



Approved: October 28, 2019

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**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 16, 2019  
5:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor David Grant called to order the City Council Work Session at 5:03 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor David Grant, Councilmembers Brenda Holden, Dave McClung, Fran Holmes, and Steve Scott

**Absent:** None

**Also present:** City Administrator Dave Perrault, Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Todd Blomstrom, Finance Director Gayle Bauman, Deputy Clerk Jolene Trauba, Bolton and Menk Principal Engineer Sarah Lloyd

**Councilmember Holden** requested Old Snelling/Lindy's roundabout and awarding of contracts be placed on the agenda.

**1. AGENDA ITEMS**

**A. Hazelnut Park Master Plan Review**

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** introduced Sarah Lloyd to give an overview of the Master Plan and cost estimates. Staff is asking for direction from Council on the highest priorities for the park so they can be included in the upcoming CIP.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** reviewed the maintenance agreement between the City and the Church.

**Councilmember Holden** mentioned that the Church has never done any sealcoating as required by the agreement.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** noted the Joint Use Agreement allows the City to use the parking lot from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The agreement can be terminated by the City with a 60 day notice, but the Church may not terminate without the City's written consent. At a recent meeting with the church representative, it was mentioned there are three services on Sundays. Based on attendance there is a parking demand of between 40 to 80

vehicles. There are currently 139 spaces in the lot. The lot could be reduced in size and reserve the ability to expand again in the future. The lot has a fair amount of wasted space. Reducing to 100 spaces could reduce the parking lot by nearly 25%. The Church does not want to transfer ownership to the City.

**Councilmember Holmes** felt the Church was being unrealistic to have the City reconstruct a parking lot we don't own.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** responded that one issue may be severing the parking lot from the building would reduce the value of the property.

**Councilmember Holden** said she thought the idea was to reduce the parking lot size for lower maintenance costs, and get the extra green space as park land.

**Bolton and Menk Principal Engineer Lloyd** described the map with existing and proposed features of the park, which included new trails, reconstruction of the parking lot, construction of a warming house, LED lighting improvements, and general landscape components. The shared lot is proposed to be reconstructed with concrete curb and gutter. There is a proposed maintenance line with property to the south of the line belonging to the Church and north of the line to the City. An ADA compliant trail leads to the warming house. Clearing and grubbing will be required to help create the trail and visibility. There are two concepts for the warming house, a low maintenance structure of concrete with a metal roof and oversized garage door, and a framed structure with wood siding, metal roof and oversized garage door. There would be grading to minimize flooding. She discussed the cost estimates for individual items.

**Councilmember Holden** asked how much the temporary warming house costs.

**City Administrator Perrault** replied that it was approximately \$5000 last year.

**Councilmember Holmes** asked for further explanation of the park lighting and wondered if it was necessary with the parks closing at dusk.

**Councilmember Holden** requested the discussion be tabled until there is some agreement struck with the Church regarding the parking lot.

**Councilmember Holmes** agreed.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** noted that if the City does a substantial park improvement it would need to be ADA compliant, or if a trail is modified or reconstructed it would have to be made ADA compliant.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** suggested the City focus on reconstructing the northerly parking spots that the City needs and ask for ownership of that portion of the lot be transferred to the City.

**Councilmember Holden** said they would like to see that portion green space as there is no need for the parking lot to be so large. If the parking lot is reduced and reconstructed by the City, the reward would be the green space.

**City Administrator Perrault** rephrased that if the Church isn't willing to reduce the size of the lot and enter into an agreement for reconstruction the City would do nothing.

**Mayor Grant** suggested putting a few parking stalls on the City property and disregarding the Church lot.

**City Administrator Perrault** said the Church isn't interested in reducing the size of the parking lot. He asked for clarification that if the Church isn't willing to reduce the size of the parking lot for green space, the City won't be willing to reconstruct the parking lot.

**Councilmember McClung** said if they can't find a way to move forward together than we have to insist the Church meets the obligations of what they said they would do in the agreement.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** asked if they were willing to reduce the lot by 30% and convey that land to the City, what would the Council's willingness be to cost share? They could look at lower cost designs.

**Councilmember Holmes** said she would be willing to do bare bones in the parking lot with some concessions by the Church, and would like to know what the Corrections crew could do.

Discussion ensued regarding the location placement of the warming house. It was agreed to table the item until staff meets again with the Church.

## **B. Karth Lake Pump Replacement**

**City Administrator Perrault** stated that in 2003 the City Council approved the formation of the Karth Lake Improvement District. The duty of the District is to act as an advisory board to the City Council on construction and maintenance of a lake elevation control structure and other duties as defined in the bylaws. The first project was the installation of a pump to aid in controlling the lake levels. The project cost approximately \$99,000 and was split 50% by the City's stormwater fund and 50% by the District by a levy specific to the properties surrounding Karth Lake. There is currently no pump to serve the lake, it needs to be replaced at a cost of approximately \$12,000. The City Attorney said the agreement didn't necessarily dictate future projects. There are two other improvements coming up, the retaining wall, budgeted for \$100,000 and control panels associated with the pump, estimated at \$30,000. The pump is the most immediate need and cost could be absorbed by the Stormwater Maintenance Fund. Karth Lake is still an active taxing district. There was previous discussion by a former City Council on separating the District and making them a private association, but no action was taken.

**Councilmember Holmes** asked why the City would pay for anything if it is a private lake.

**Councilmember Holden** said you don't want to diminish the value of the land around the lake.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** said the retaining wall is used to get equipment close enough to the lake to set the equipment in the water.

**City Administrator Perrault** added they believe if not for the pump there would probably not be a need for the retaining wall.

**Councilmember Holden** wondered if they could ask a homeowner to let the City take the pump out from their property.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** said the force main comes out of a wall that the pump is connected to, and the panel sits on top of the retaining wall.

**Councilmember McClung** felt being as the City is a property owner on the lake we should pay for a portion of the improvements that benefit our property.

**Finance Director Bauman** said the city can't tax themselves, so it would be like a street assessment and the City's cost would be built into the costs the City is putting into the project.

**Councilmember McClung** said he would support an amount percentage equivalent to the amount of property the City owns.

**Councilmember Holmes** felt because the retaining wall is on City property but the residents at large can't use the lake, the City should pay a small percentage of the cost of the retaining wall.

**Mayor Grant** said we would have to determine if the City is part of the taxing district.

**Councilmember McClung** said he is willing to pay an amount based on the percentage of land the City owns on the lake, not the full amount of the retaining wall or the pump.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** noted that oftentimes there is a cost sharing arrangement because the City and people not adjacent to the lake have created development that has increased runoff to the lake thus increasing the water level of the lake. The District could pose the argument that is a contributing factor so the City should pay a share of the cost.

**Councilmember McClung** felt the majority of the cost should be born by the members of the District.

**Mayor Grant** asked if the control panel was bad enough to need replacement.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** responded that the newer modern pumps need new controls and the wire from the cabinet to the pump needs to be replaced. The shell of the cabinet is beat up but doesn't necessarily need to be replaced. Replacing the controls would be done when the new pump is installed. He estimated the pump could be up and running for a year before the retaining wall would need to be replaced. If there were another place to put the float in and they removed the pump and retaining wall, slope stabilization would need to be installed.

**Councilmember Holden** noted that Council agreed the Karth Lake Improvement District should be asked if someone would give the City an easement to put the pump in and out of the lake.

**Councilmember Holmes** felt that a 50/50 split on cost would be more equitable because of the runoff going into the lake.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** said he would provide a drainage map to show the parcels that drain into the lake.

**Mayor Grant** said Karth Lake was supposed to maintain the operational costs. He felt the Karth Lake taxing district should have put money aside each year in a fund for upcoming costs.

Discussion ensued regarding the taxing district and advisory board.

**City Administrator Perrault** commented that Karth Lake board doesn't levy a tax, they make a recommendation to the Council and the Council enforces the levy. They can't tax themselves.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** noted the governing body of the special taxing district is the City Council, not the Karth Lake advisory board.

**Councilmember McClung** said the board needs to determine if they want a pump and recommend it to the Council. Council would impose the tax and possibly a small yearly assessment.

**Mayor Grant** said as the Council liaison he would talk to the Karth Lake Improvement District board.

**Councilmember McClung** said another idea would be to front them a portion of the money and have them pay it back over several years.

Staff was directed to wait to order the pump until after the Karth Lake Improvement District meeting.

### **C. Lake Johanna Boulevard - Speed Display Sign**

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** stated that staff has received several comments from residents concerning traffic speeding along Lake Johanna Boulevard. He is looking for direction from the Council on installing radar speed display signs. He referenced a map of speed limit signs along the roadway and discussed the options of permanent display signs and trailer mounted signs.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** noted that permanent mounted speed control signs are most effective around school zones and areas where there is a large change in the speed limit. Research has shown that on a normal roadway with a constant speed the signs have a diminishing effect over time. He recommended a sign with data recording capabilities. Data collected is helpful to law enforcement, Council and residents. He reviewed estimated costs for a trailer mounted sign and pole mounted signs.

