

April 6, 2016

The City Council held a Work Session on the above date. The following were present: Mayor Randall Simonson, Council members Dan Lee, Bob Hegland, Chris Ness, and Jim Schneider. Staff present: City Administrator Neil Soltis, Public Works Director Dave Williams, Fire Chief Mike Hinz and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

Mayor Simonson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Council member Ness added Agenda Item #12, Solar Garden update. **Schneider, seconded by Lee, moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 5-0.**

### **UPDATE OF FIRE DEPARTMENT RECRUITING**

Fire Chief Hinz provided an update on the recruiting process for volunteer firefighters. Seven applications have been received so far; an increase from previous years due to direct contacts with residents and an open house held at the station in February. Interviews will be scheduled the week of April 20<sup>th</sup> with the physical testing occurring on April 30<sup>th</sup>. It's anticipated that at least six new hires will be recommended at the May 17<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. With the anticipated retirements this year, Hinz proposed that recruiting will need to occur each spring to keep the department adequately staffed.

### **UPDATE OF STREET PATCHING PROGRAM**

Public Works Director Williams explained that certain streets have been especially hard hit this spring with pavement break-up. Old Marine Trail is recommended for a bituminous overlay of 2,550 feet in length instead of patching to prolong the life of the road until its scheduled reconstruction in 2018. Williams estimated all patching projects, including Meadowbrook, Oakhill, Peabody and 220<sup>th</sup> would cost approximately \$98,000, with Old Marine Trail's overlay portion being \$58,000.

Council member Schneider stated that he was opposed to spending the funds for an overlay on Old Marine Trail since it will be reconstructed in 2018 anyway. Council member Lee agreed that as long as the worst segments can be patched for now, an overlay is not necessary, especially since it's a low traffic road. He said that it should be communicated to the residents that they will be getting a new road in a few years. Council member Ness said that he was not in favor of spending close to \$60,000 for work that will be replaced in two years.

Administrator Soltis stated that staff will pursue a regular patching project this season, with a bid review in April for work to begin in May or June. Williams stated that the Public Works crew will be able to complete some of the work with a paver that will be on loan from Hugo.

### **DISCUSSION ON SEASONAL WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS**

As discussed at the March Work Session, the City must follow the state statute on seasonal weight restrictions when there is no city ordinance in place. This is currently 10 tons per axle on paved streets and a 5 ton limit on unpaved streets. Scandia has traditionally communicated a 5 ton limit on all city roads when the county and state limits go into effect, but cannot legally

provide this restriction without an ordinance in place. Soltis presented a draft ordinance that provides for a 5-ton weight limit on all roads unless posted otherwise. Exemptions for school busses, refuse and utility trucks, and a process for emergency exemptions were included. Consensus was to prepare the ordinance for adoption at the April 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

#### **DISCUSSION ON PURCHASE OF COUNCIL CHAMBERS AUDIO SYSTEM**

Mayor Simonson explained that \$8,000 was earmarked in the 2016 budget for the purchase of an audio system for the Council chambers. Several quotes were submitted, with Alpha Video providing the lowest quote of \$8,750. The quote includes the installation of four ceiling mounted speakers, eleven microphones, and audio input. Simonson explained that Midco Cable provided a point of origination capability to the building through fiber optics at no cost as part of the franchise agreement, and the installation of audio would fulfill the City's obligation. Simonson stated that it is a disservice to the community when the audience cannot hear what is being said at public meetings.

Council member Lee said that he does not see the value in this project; the audience can ask speakers to talk louder if they cannot hear. Council members Ness and Schneider also stated their opposition, with Schneider stating that it is a waste of money for a small room to be wired for audio.

#### **FOREST LAKE CABLE COMMISSION VACANCY**

Administrator Soltis reported that no applications for the Cable Commission vacancy were received by the April 4 deadline. Mayor Simonson recommended discussion of the vacancy be addressed during Agenda Item #10, Update on Forest Lake Cable Commission.

#### **DISCUSSION ON FILLING VACANCY ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

EDA member Sally Swanson has relocated from the City and will soon be ending her term which expires on July 31, 2016. Administrator Soltis recommended that an appointment be made that would fulfill Swanson's term and a full term with an expiration of July 31, 2019. Council stated their agreement to advertise for applications through the City's website and Facebook page.

#### **DISCUSSION ON LEAGUE OF MN CITIES DATA SECURITY SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Administrator Soltis reported that representatives from the League recently met with staff to review loss control topics related to data security. Their assessment included recommendations for improved data security, and requested a response from the City within 60 days regarding actions on the recommendations. Some of these include adoption of a computer use policy and a social media policy, although the League noted that the City is acting responsibly to date.

Soltis explained that he will work with department heads on the topics that address use of mobile devices to ensure measures are in place to prevent any data breaches or hacking. The recommendation included relocating the City Hall router and phone switches from the utility room to a secure location that is not accessible to the public. Soltis said that consideration for

funding relocation of the equipment to a closet in the Board Room could be addressed in 2017 budget planning.

#### **UPDATE ON FOREST LAKE CABLE COMMISSION**

Mayor Simonson reported that the Administrative Assistant at LATV and the Executive Director of the Forest Lake Cable Commission have submitted their resignations. Simonson stated that it is a serious concern to have the cable station without administrative staff. Simonson explained that Scandia, as one of the three cities in the joint powers agreement, is legally and financially responsible for the station. With no staff director, Simonson stated that there are strong concerns that the station could be vulnerable to many issues, particularly since the station's lease agreement is expiring later this year. Simonson questioned the viability of the Commission, and asked if the Council sees any positive measures to continue the joint powers agreement with Columbus and Forest Lake.

The Council discussed the history of the Commission and concluded that now would be the time to consider dissolving the joint powers agreement. The City would continue to collect franchise fees from Midco and the cable subscribers would not be affected. Cable access channel LATV 10 and Ranger 20 would no longer be provided for, and all station inventory would be liquidated among the three cities. Administrator Soltis noted that Scandia used over \$10,000 in franchise fees to support the station last year; keeping these fees could go towards a web streaming service that would transmit all city meetings to the public.

Council was in consensus to direct Administrator Soltis to communicate with Columbus and Forest Lake on their interest to dissolve the joint powers agreement. It was also agreed that the City would suspend any solicitation for applications to fill the vacancy on the Cable Commission.

#### **UPDATE ON SOLAR FARMS**

Council member Ness stated that he attended the April 5, 2016 Planning Commission meeting where two applications for solar farms were presented, along with a recommendation to place a moratorium on solar farms for the next three months. Ness said that site locations and screening are big concerns, and recommended the Council attend a site visit conducted by the Planning Commission on April 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm at the proposed solar garden site at Oldfield Avenue and 237<sup>th</sup> Street.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Hegland, seconded by Schneider, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk

