

January 7, 2015

The City Council conducted a Work Session on the above date.

City Administrator Kristina Handt administered the oath of office to Mayor Randall Simonson and Council members Jim Schneider and Bob Hegland. At the November 4, 2014 General Election, Mayor Simonson was re-elected to a two-year term of office. Schneider was re-elected to a 4-year term and Hegland was elected to begin a 4-year term on the Council.

Mayor Simonson called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. The following were present: Council members Bob Hegland, Dan Lee, Chris Ness, Jim Schneider and Mayor Simonson. Staff members: City Administrator Kristina Handt, Public Works Director Tim Kieffer and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Administrator Handt stated that discussion of a property on Keystone Avenue should be added to the agenda. **Ness, seconded by Lee, moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 5-0.**

TREE TRIMMING POLICY

The Tree Trimming Policy was reviewed at the November 18 Council meeting, and staff was directed to only use the flail mower in the down position. No other changes were made at that time, and Mayor Simonson offered to discuss the policy further at a work session.

Council member Lee stated that he had met with residents to work on ideas and suggested revisions to the current policy. Margie Schmidt was in attendance to discuss the recommended additions such as forming a tree committee to evaluate areas to be trimmed, to top off dead trees but leave them in place to decrease erosion, and having an option for neighborhoods to opt out of tree trimming in the right-of-way.

There was much discussion on the pros and cons of having a sub-committee appointed to oversee and determine the extent of tree trimming in the right-of-way. Eventually the Council came to a consensus on modifying the policy so that landowners could be given the opportunity to appeal the removal and trimming of trees that abut their property. As has been the practice, a notification letter will be sent prior to the start of any tree trimming within the right-of-way. If a landowner has concerns about the removal of trees, they will have two weeks to contact Public Works Director Tim Keiffer and he will mark the trees and could meet with them on site to explain the proposed work. If the landowner wants to dispute the extent of the tree removal and/or trimming and no resolution can be achieved with Public Works, the appeal will be on the next City Council agenda for a determination by the Council. All agreed that this was a fair compromise to the situation.

This language will be added to the policy along with a statement that the flail mower will never be used to vertically trim trees. A draft of the amended tree trimming policy will be on the January 20th Council agenda.

PILAR, PARIS, PERKINS, PENFIELD TREE TRIMMING AND GRUBBING

Last January, City Engineer Goodman presented a report on the scope of work necessary for improving the gravel roadway on Pilar Road and the adjacent network of gravel roads. The Council agreed that improvements need to be done to address safety issues, and asked that the work be staged out over five years. There is \$30,000 in the 2015 budget to begin the tree trimming and grubbing work this year as the first step.

Administrator Handt asked the Council if the work should proceed ahead as planned. The Council members were in consensus that the work should move forward. Public Works Director Kieffer will obtain quotes so that the bid could be awarded at the January Council meeting and the work done on the roads this winter.

CHANGE ORDER, 201 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, AUTOMATIC SYSTEM

Public Works Director Kieffer explained that the 201 Improvements Project was awarded to Automatic Systems last year based on using a 10 foot mast atop the lift station control panel. A radio path study, to determine if a signal for the transmission of data to the fire hall where the master SCADA system is located, was not completed at that time. Automatic Systems recently conducted this study at their cost and determined that the hilly terrain requires additional height for the signal to transmit. Several options for radio upgrades were offered and Kieffer recommended Option 1 as the most cost effective, a 40-foot wooden pole installed at the A/E drainfield that will allow proper radio communications between the Bliss radio as well. A quote of \$9,987, plus easement costs to directional drill cable from the lift station to the drainfield, was given.

Council member Schneider stated that he was disappointed with this additional cost and thought that Automatic Systems should cover these costs. Kieffer explained that it is upsetting that a formal study was not done, but language in the contract covered this possibility. Administrator Handt stated that the company has brought the cost down after meeting with staff. Action needs to be taken on this, as there are no alarm systems operating on the lift stations right now.

Council member Lee asked if a repeater could be installed on an existing cell tower to serve the same purpose. Handt stated that this had not been considered, but there could be leasing costs involved. Schneider and Ness recommended that other options be considered as well, such as adding a pole off the top of the warning siren. Kieffer will continue to explore these alternatives.

ANNEX / OLD FIRE HALL

Administrator Handt explained that recently a local business was exploring possibilities to relocate to a building with high ceilings and a large service door. They may have resolved their lease issues, but it has brought forward an idea to consider giving the annex/old fire hall to the EDA and allowing them to lease it out as a revenue stream to the EDA that does not rely on tax dollars. Currently the Lions share the building with the Boy Scout Troop for storage. The Lions have a lease with the City in which they pay \$150 per month and the City maintains electricity and minimal heat.

Council members Lee, Ness and Schneider stated that they would not be in favor of selling the building, but renting out the building could be explored. Council member Hegland suggested

that the building's value be determined in order to study the cash flow benefits of renting versus selling. Handt replied that the insurance firm did a valuation analysis last year and she will bring back a ballpark figure from that report.

Mayor Simonson commented that it is a valued piece of property that the City could do more with than what it is doing now.

BUILDING INSPECTOR PROPOSALS AND INTERVIEW TIMES

Administrator Handt reported that two proposals for building inspection services were received by the January 7 deadline. Neither included SSTS services but indicated that they would be open to pursuing this. It was decided that Council members Hegland and Schneider would interview the City of Hugo and CCC Inspections next Tuesday, January 13th and make a recommendation to the Council at their January 20th meeting.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS AND UPDATE ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Council made the following appointments to various committees:

Economic Development Authority Liaison

Simonson, seconded by Lee, moved to appoint Hegland to the EDA. The motion carried 5-0.

Forest Lake Cable Commission Liaison

Mayor Simonson volunteered to stay on as Scandia's representative to the Cable Commission. **Simonson, seconded by Schneider, moved to appoint Simonson to the Forest Lake Cable Commission. The motion carried 5-0.**

Parks and Recreation / Economic Development Authority Liaison

Council member Lee stated that he enjoys serving on these committees and would like to continue. **Simonson, seconded by Schneider, moved to appoint Lee to the Parks and Recreation Committee and the EDA. The motion carried 5-0.**

Planning Commission Liaison

Simonson, seconded by Schneider, moved to appoint Ness as a liaison to the Planning Commission. The motion carried 5-0.

Acting Mayor

Council member Ness agreed to serve as Acting Mayor in 2015. This appointment will be made at the January 20th meeting.

Planning Commission

Two citizen applications were received. **Simonson moved to appoint Walt Anderson to serve on the Planning Commission. The motion failed for lack of a second.**

There was discussion on the candidates and whether or not interviews should be scheduled.

Lee moved to appoint Mike White to serve on the Planning Commission. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Ness, seconded by Simonson, moved to appoint Walt Anderson to serve a 5-year term on the Planning Commission. The motion carried 5-0.

Wastewater Advisory

Schneider, seconded by Lee, moved to appoint Peter Nora to serve a 5-year term to represent the Uptown System on the Wastewater Advisory Committee. The motion carried 5-0. Council member Schneider agreed to continue to serve as the Council liaison.

Capital Improvement Committee

Three citizen applications were received for the five available positions on the Capital Improvement Committee. **Ness, seconded by Lee, moved to appoint Lisa Schlingerman, Brad Borg and Mike White to the Capital Improvement Committee. The motion carried 5-0.** Staff will continue to advertise for the remaining two positions. Meetings will begin in May.

Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District

One application was received for a Scandia representative to the Watershed. Since a recommendation to the County Board is not due for another month, Mayor Simonson suggested that Steve Kronmiller be contacted to see if he is interested in continuing as the Scandia representative. The Council was in agreement to this.

DISCUSSION OF 18881 KEYSTONE AVENUE

Administrator Handt described a unique situation in which the owners of 18881 Keystone Avenue have an adjacent property to the west which lies in Forest Lake. They wish to build a new home on the Scandia lot that would be 8-feet from the sideyard. Under normal circumstances the City would require them to combine the lots in order to eliminate the setback issue, but this is not possible when the lots are in two separate jurisdictions. Handt explained that it would be difficult to justify a variance given the large lot size and that the proposed location of the house fits best with the configuration of the existing outbuildings. Handt stated that going through the variance process may be penalizing them when a solution could be handled by recording a development agreement that ties the two parcels together so that they could not be sold separately. Forest Lake took this approach so that the property owners could build an accessory structure on the west parcel. City Attorney Vivian advised that a development agreement is a viable option for working through this situation.

The Council was in consensus to proceed with drawing up a development agreement on this property.

ADJOURNMENT

Ness, seconded by Schneider, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.
The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Eklund, Deputy Clerk