

MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
October 7, 2019
City Hall Council Chambers

PRESENT: Mayor Stiehm. Council Members Steve King, Paul Fischer, Jason Baskin, Joyce Poshusta, Laura Helle, Council Member-at-Large Jeff Austin

ABSENT: Council Member Rebecca Waller

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Planning and Zoning Administrator Holly Wallace, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Police Chief David McKichan, Fire Chief Jim McCoy, Park and Recreation Director Kevin Nelson and City Clerk Ann Kasel

ALSO PRESENT: Austin Daily Herald, KAUS Radio, Honorary Council Member Austere Apolo

Mayor Stiehm opened the meeting at 5:51 p.m.

Item No. 1 – 2020 Budget Discussion

Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert stated the Council's levy for 2020 has been certified to the State. He stated staff are fine tuning the budget for final adoption in December.

The item will be added to the October 21, 2019 agenda if Council would like additional discussion.

Item No. 2 – 5-year Capital Improvement Plan Review

Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert presented the 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Plan. The plan identifies approximately 121 million dollars in capital improvements for the City, some of which are contingent on receiving grant funds. The purpose of the work session was to review and ask questions about any of the proposed items. Then the Council will approve the document in December 2018 which authorizes the staff to purchase the 2020 items that are indicated in the CIP. For years 2021 and beyond, the document serves as a guide for the future but is subject to change as the City's needs change.

Pages 5-6 - Police Chief David McKichan discussed the Police Department's capital improvement plan and noted that there are two marked squad cars and an unmarked car budgeted for 2020. The Department has been using funds from the forfeited vehicle reserve balance to outfit the vehicles. He also noted other computer upgrades and other equipment purchases over the next five years.

Pages 7-8 – Fire Chief Jim McCoy presented the Fire Department’s capital improvement items. In 2020, Chief McCoy plans to purchase pagers on the 800 mhz system. He noted a \$470,000 vehicle replacement in 2022.

Page 9-10 – Library Director Julie Clinefelter presented the Library’s portion of the capital improvement plan. In 2020, new flooring is planned for the library. Other renovations and improvements are scheduled for future years.

Page 11 – Administrative Services Director Tom Dankert stated the Nature Center asks for most of their capital improvements though the Hormel Foundation or the Friends of the Hormel Nature Center. He noted a water heater for Ruby Rupner auditorium would be updated in 2020.

Pages 46-50 – Mr. Nelson reviewed Parks and Recreation requests noting various upgrades to parks including roads, playground equipment, buildings, signs and accessibility. The Park and Rec equipment fleet is also older and various purchases of vehicles and equipment are scheduled over the next five years.

Pages 12-13 – Director of Administrative Services Tom Dankert discussed Administration’s capital improvement projects stating that funds are being budgeted for public works equipment, a new copier, computers and other engineering equipment. Each year \$20,000 is set aside for computers and associated equipment.

Pages 14-16 – Steven Lang reviewed the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) noting the repairs and upgrades scheduled for the future. The City is waiting for the final permit from the MPCA to determine upgrades in the future. The WWTP is an older facility and continual upgrades are needed to keep it flowing smoothly. The proposed cost to upgrade the WWTP is \$70 million.

Pages 17-19 – Steven Lang presented on the proposed improvements to the Central Garage. The older vehicles get rolled down from supervisors to the crew and the vehicle causing the most problems gets sold from the fleet. There are also roof repairs scheduled for 2020.

Page 20 – Steven Lang stated the Waste Transfer Station is in need to some repairs over the next few years including a new compactor in 2021. The City entered into an agreement for the lease of the transfer station so additional improvements may be made in the future.

Pages 21-23 – Steven Lang stated the airport has been upgraded recently so most of the capital improvement items are maintenance issues. The item for the 2020 budget is a fuel tank upgrade in the amount of \$570,000. Many of the airport projects are contingent upon grants from the FAA or MnDOT.

Pages 24-26 - Steven Lang reviewed the non-MSA streets, noting that these are not supported by the state gas tax. These are local projects paid for with local tax dollars and assessments in order to fund the construction. Each year the street department looks at the proposed streets to see if they need to be reprioritized based on deterioration. In 2020, \$2.5 million dollars in projects are scheduled.

Pages 27-29 – Steven Lang discussed the MSA streets that are funded with approximately \$1 million of state gas tax money each year. The City assesses all of these property owners under the same assessment policy as non-MSA residents. This assessment policy eliminates the favoritism for one street of homeowners versus another. The projects scheduled for 2020 total \$2.6 million dollars

Pages 30-31 – Steven Lang discussed the upcoming trail projects. There are three additional trails slated for the City of Austin through 2023.

Pages 32-36 – Steven Lang noted the Sanitary Sewer capital improvement plans. Each year funds are allocated for manhole replacements; for inspection of all City mains and inspection of all private lines and plumbing; and for replacement of mains with street construction projects. Lift stations are also scheduled for reconstruction.

Pages 37-39 – Steven Lang noted Miscellaneous Street projects scheduled for 2020 including an LED lighting conversion. There are also additional lighting projects scheduled through 2023.

Pages 40-45 – Steven Lang discussed the items under Miscellaneous Other Projects including tile line installation, sidewalk and pedestrian upgrades, hazardous building removal, Ramsey Dam. Other arena improvements are also scheduled.

Pages 51-54 - Steven Lang discussed the storm water utility district noting that there are various projects scheduled over the next five years to the current system. There have been drainage issues identified that will be addressed through these projects.

Page 56-57 Steven Lang presented on the City's Flood Mitigation efforts. The City will continue scattered site acquisitions in 2020 and a levee at the Waste Water Treatment Plant in 2021. There are no grant dollars for the project at this time and LOST funds may have to be allocated for the project to be completed.

Page 58- Mr. Dankert noted \$450,000 each year will be allocated for housing initiatives out of tax levy and building fund levy.

Page 59 – Mr. Dankert presented some economic development areas including 8th Avenue NE redevelopment, Port Authority property clean up and industrial park land acquisition.

Mr. Dankert concluded the discussion stating he would make minor modifications to the capital improvement plan and bring it back to the Council for adoption in late 2019. No additional Council action needed at this time.

Item No. 3 – Council Goals

None.

Item No. 4 – Administrative Report

None.

Item No. 5 - Open Discussion

Mayor Stiehm stated the Chamber of Commerce is wanting to give up Freedom Fest and the City may need to take over a portion of the event.

Council Member Helle stated it makes the most sense for the City to take the fireworks and spoke in support of the City having one night of fireworks.

Honorary Council Member Comments

Honorary Council Member Austere Apolo stated she is learning a lot from attending the City Council meetings.

Moved by Council Member King, seconded by Council Member Helle, adjourning the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann M. Kasel
City Clerk