

July 1, 2015

The City Council held a Work Session meeting on the above date. The following were present: Mayor Randall Simonson, Council members Bob Hegland, Dan Lee, Chris Ness, and Jim Schneider. Staff present: City Engineer Ryan Goodman, Fire Chief Mike Hinz and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

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

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Ness, seconded by Lee, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.**

### **LOG HOUSE LANDING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Mayor Simonson introduced the discussion of the Log House Landing Improvement Project by referencing the site visit and joint meeting with the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed in May 2013 in which paving 205<sup>th</sup> Street to the river landing was presented as an option to control erosion and runoff into the St. Croix River. The City was awarded a State Park Road Account grant in 2014 from the DNR/DOT to cover 50% of the costs of improving the Log House Landing roadway. The City and Watershed would equally share in funding the remaining half of the costs. Simonson explained that the recent action of the Watershed to withdraw their support for paving the roadway changes the dynamics of moving forward with the project. He recognized and thanked the citizen group for the information they had gathered on alternative road surfaces that would be presented to the Council at this meeting and the following motion was made:

**Simonson, seconded by Hegland, moved to direct staff to inform the DNR that the City is turning down the grant funds and to make no improvements to 205<sup>th</sup> Street east of Quinnell Avenue.**

Council member Ness stated that the citizen group was told they would have a chance to present their research on alternative surfaces and the Council should acknowledge their information.

Council member Lee said that Ness has a point and the motion also has a point.

Council member Schneider said he'd like to hear what they have to say but doesn't want to dwell on the issue since the City is tied without the money being there and may end up leaving the road as it is.

Council member Hegland said the dynamics have changed and the project is much different than envisioned at the beginning and agreed with the Mayor's position.

**Simonson called for a roll call vote on the above motion. Lee – yes; Ness – no; Schneider – yes; Hegland – yes; Simonson – yes. The motion carried 4-1.**

Pam Plowman-Smith explained that the information they gathered on bound aggregate may be a benefit for other gravel roads in Scandia and said they could make a brief presentation by

showing a video featuring gravel expert Steve Monlux. Following the video in which Monlux recommended using bound aggregate (containing clay) treated with calcium chloride with water diversion channels and two sedimentation ponds along the roadway, Smith noted that the Watershed would participate in funding 50% of this alternative surfacing option, estimated at a total cost of \$162,000.

Watershed Board member Steve Kromiller stated that modeling data indicated that the amount of runoff was not as great as first estimated and they see this alternative to paving as a more reasonable and cost effective solution in which the Watershed could partner on.

Mayor Simonson stated that a new Public Works Director will be starting his position this month and a discussion of modifications to 205<sup>th</sup> Street could continue once he is on board and up to speed on the roadway.

Council member Ness asked for Engineer Goodman's opinion of bound aggregate. Goodman said that the gravel used now is modified with clay content but all surface materials have an optimum moisture point and are susceptible to erosion at some point. He recommended if bound aggregate were used, to hold off on constructing overflow ponds and use a swale first to determine the extent of water runoff.

Kronmiller stated that re-grading the roadway this spring did help somewhat, but to perform properly it should get to a 4% slope. It will take additional work to get to this point.

Simonson noted the difference in precipitation amounts between Beltrami County, where this product is being used, and Washington County, which gets significantly more rain. Kronmiller stated that the amount of chlorides can be adjusted to help the clay bind to the aggregate in this case.

Christine Maefsky asked what the next step would be. Simonson stated that once the new Public Works Director is on board and working with Engineer Goodman, any modifications to the road would be discussed at a public meeting, but said he could give no sense of timing on this.

#### **HIRE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR**

Mayor Simonson reported that Dave Williams had accepted the City's offer as Public Works Director and had passing results on required testing, although awaiting results of the drug test.

**Simonson, seconded by Ness, moved to hire Dave Williams at a salary of \$58,437 effective July 6, 2015 dependent on passing the drug test.**

Council member Schneider stated that he wants to go on record that Williams was not his pick.

**Simonson called for a vote on the above motion. The motion carried 4-1, with Schneider opposed.**

**COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS DISCUSSION AND FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR EQUIPMENT (COUNCIL MEMBER HEGLAND)**

Council member Hegland introduced his proposal for gathering more information and establishing a process for a cost-benefit analysis for future capital expenditures. He explained that he eventually would like this implemented in every department. Hegland provided an outline of data to be collected such as how many members responded, mileage and time spent at the call, total gallons of water used, was mutual aid involved, should chargeback be pursued, etc.

Fire Chief Hinz explained that a replacement schedule is followed that conforms to NFPA requirements. Engine and tanker equipment is typically replaced at 20-year intervals and spaced apart for funding purposes. Hinz said that trucks are part of the city's public safety policy and not analyzed through a cost-benefit situation – the department does not exist to make money. He said he doesn't see the benefit in filling out pages of information when a truck will still need replacing at 20 years.

Hegland explained that knowing how many water runs are made on a call could lead to needing a larger tanker. Hinz said that larger trucks could not be used due to limitations of driveway sizes in Scandia.

Hinz asked that the Council not make their jobs harder by micromanaging the department and put more trust in their department heads. Collecting this data is basing it on past history and does not look at what the long-term needs should be. Hinz said that charging communities for mutual aid would not be a good practice. Forest Lake's cost to respond to Scandia's calls could be quite expensive if that were implemented.

Hegland said that budgets are being challenged these days and charging for services is in the future. Calculating the cost of each fire run is important information to have. Hinz said that they have lowered their budget every year and run an efficient department. The City has a responsibility to provide fire services, and if it comes down to contracting for this service, the costs would at least double. Hinz said the Council leaders seem to be putting more stress on their followers which is pushing members of the department to retire. The population is not growing and recruitment for new members is not keeping up with retirements.

Council member Lee said he was in favor of getting this data and it could be used to provide the citizens more information. Tracking the numbers could give them an idea of how calls unfold. This process allows for a practical approach in making decisions.

Council member Schneider said he would not be in favor of adding more work for the department and wouldn't find this information helpful in getting to a decision on equipment replacement.

Mayor Simonson suggested a meeting with Chief Hinz, Hegland and himself to further discuss data gathering and report back at a future meeting. Council member Lee asked if staff could be asked to research what other fire departments provide for information. Simonson proposed that Lee could conduct that research with neighboring cities and the League.

**FOREST LAKE CABLE COMMISSION UPDATE (MAYOR SIMONSON)**

Mayor Simonson, Council representative on the Cable Commission, provided information on a proposal that Scandia take over the financial books from Columbus due to conflicts their staff is having.

The Cable Commission currently pays Columbus \$3,600 per year to handle the books. Scandia's staff has indicated that this could be easily implemented and not burdensome or intensive.

Council members were in agreement that this would be acceptable as long as staff is agreeable. The switch could occur at the first of the year.

Mayor Simonson and Cable representative Dan Swanson reported on the clean audit the Commission recently received. Simonson questioned if there is a value to having Scandia remain with the Commission so that he has a sense of continued support among the Council.

All agreed that Scandia should continue to be involved even though only a small percentage of the City has access to cable. Council member Lee noted that coverage is a big concern and having representation could push for an increase in growth. Simonson stated that the Commission is continuing to apply for grant funding and pursuing installation in the Wyldewood Acres development.

Mr. Swanson described the positive improvements he has seen in the 1½ years he has been involved with the Commission and encouraged the Council to tour the station operations.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk