

March 4, 2015

The City Council held a Work Session meeting on the above date. The following were present: Mayor Randall Simonson, Council members Bob Hegland and Chris Ness. Council member Jim Schneider was absent. Council member Dan Lee arrived at 6:53. Staff present: City Administrator Kristina Handt, and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. Public Works Director Tim Keiffer and Fire Chief Mike Hinz joined the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ness, seconded by Hegland moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 3-0.

INTERVIEW CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE APPLICANTS

Interviews were conducted with three applicants for the Capital Improvement Committee – Dustin Hegland, Karen Schik, and Cristina de Sobrino.

Following the interviews, the Council discussed which two citizens should be appointed to the five-member advisory Committee. The Council had appointed Brad Borg, Lisa Schlingerman and Mike White in January.

Ness, seconded by Simonson, moved to appoint Cristina de Sobrino and Dustin Hegland to serve on the Capital Improvement Committee. Council member Hegland recused himself from voting. The motion carried 3-0.

The appointments will formally be adopted on the March 17 Consent Agenda.

LEVEL 3 MEDICAL CALLS, SCANDIA FIRE AND RESCUE

In October 2013, the Council directed Scandia Fire and Rescue to no longer respond to Level 3 medical calls (minor cuts, flu symptoms, non-injurious falls), due to the availability of the Lakeview ambulance stationed in Scandia and after a comparison of other communities' response levels. Fire Chief Mike Hinz was present to request that the department go back to responding to Level 3 medical calls now that the ambulance is no longer stationed at the fire hall and response times have increased. Hinz stated that he would like to keep the coverage level as it had been for many years.

Hinz explained that the response time for North ambulance to a medical situation can be up to 30 minutes by law. He did not yet have enough data for this year after the absence of Lakeview in February, but generally when the department responds to Level 1 medical calls, they arrive 5-6 minutes ahead of the North ambulance. He noted that if Scandia Rescue responded to a Level 3, he could cancel the ambulance in route if the department had command of the situation. Hinz stated the benefits of allowing the firefighters a chance to interact in all response calls and the team building effects it has; the assistance to the community outweigh the costs. Hinz also noted that frivolous calls are very rare in Scandia.

Council member Hegland said that the fire departments of surrounding communities either do not respond to any medical calls or only Level 1 calls, or as requested -- he asked why this varies. Hinz stated that these communities have hospitals and ambulances in town.

Mayor Simonson presented the three options available to the Council: make no changes, request that dispatch alert Scandia Rescue on all medical calls, or have the rescue squad not respond to any medical calls.

Ness, seconded by Lee, moved to make no changes to the Fire Department medical call response. It was noted that this would be for Level 1 and 2 calls and as requested.

Council member Lee stated that for Level 3s such as cuts and burns, a response from Scandia Rescue is not necessary and the victim could be able to drive themselves to a hospital. Lee reasoned that the time difference for an ambulance to arrive anyway does not justify a response.

Council member Hegland stated that help from a fall outdoors in the cold could be critical and it would be beneficial to have Scandia Rescue respond. Ness noted that dispatch could determine if Scandia Rescue be called depending on the situation.

Mayor Simonson asked for a roll call vote on the above motion: Lee – yes; Ness – yes; Hegland – yes; Simonson – yes. The motion carried 4-0.

Hinz stated that he was disappointed as it's a small cost for a service the community has been accustomed to since 1989 – it appears that the department is going backwards. Simonson said that nothing is permanent and this issue can be revisited in the future.

AUTHORIZE BIDDING PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR QUINNELL AVENUE, LILLESKOGEN PARKING LOT AND 2015 SEAL COAT PROJECT

Public Works Director Kieffer introduced a request for the authorization to prepare construction plans and specifications for full depth reclamation of Quinnell Avenue. Preliminary cost of the project is estimated to be \$565,000. Kieffer explained that project plans for the parking lot improvements at Lilleskogen Park could be prepared to determine a definitive cost for completing the parking lot. He recommended this be added as an alternate bid to take advantage of quantity pricing.

Council member Lee agreed to include the Lilleskogen parking lot in the bid in order to have construction figures. Council member Ness asked if the City would be obligated to authorize the work on the parking lot. Kieffer explained that they would not be, only if the Council decided the bid is favorable and the funding is there. Mayor Simonson stated that it would be wise to bid the two projects together.

Ness, seconded by Lee, moved to authorize the preparation of Plans and Specifications for bids, for the Quinnell Avenue Project and Alternate Bid for Lilleskogen Parking Lot. The motion carried 4-0.

Kieffer introduced the 2015 plan for street maintenance that includes seal coating and crack filling roadways in the northwest corner of the city and the City Hall parking lot as an alternate bid. Kieffer noted that 230th Street should be removed from the list as it will be scheduled for full reclamation in a future project. Kieffer explained that he identified fewer roadways for seal coating and will use these funds to perform more crack sealing to protect against roadway degradation.

Ness, seconded by Lee, moved to authorize the preparation of plans for the 2015 Seal Coat and Crack Sealing Project and to put the project out for bids. The motion carried 4-0.

ASSESSMENT SERVICES

City Administrator Handt reported that City Assessor Frank Langer has announced his retirement effective May 1, 2015. Mr. Langer has held this position since 1976. Handt identified several options for obtaining new assessor services. Other Washington County communities that Mr. Langer had retired from have contracted with his assistant Dan Raboin. Most communities in the County contract with the County Assessor's office, or the City could issue a Request for Proposals. Handt noted that Chase Peloquin, also an associate of Mr. Langer's who has been present for the City's Board of Reviews, is also interested in providing assessing services.

Mayor Simonson stated that there are advantages in working with a local assessor. Council member Lee agreed. Council member Hegland stated that the bottom line will be cost, and recommended that the proposals be collected and examined.

Handt recommended one or two members of the Council join her in meeting with the gentlemen who have worked with Mr. Langer and compare their costs to the County Assessor and report on a recommendation to the City Council. Simonson and Hegland agreed to be part of the interview process.

ADJOURNMENT

Ness, seconded by Lee, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund
Deputy Clerk