



Approved: October 12, 2020

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
7:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor David Grant called to order the regular City Council meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Note: On March 20th, the Mayor signed a determination allowing Councilmembers to participate in City Council meetings via telephone pursuant to State Statute 13D.021

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

Absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Dave Perrault; Public Works Director/City Engineer Todd Blomstrom; Finance Director Gayle Bauman; City Clerk Julie Hanson **via telephone:** Community Development Manager/ City Planner Mike Mrosla

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Councilmember Holden moved and Councilmember Holmes seconded a motion to approve the meeting agenda as presented. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

2. PUBLIC INQUIRIES/INFORMATIONAL

None.

3. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC INQUIRIES

None.

4. STAFF COMMENTS

A. COVID-19 Update

City Administrator Perrault provided the Council with an update on how the City was responding to COVID-19. He encouraged residents to visit the City's website for the most current and up to date information regarding COVID-19. He reported the Minnesota Department of Health and CDC also had websites with current guidelines and recommendations. He explained the City of Arden Hills remains in a peacetime state of emergency and City Hall will remain closed until further notice. He indicated all City services remain operational and staff can be reached via phone or email. He reported the City's small business assistance grant program was approved by the City Council at a previous meeting and applications were still being accepted.

B. Transportation Update

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom reported work continues on the I-35W MNPASS project. He explained the center paving and median work south of I-694 is nearing completion. He commented on the County Road I bridge replacement. He indicated drivers are asked to remain aware when driving through the I-35W project area to ensure safe passage.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. July 20, 2020, City Council Work Session
- B. August 10, 2020, Special City Council Work Session
- C. August 10, 2020, Special City Council Executive Session (Closed)
- D. August 10, 2020, Regular City Council
- E. August 17, 2020, City Council Work Session

Councilmember Scott stated he submitted minor corrections to staff for the August 10 Regular City Council meeting minutes and August 17 City Council Work Session meeting minutes.

MOTION: **Councilmember Holden moved and Councilmember Holmes seconded a motion to approve the July 20, 2020, City Council Work Session meeting minutes, August 10, 2020, Special City Council Work Session meeting minutes, August 10, 2020, Special City Council Work Session (Closed) meeting minutes; August 10, 2020, Regular City Council meeting minutes as amended; and August 17, 2020, City Council Work Session meeting minutes as amended. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Motion to Approve Consent Agenda Item - Claims and Payroll
- B. Motion to Authorize Purchase of Ford F150 Extended Cab Pickup Truck
- C. Motion to Award 2020 CIPP Lining Project to Michels Corporation
- D. Motion to Approve Resolution 2020-041 for Denial of Findings of Fact and Decision – Planning Case 20-004 – Variance at 1741 Venus Avenue
- E. Motion to Approve Planning Case 20-005 – Development Agreement – Bethel University – 2 Pine Tree Drive

MOTION: Councilmember Holden moved and Councilmember Holmes seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as presented and to authorize execution of all necessary documents contained therein. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

7. PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

None.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. 2021 PMP Street and Utility Improvement Project

