CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor Grant called to order the City Council Work Session meeting at 5:00 p.m.

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

Absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Dave Perrault, Finance Director Gayle Bauman, Public Works Director/City Engineer Todd Blomstrom, Senior Engineering Technician David Swearingen, Community Development Manager/City Planner Mike Mrosla, Associate Planner Joe Hartmann, Communications Coordinator Dawn Skelly, Recreation Coordinator Sara Knoll, GreenCorps Member Danica Mooney-Jones and Deputy Clerk Jolene Trauba

1. AGENDA ITEMS

A. 2020 State of the City Meeting

Mayor Grant asked if anyone had a preference on date or location.

Communications Coordinator Skelly mentioned that if the event were held at Boston Scientific we would use their food service, at Land O’Lakes we would use their catering service.

After discussion it was determined to have the event at Land O’Lakes on April 23.

Mayor Grant asked if there were any items anyone would like added or removed from the list of topics.

Councilmember Holden would like to have a legislative update. She would like a slide about the foundation and donations.

Communications Coordinator Skelly said staff could ask someone from the Red Bulls to speak.
Mayor Grant agreed that would be a good idea to have them give a short presentation.

Councilmember Holden said she would also like a representative from AHATS to be there.

Discussion ensued on whether a TCAAP item should be added. Mayor Grant will take the topic and decline to answer questions that pertain to litigation.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla suggested having our GreenCorp member at a city booth to answer recycling questions, along with tables for City departments like Park & Rec, the Planning department, and the Engineering department.

After discussion it was decided to not recognize a business partner via proclamation at the event, to invite the host to make a few remarks about their business, request facility tours, invite MnDOT and Ramsey County to speak, and that topics would be divided among the Council members.

B. Recycling Contract and Cleanup Day

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla said Republic can do a cleanup day event for around $18,000 but that doesn’t include prices for bulk electronics. Republic won’t offer bulk-curbside recycling services for Arden Hills because of problems they’ve had in other cities. Time, location and staff would have to be determined for a cleanup event, although they wouldn’t be available until fall.

Councilmember Holmes noted it would be approximately $150 per person and felt we should get rid of cleanup day.

Councilmember McClung thought more residents may take advantage of the event if it were just Arden Hills and the lines weren’t as long as with previous joint events.

GreenCorps Member Mooney-Jones stated a positive about holding a cleanup day is by bringing in recycling haulers to the event some items would be recycled instead of being brought to the landfills.

Councilmember Holden wondered about getting a dumpster in neighborhoods.

City Administrator Perrault said staff could research the idea but he had concerns about City liabilities.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla said a cleanup day could be added onto the next recycling contract.

Council referred the item back to staff to continue researching options including neighborhood dumpsters.
C. Residential Driveway Parking Standards

Associate Planner Joe Hartmann stated that at the October 28, 2019 City Council meeting the council approve a request for variance for a garage with a condition that only four vehicles would be allowed outside between the two driveways on the property. Council directed staff to review the current vehicle parking restrictions for residential properties in the City Code. Staff would like direction regarding properties with two driveways.

Councilmember Holden felt a definition for a driveway should be included.

Councilmember McClung liked the wording of “no more than a total of four vehicles may be parked on a single lot on an approved surface”.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla said if there is a definition of a driveway they can also stipulate what an approved surface is.

Discussion ensued about potential wording of what is a garage or approved surface.

City Administrator Perrault asked how many cars would be allowed that are visible on the lot.

After discussion it was agreed that a definition of driveway would be established, four vehicles would be allowed and language about visibility added.

D. Non-Commercial Signs

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla noted that staff discovered non-conformance with State Statute regarding the number of days non-commercial (political) signs could be placed. State Statue says signs can go up 46 days prior to a State primary election. Staff worked with the City Attorney to revise the language and make it consistent with State Statute. Arden Hills can increase the number of days but can’t go below 46 days.

