would likely be reappointed until terms max out and the Council would like to further stagger terms.

4 Council Calendar Review

Ms. Sorensen reviewed the Council Calendar. It was noted the spring retreat dates would be determined at the winter retreat, which would be held on February 28-29.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

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

Adjourned