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom stated on July 27, 2020 the City Council adopted Resolution 2020-029 receiving the feasibility report and calling for a public hearing on September 14, 2020 to consider proposed improvements for the 2021 Pavement Management Program (PMP) Street and Utility Improvement Project.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained projects involving special assessments generally require two public hearings commonly known as an improvement hearing and an assessment hearing. The subject hearing for September 14 is the first improvement hearing. The purpose of the improvement hearing is for the City Council to discuss a specific local improvement before ordering it done. The second assessment hearing would be scheduled for early spring next year to provide property owners an opportunity to express concerns about the actual special assessments.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom reported at the improvement hearing, interested persons may voice their opinion regarding the proposed project improvements and whether or not they are in the proposed assessment area. A reasonable estimate of the total amount to be assessed and the description of the methodology used to calculate individual assessment for affected parcels is contained within the feasibility report, a copy of which is available for review on the City's website. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 429, notices of the public hearing were published in the Pioneer Press on August 31, 2020 and September 7, 2020. A notice was also mailed to each property within the feasibility study area on August 28, 2020.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom indicated the following streets are proposed for reconstruction: Jerrold Avenue from New Brighton Road to 335 feet west of Prior Avenue; Glenpaul Avenue from New Brighton Road to Cleveland Avenue; and Prior Avenue from County Road D to 155-feet north of Jerrold Avenue. Reconstruction involves fully rebuilding the road base and surface and the addition of curb and gutter along the length of the street. The following streets are proposed to be reclaimed: Edgewater Avenue from New Brighton Road to west cul-de-sac, and Jerrold Avenue from 335 feet west of Prior Avenue to west cul-de-sac. Reclamation involves pulverizing the existing bituminous surface and recycling the material to be used as an aggregate base prior to installing a new bituminous surface. These street segments currently have concrete curb and gutter. The project includes spot repairs for damaged curb. The feasibility study also investigated potential street improvements along Lake Valentine Road from Snelling Avenue North (CSAH 76) to Mounds View High School and recommends these street

improvements be rescheduled for the year 2028. The City's Public Works Department would complete routine surface repairs to address pavement condition issues along Lake Valentine Road during the interim period. The estimated costs and funding sources for the roadway projects was reviewed with the Council. Staff provided further comment on the street, curb, storm drainage, water system and sanitary sewer improvements that would be completed for these roadways and requested the Council hold a Public Hearing.

Councilmember Holden asked what the next steps would be for this project. She understood February was the best month for the City to receive bids. She questioned why the City was seeking bids in March or April.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom reviewed the next steps for this project and anticipated the project would be bid at the end of January. He noted the bidding would remain open for two or three weeks.

Councilmember Holmes commented on the core samples and pavement conditions for the roadways. She inquired if reclamation or reconstruction was recommended for the core sample on Slide 18.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom reported the deterioration was significant for this core sample and therefore this street would require a full depth reclamation of the pavement.

Councilmember Holmes stated she supported curb and gutter being installed along Jerrold Avenue. She requested staff speak further as to the benefits of curb and gutter being installed.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained as bituminous goes through the freeze/thaw cycle in Minnesota the pavement can deteriorate and deform. This process can create flat spots that hold water. He stated poor drainage is a key factor in pavement deterioration. He commented further on the importance of curb and gutter in keeping pavement well drained.

Mayor Grant opened the public hearing at 7:43 p.m.

Urbae Hall, 1991 Edgewater Avenue, asked if the proposed improvements would help address the standing water on Prior Avenue.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom reviewed the expanded storm sewer and catch basins that would be installed along Prior Avenue. He reported these improvements would address the standing water that occurs along Prior Avenue.

Deb Lane, 1950 Jerrold Avenue, questioned if the rain gardens would be part of the curb and gutter project.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained the City would be looking for residents who would volunteer to have a rain garden.

Ms. Lane stated she would be willing to volunteer to have a rain garden. She inquired what she would have to do to get the sewer pipe from her house to the street replaced.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom encouraged any resident interested in having their sewer pipe replaced to contact City staff. He noted this work would be addressed during the second round of public engagement. He reported staff would assist in coordinating this work but noted the work would not be completed by the City.

Councilmember Holden requested further information on how the water would drain from Prior Avenue.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom discussed how the water would drain along Prior Avenue and into storm drains.

Thomas Whittle, 1867 Glenpaul Avenue, questioned how old Glenpaul Avenue was originally put in place.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom stated a thin overlay was completed in the late 1990's on Glenpaul Avenue.

City Administrator Perrault reported staff received one comment via the chat function asking if the City had explored sidewalk installation.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained staff did not receive any comments expressing the desire for sidewalks in the Glenpaul or Hazelnut neighborhoods. He reported the residents that live along Lake Valentine Road had expressed the desire to have a sidewalk from Snelling Avenue to the Mounds View High School for students. He indicated the City is pursuing a grant application for a trail extension along Lake Valentine Road.

With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Grant closed the public hearing at 7:58 p.m.

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution 2020-037 Ordering Improvements and Preparation of Plans and Specifications for the 2021 PMP Street and Utility Improvement Project

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom stated following the public hearing under agenda item No. 8A, the next step in the project delivery process is to approve a Resolution ordering the improvements and the preparation of plans and specification for the 2021 PMP Street and Utility Improvement Project. The resolution would order the improvements and plans in accordance with the recommendations provided in Section 7 of the project feasibility report. Upon approval of the resolution, the project design process would proceed with a second virtual public informational meeting conducted during the week of October 19, 2020, final plans available for City Council approval in January 2021 and an assessment hearing scheduled for late March or early April 2021.

Councilmember Holden stated she would like to clear up whether or not Prior Avenue was included in the project area. She commented she did not believe Prior Avenue should be included.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained based upon the City's assessment policy Prior Avenue would be excluded.

MOTION: **Councilmember Holden moved and Councilmember Holmes seconded a motion to adopt Resolution #2020-037 – Ordering Improvements and Preparation of Plans and Specifications for the 2021 PMP Street and Utility Improvement Project.**

Councilmember Holden hoped that the City Council would vote to support this Resolution. She indicated these streets were in dire need of improvement.

Councilmember McClung agreed.

Mayor Grant reported he drove these roadways and explained some are very close to breaking apart. He agreed these streets were in need of improvement.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried (5-0).

B. Set Preliminary Levy and Establish Truth in Taxation Public Hearing Date for Proposed Taxes Payable in 2021

Finance Director Bauman explained State law requires that cities certify their proposed property tax levies to the county auditor by September 30. The proposed tax levy that is given preliminary approval may be lowered but cannot be increased. The City Council needs to decide the maximum levy that it is willing to approve and then adopt a Resolution. The final levy will be set in December 2020. A budget workshop was held with the Council on August 17, 2020. Staff was directed to reduce the proposed COLA for non-union employees from 3% to 2% and to raise the proposed maximum levy increase from 3% to 5%. It was noted there will be another budget workshop in either October or November, prior to the final levy and budget adoption meeting in December. She provided further comment on the anticipated expenditures and revenues for 2021. She described how the proposed levy would impact the median value homeowner. She discussed the amount of funds available for a General Fund Transfer and recommended \$341,000 be transferred to cover the cost of the land purchase for the future Lake Johanna Fire Station and that the remaining \$137,000 be transferred to the PIR Fund. Staff recommended the Council set the Preliminary Levy and Set the Truth in Taxation Hearing Date.

Councilmember Holmes requested further information regarding the City's tax rate.

Finance Director Bauman explained the tax rate was the percentage that was applied to the estimated taxable value of a home. She reviewed the City's tax rate from 2020, which was 25.414%. She noted with a 3% tax levy the City's tax rate would be 24.891% in 2021 and with a 5% tax levy the City's tax rate would be 25.417% in 2021.

Councilmember Holmes asked why NYFS was included in the City Council budget. She recommended this expense be a separate line item.

City Administrator Perrault stated this was a historical item and noted the expense could be moved to a separate line item.

Mayor Grant commented he did not believe it was necessary to make this a separate line item.

Councilmember Holden suggested this item be placed under Administration or under its own line item.

Councilmember Holmes stated two large projects were included in the building permit revenues for next year. She indicated the Council should take into consideration how this line item would be impacted if these projects did not go forward. She discussed the Karth Lake assessment and questioned how these assessments would be administered.

Finance Director Bauman explained once the paperwork was sent to Ramsey County, the County would administer the distribution and collection of these fees.