Councilmember Holmes felt people started putting up signs around Labor Day, or about 70 days.

City Administrator Perrault wondered if the direction is to have 70 days before the State Primary in August which would be mid-May.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosla said the revised text currently reads “any election” that would encompass Federal, State or Local elections. And State Statute says any size sign can go up 46 days before an election.

Staff was directed to change the ordinance to 70 days before any election. It will be brought forward to a future Council meeting.

Councilmember Holmes also requested that language be added that if a sign is removed the sign owner should be notified.
E. Recreation Programs Review

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained Council had requested Staff provide information about the Park and Rec programs. Information provided included a summary of revenue and expenses, an initial comparison of programs with other cities, and a summary of specific programs offered in 2018.

Finance Director Bauman handed out a summary of 2019 noting the year hasn’t closed yet but there is a difference between budgeted and actual costs, mostly due to a staff member being on leave for two months.

Councilmember Holden expressed concern over the expenditure amount.

Finance Director Bauman said a memo was found from 2001 stating their formula at that time was to cover all direct costs plus 40% of overhead. Direct costs are program expenses such as temporary employees, supplies, materials, contractual services etc. Charitable gambling funds also went toward covering those programs. It appears the City is currently covering their direct costs but only a portion of the overhead.

Recreation Coordinator Knoll said they could increase fees for Summer Playground program.

Councilmember Holden suggested the item be sent to FPAC for discussion.

Councilmember Holmes said she would be willing to be on the FPAC as an ad-hoc member or be on the committee.

Councilmember McClung felt FPAC could look at the numbers and possibly bring a new policy forward to the Council.

City Administrator Perrault asked if they wanted to give FPAC specific direction.

Councilmember Holden thought they should be allowed to look at it and come back with a recommendation.

Councilmember McClung said he would give it to them with no preconceptions.

Finance Director Bauman noted the recreation programs are a service to the community so how much would Council like to be city funded and how much would be user fees?

Councilmember Holden suggested asking FPAC to look for up to 50% recoup from user fees.

F. Karth Lake Pump and Control Cabinet

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom noted that Staff worked with the Karth Lake Improvement District Board to consider proposals for replacing the pump. Four options are listed in the memo. The Improvement District Board is recommending Option 1 with the full amount
being levied in 2021 and 2022. They are asking the City to cover the initial cost of the pump and panel so it can be repaired and replaced in the spring of 2020, that the City take responsibility for stabilizing the slope and controlling erosion in the area of the pump and control cabinet, and that the City continue to cover the cost of operating the pump, installing and removing it and storing it in the winter.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said he would prefer to not put in another retaining wall so they would look at options of stopping the water flow and getting vegetation to grow on the bank. A grant application for a 50% match has been submitted to the Rice Creek Watershed.

Councilmember Holden asked if we retrofit the existing cabinet would it be good for ten years.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom responded that the cabinet is stainless steel and even though it is a weathered it is generally still a good cabinet. The price includes putting a phase convertor inside the existing cabinet. He felt the cabinet should be fine for the estimated life of the pump with the assumption that the bank is stabilized with some burning and minor grading to control the drainage.

Councilmember McClung wondered if the Improvement District Board understood that fronting money for repair is a one time thing and they need to establish an escrow.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said they plan to discuss that at their next meeting.

Councilmember Holden said she would go with Option 1 with reassurance from the Improvement District Board that is something happens they take care of it in the future.

Councilmember Holmes agreed that the Karth Lake Improvement District Board should be responsible for the pump and control cabinet.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said at the March Karth Lake Improvement District Board meeting he will discuss with the Board that the city will attempt to stabilize the slope but the Board is responsible into perpetuity for the control cabinet and pump.

Mayor Grant asked if they could try to push the meeting to February.