**Councilmember McClung** said he would rather do a trailer mounted sign to move around; solar powered with a backup battery.

**Mayor Grant** was not in favor of purchasing a new sign. He would like to utilize the trailer sign the City currently owns. He felt if the County wanted the data they could buy their own trailers with that ability.

**Councilmember Holden** didn't want to collect speed data for fear the County would actually raise the speed limit. Public Works will need to remove the snow from the solar panels.

**Councilmember Holmes** liked the idea of permanent signs, like on Old Highway 10.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** said he would check into the status of the trailer the City currently owns and see if it is operable.

**Mayor Grant** said if the trailer we have is operable or is fixable to put it on Hamline Avenue, and develop a rotation schedule.

#### **D. MSA Discussion**

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** explained where State Aid comes from and he allotment formula. Arden Hills has a 25% maintenance allotment totaling \$98,000 per year, and 75% construction allotment, totaling \$293,900 per year. A funding request wasn't filed for the Old Snelling water main and trail project. Plans were approved so it is eligible, but they will need to make a request to be funded. An advancement request could be made, paid back through the annual allotments. Or wait for the annual allotments and receive the funds at that time. Either option will require relooking at the CIP funding.

**Finance Director Bauman** said the City wouldn't have to defer projects, but would need to carry the balance until State Aid is available to draw on.

Discussion ensued regarding the CSAH 96 to Gateway Boulevard project costs and funding. Staff will look at the entire description to determine exactly what work was done that was covered by State Aid.

**Finance Director Bauman** explained the funds that were left in the account and what is still owed.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** said his recommendation for the next project would be in the southwest corner of the City, in the Glenpaul area. The City can borrow five times the annual construction allotment if the fund has cash available. Some cities keep a constant backlog but the City has to be able to cash flow the projects. If you use any MSA money on a roadway you can't delist it and put the mileage on another road for 20 years or you have to pay the money back.

**Councilmember Holmes** suggested possibly making Old Snelling not an MSA road. She felt they should reacquaint themselves with the study that was done regarding that possibility.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** said every year the City updates their needs, 20% of total street miles can be State Aid miles, and it includes some County road components and turn back credits.

**Councilmember McClung** asked if staff could provide the actual number of miles of streets in Arden Hills.

#### **E. Public Works Director Discussion**

**City Administrator Perrault** stated the City has a vacancy for Public Works Director/City Engineer, currently being filled by an interim director (Todd Blomstrom) from SEH. The Council's intent was to hire SEH for at least six months to evaluate how to move forward with the position. Staff discussed if the position should be split but felt it wasn't necessary. There are options to consider; 1) re-post for the position 2) continue with a consultant or 3) split the role. Another option would be to enter into a longer-term contract with SEH and leave Mr. Blomstrom in the position.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** explained his work hours and availability. Also, the current Senior Engineering Technician could be groomed into the role of Public Works Director.

After discussion, Council decided to continue the contract with SEH for an additional year (through January 2021), with further options to be discussed at a work session in July. Project bids will be considered from SEH and other vendors.

Council agreed to continue the meeting past 8:00 p.m.

#### **F. Public Works Admin Office Support Discussion**

**City Administrator Perrault** explained there is a need for administrative assistance in the Public Works Department, the position would be similar in grade to the office support positions at City Hall. Some items the assistant could help with include receiving and responding to requests for service, implementing a work order system, coordinating material orders and inventory, monitoring the training and safety program, MS4 permits, informational mailings, and documenting work load statuses. This position would not have a negative impact on the budget.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** felt about half of the calls that are received by the Public Works Director and Superintendent could be handled by this position. He highly recommends getting a work order system implemented among other things. He felt even a half time person would be a huge improvement.

After discussion, staff was directed to post for the position.

#### **G. Old Snelling at Lindsey's Triangle**

**Councilmember Holden** asked if the roundabout has to be built at that location.

**Interim Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** said the County is paying for a considerable amount of the project, and the intersection doesn't meet warrants for a signal light.

**H. Bidding Process**

**Councilmember Holden** stated that she wanted to change the evaluation process for engineering projects, and bidding needs to be handled carefully.

**I. Council Tracker**

**Councilmember Holden** requested that I & I, Recreation Funding, and crack sealing on tennis courts be added to the tracker.

**2. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS**

**Councilmember Scott** noted that he will not be at the October 14 meeting.

**Councilmember McClung** said he also may not be at that meeting.

**ADJOURN**

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session at 8:30 p.m.

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David Grant  
Mayor

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Jolene Trauba  
Deputy Clerk