Councilmember McClung commented he did not have any problem with the Karth Lake assessments or the Truth in Taxation hearing date. He indicated he was having trouble with 5% levy increase. He stated he would like to see this reduced to 3% by December. He explained he could support a tax levy of 4% at this time.

Councilmember Scott reported this was a preliminary levy and noted this was a not to exceed amount that could come down. He stated the City gives itself some wiggle room within the preliminary levy and could reduce this amount between September and December.

Councilmember Holden indicated she agreed with Councilmember McClung. She stated the City had \$478,000 leftover from last year. For this reason, she recommended the City move forward with a 4% tax levy so as not to have an overly high surplus.

Mayor Grant commented he understood this was a preliminary levy. He explained he could support a 4% tax levy moving forward at this time.

Councilmember Holmes stated she would like the City to move forward with a 5% tax levy for 2021. She indicated the City would not be putting a sizeable transfer into the PIR fund in 2020 due to the purchase of the fire station property. For this reason, she recommended the Council approve a 5% tax levy for the coming year.

Councilmember Scott commented he supported a 4.5% tax levy. He stated he did not want the City to have to approve larger increases in the future.

Mayor Grant provided a summary of the comments being made by the Council and asked if the Council could support the preliminary tax levy being set at 4.25%.

Councilmember Holden indicated she could support 4.25%.

Councilmember McClung explained he could support the preliminary tax levy being set at 4.25%.

Councilmember Scott agreed.

Mayor Grant reported he could support the tax levy being set at 4.25%.

Councilmember Holden asked what amount would be certified if the tax levy were set at 4.25%.

Finance Director Bauman reported this amount would be \$4,311,090.

MOTION: Councilmember Holden moved and Mayor Grant seconded a motion to adopt Resolution #2020-038 – Setting the Preliminary Levy for Taxes Payable in 2021 in the amount of \$4,311,090. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried 4-1 (Councilmember McClung opposed).

MOTION: Councilmember Holden moved and Councilmember Holmes seconded a motion to adopt Resolution #2020-039 – Setting the Preliminary Levy for Taxes Payable in 2021 for the Karth Lake Special Taxing District in the amount of \$6,611.11. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried (5-0).

MOTION: Councilmember Holden moved and Councilmember Holmes seconded a motion to adopt Resolution #2020-040 – Adopting Truth In Taxation Public Hearing Date for Proposed Taxes Payable in 2021 as December 14, 2020. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried (5-0).

C. Resolution 2020-042 Extending the Application Submittal Period for Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant Program

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosła stated at its August 24, 2020 meeting, the City Council adopted resolution 2020-035 establishing a Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant Program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the direction of the City Council, the City of Arden Hills made available \$150,000 of CARES Act Funds to support the Grant Program. The intent of the grant program is to provide financial assistance to local businesses to help them continue their operations, preserve employment, and prevent business closures in an effort to encourage long-term economic vitality in Arden Hills. The program provides locally-owned and operated businesses with an emergency grant of up to \$5,000. The established grant amount allows for up to 30 Arden Hills business to apply and receive funding. To be eligible to receive a grant, a business must demonstrate loss due to COVID-19 and meet the eligibility requirements and program parameters.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosła reported the application window opened on Monday, August 31 and runs through Tuesday, September 15, 2020. To date, City staff has received 18 applications for funding. Should Council want to extend the application window via resolution to allow for additional time for businesses to apply for the grant a Resolution has been provided for consideration. If approved, staff would promote the extension through emails, the website, and social media.

Councilmember Holmes stated she supported extending this program. She questioned if this extension would allow businesses that received grants in round one to reapply in round two if they have additional expenses.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosia commented if the Council were to approve a program extension, the requirements for round 2 could be changed to allow businesses to reapply for additional funding.

Mayor Grant indicated he would like to spread this money around to help as many businesses as possible. He explained the City has enough money within this program to help 30 businesses. He stated he supported the program being extended an additional two weeks.

Councilmember McClung reported his only concern with extending this program was that he wanted to be assured the City had enough time to complete a second round if funding is available. He suggested round one only be extended an additional 10 days.

Mayor Grant questioned if Councilmember McClung supported a second round of funding if all funds has been exhausted during round one.

Councilmember McClung stated he would support the City Council considering a second round of funding if this were to occur.

Councilmember Holden questioned what staff would recommend for this program.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosia recommended the program be extended to Friday, September 25.

MOTION: **Councilmember Holden moved and Councilmember XX seconded a motion to adopt Resolution #2020-042 – Extending the Application Window for the Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant Program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through September 25, 2020. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried (5-0).**

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

11. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Scott stated last month he attended a neighborhood meeting in the Fairview and Crystal neighborhoods after a crime spree occurred. He indicated 30 residents were in attendance at this meeting, along with Ramsey County Deputy Mike Servatka. He noted Cindy Garretson volunteered to organize and chair a new neighborhood watch program for this area. He explained a sign would be posted in this neighborhood and that the neighborhood had requested a 2nd sign since there were two major entrances to the neighborhood.

Councilmember Scott commented the residents in this neighborhood were still concerned with the speed of traffic in this area of the City. He requested the Council discuss the speed of traffic in residential neighborhoods at a future worksession meeting.

Councilmember McClung reported Minnesota would be an important state in the upcoming election. He encouraged residents to consider voting absentee, which would begin on September 18, 2020 and would run through November 2, 2020. He reminded the public that the general election would be held on Tuesday, November 3.

Councilmember Holmes discussed the improvements that had been made at Perry Park. She stated the dog park looks really nice.

Councilmember Holden thanked the Public Works staff for their great efforts to overlay Norma Lane, Dawn Circle and Edie Circle.

Councilmember Holden supported the City Council discussing a change to the residential speed limit to 25 miles per hour.

Councilmember Holden stated the Lake Johanna neighborhood has been trying to get Ramsey County to address the speed of traffic from Beckman to Lake Lane.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom explained he would speak with the County and would report back to the Council regarding this matter.

Councilmember Holden recommended a letter be sent to the County Commissioner regarding the County park in Arden Hills. She wanted to see sidewalks and crosswalks installed at Lake Johanna.

Councilmember Holden commented the Arden Hills/Shoreview Rotary would be completing some volunteer work in Arden Hills. She explained this group would be painting the ice skating rink this fall and next spring would be installing a garden at the manufactured home community.

Councilmember Holden thanked staff for posting information regarding voting via absentee ballot on the City's website and other social media platforms.

Mayor Grant stated the dog park had the backstop removed some time ago. He requested staff look into the deep holes that dogs have dug at the dog park.

Mayor Grant thanked the Public Works Department for their great work on the overlay project.

Mayor Grant requested an update from staff on the upcoming election.

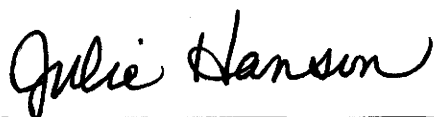
City Clerk Hanson provided the Council with an update on the upcoming election. She explained absentee voting would begin on Friday, September 18. She reported in person, early absentee voting would take place at the Ramsey County Elections Office in St. Paul, the New Brighton Community Center and the Ramsey County Library in Roseville. She reported additional sites would be opening for in-person absentee voting on October 27 but these sites have not been

finalized. She reported she would be meeting with Ramsey County elections staff tomorrow to learn more about this. She stated those that request a ballot by mail would be allowed to turn their ballot in in person at certain locations and that more information would be provided in the near future regarding this option and process.

ADJOURN

MOTION: Mayor Grant moved and Councilmember Holmes seconded a motion to adjourn. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Mayor Grant adjourned the Regular City Council Meeting at 9:10 p.m.



Julie Hanson
City Clerk



David Grant
Mayor