G. 2020 and 2021 Capital Project Delivery

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said he was asking for direction on three initiatives. The first is the Asset Management Plan, he would like to move that study in-house to be done by Public Works and Engineering personnel, rather than use a consultant to develop a plan. Asset management planning work is recommended for the street system, water distribution system, sanitary sewer system, storm drainage system, park/trail facilities and vehicle/equipment items. He felt this project is one of the most important things they can do to allow the Council to set priorities.
Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom noted they are looking for direction on how to manage the 2021 Pavement Management Program. The Capital Improvement Program identifies street and utility improvements within the residential area consisting of Jerrold Avenue, Glenpaul Avenue, Edgewater Avenue and Prior Avenue. Roadway improvements along Lake Valentine Road are also included in the proposed project. Construction is scheduled for 2021. Staff strongly recommends an early start for this project to ensure adequate time is available for public engagement, design, state aid approval, and quality control reviews prior to awarding the construction contract. They would like to begin that project early this year. One of the first steps is the feasibility report. He would like to develop that report with staff and put that in their 2020 work plan.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said the third piece is the 2020 Capital Projects. Three of those projects for the 2020 construction season primarily involve roadway, paving or drainage improvements; the Hamline Avenue Pedestrian Crosswalks, City Hall Parking Lot Improvements, and the Shorewood Drive Drainage Improvements. Each of those individually are not a freestanding project in terms of bidding. He suggested consolidating those projects into one project package is more efficient to bid, they would likely get more competitive bid prices and would be more efficient to manage during construction. He asked if the Council would agree to negotiating with HR Green to put together a common plan set as they have already done some of the work. They would design the parking lot and Shorewood Drive, take the design sheets they have already prepared for the Hamline Avenue crosswalk and merge them into one common set of plans and specifications.

After discussion Staff was directed to move forward with all three of the recommended projects as presented in the memo; Asset Management Plan, 2021 Pavement Management Plan and 2020 Capital Projects, and to negotiate a professional services agreement with HR Green for the 2020 Capital projects.

H. Council Retreat Discussion

Mayor Grant asked if the Council wanted to have a retreat.

Councilmember McClung wasn’t sure he saw a huge benefit to it.

Councilmember Holden would like to create specific priority lists.

Councilmember Scott said no.

Councilmember Holmes stated no.

Mayor Grant said they could schedule and extra work session rather than a facilitated retreat to discuss priorities.

City Administrator Perrault indicated he was in favor of having a Council retreat. He felt it would be beneficial with the newer staff. He’d like to talk about short term priorities. If Council isn’t interested he would like to have a Department head level retreat but felt prioritization and performance talks with the Council would be beneficial.
Council consensus was to have a meeting with Department heads without a facilitator. Staff will discuss internally and bring back a list of discussion topics.

I. Council Tracker

After discussion, Staff Photo Directory, Brighton Way Vacant House Property Maintenance Issues and Estimated TCAAP Expense Review were removed from the Tracker.

2. COUNCIL COMMENTS AND STAFF UPDATES

Councilmember Holden felt the City should have an ordinance regarding time frames that snowmobiles and dirt bikes could be used.

Councilmember Holden asked if someone could look into more grant opportunities for the City.

Councilmember Scott noted that he may not be at the February 10 meeting.

Councilmember Holmes reminded everyone that the City Administrator’s reviews were due the following day.

Mayor Grant mentioned that he received census information and has given it to Staff to review.

City Administrator Perrault stated the annual staff luncheon would be February 6 and years of service awards would be presented.

Mayor Grant explained that the last item was to consider or develop offers of the purchase of property and 2 Pine Tree Drive. This portion of the meeting would be closed per State Statute 13D.05 subd. 3. (c)(3), pending a formal vote to go to closed session.

The vote carried unanimously 5-0.

J. Land Acquisition Discussion (Closed per Minn. Stat. 13D.05 subd. 3. (c)(3) Consider or Develop Offers for the Purchase of Property)

The City Council discussed the consideration or development of offers at 2 Pine Tree Drive in a closed session.

ADJOURN

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Jolene Trauba  
City Clerk

David Grant  
Mayor