

September 7, 2016

The City Council held a Work Session 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 Administrator Neil Soltis, Police Deputy Brandon Yetter and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

Mayor 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.**

### **DISCUSSION ON PARKING FOR CRYSTAL SPRINGS SNA – LIZ HARPER, MN DNR**

Liz Harper, Regional Manager with the MN DNR, was present to gather feedback on public parking options and access for the newly created Crystal Springs Scientific and Natural Area. Harper described four potential locations to accommodate parking for 2-3 vehicles with a pedestrian trail into the SNA.

- Quarry Avenue on the west shoulder of the paved road, with an existing easement to allow access from the end of Quarry Avenue along the field edge south to a gravel driveway into the SNA. Some Quarry Avenue residents are opposed because of vandalism and trespassing concerns.
- Highway 95 North, parking on the east side within the MN DOT right-of-way, across from 21560 St. Croix Trail. This was originally identified as the public access point, but Deputy Yetter has concerns about safe vehicle ingress and egress. There is a steep grade and sight lines are poor to pull onto Highway 95. Easement exists for land management access, but an access easement for pedestrian use would have to be negotiated.
- Highway 95 South Option 1, parking on the east side of 95 within the MN DOT right-of-way. No legal access to the SNA; negotiating an easement with the landowner could take at least 12 months. Concerns about the depth of the ditch here, as well as entering onto Highway 95.
- Highway 95 South Option 2, parking on the east side of Highway 95 adjacent to the Zavoral Mine access. No safe way to enter the SNA from this parking area due to a steep ravine and stream between the parking area and the SNA.

Discussion concluded that Quarry Avenue parking would be the safest and most viable. No other easements would be needed and 220<sup>th</sup> Street is a safe access onto Highway 95 of all the options. Deputy Yetter agreed that this would be the best option, with designated parking on one side and posted so as to not block the gravel driveway.

Staff will work with Ms. Harper to develop the Quarry Avenue site as designated parking for the SNA.

### **DISCUSSION ON CHANGES TO THE PRELIMINARY DESIGN OF THE SCANDIA VETERANS MEMORIAL**

The City Council approved the site plan and design concept for a Veterans Memorial to be placed in Lilleskogen Park on July 15, 2015. The approved design concept called for the

memorial to be located in a 12'x12' area north of the parking lot. The Veterans Memorial Committee is seeking to modify the plan with a design that would include a 24' diameter circular area and a 46'x5' concrete sidewalk from the monument area to the parking lot. The Veterans Memorial Agreement, approved by the City on June 22, 2016, requires consent from both parties for any changes to the original site plan and design concept. Administrator Soltis said that no tree removal would be necessary to accommodate the larger design.

Written comments from Parks and Recreation Chair Ryan Jinks and Vice Chair Greg Zauner expressed opposition to an increased size of the memorial. Jinks noted that review of a revised plan should not bypass the Park and Recreation Committee.

Mayor Simonson explained that the Lions Foundation received a greater than anticipated response for the sale of paver bricks and an expansion is required for an additional honor wall. Council member Hegland stated that it makes sense as long as space in the park is available; the memorial could encourage future development of the Park.

Council member Lee was opposed to the expansion as it could steer the planned development of the Park to change, such as the future gazebo. Lee stated that the Park and Recreation Committee should have the opportunity to discuss this at their meeting and make a recommendation. Lee also noted that the site is not ideal in his opinion for a contemplative setting, and other locations should be explored. Council member Ness stated his agreement that this is too short of a notice for the Council to consider and the plan should go to the PRC for their recommendation.

Mayor Simonson stated that the Committee thoroughly vetted many sites for the memorial, and Lilleskogen was selected as the best location. The Lions Foundation has many contributors vested in the project and would not be starting over from scratch at this point. Simonson said that the Committee has contractors lined up and ready to start the project this fall once plans are approved, but bringing the project back to the PRC could delay the project for an entire year. Simonson noted that a 24' circular design is a small footprint in the entire park.

Terry Gorham, Park and Rec Committee member, stated that this is a significant alteration that could change the character of the park. Administrator Soltis explained that the PRC could hold a special meeting next week and make a recommendation at the September 20<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. The Veterans Memorial Committee will be asked to stake out the proposed design at the park.

Council member Schneider stated that the size does not matter to him although it could have implications to the remaining park details; however, he would be in favor of the expansion regardless.

Council directed the Parks Committee to call for a Special Meeting in the next week for the purpose of viewing the proposed site once it is staked and to provide a recommendation at the September 20<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

### **DISCUSSION ON COMPLAINTS REGARDING DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS**

Administrator Soltis explained that the City has received many complaints regarding the discharge of firearms in close proximity to residences and for the duration over which the shooting has occurred. Deputy Yetter stated that trap shooting and target practice complaints are the majority of the calls; not hunting or reckless shooting complaints. Soltis provided examples of ordinances from neighboring communities and from the League's model ordinance for the Council to study if regulations on firearms would be considered for adoption. Yetter stated that an ordinance regulating distance and period of time would assist him with enforcement, as currently the City does not have anything other than public nuisance and the noise ordinance to enforce.

Bob Lushanko expressed his concerns about shooting that occurs on vacant land near his home which goes on for hours at a time several times a week and has safety concerns over the type of long-range tactical guns being used. He asked that the city consider looking at Grant's ordinance to regulate this type of gun range shooting.

Susan Altmann said that her neighbor's target shooting within 200 feet of their home is a great safety concern for her family. The shooting goes on all day on the weekends and they have evidence that alcohol is consumed during the activity. She said that she would like to see a shooting ordinance developed that would make it safe for all Scandia citizens.

Mayor Simonson said that duration is an issue and it would be appropriate to limit shooting hours. Discussion of other communities' ordinances continued. Staff will prepare a draft ordinance for discussion at a future meeting.

### **DISCUSSION ON ENGAGING CONSULTANT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

In preliminary discussions of the 2017 budget, the Council allocated funds to engage a consultant to work on a revision of the comprehensive plan, which needs to be completed by mid-2018. The Planning Commission should ideally start a discussion on the Comp Plan in early 2017. Administrator Soltis asked the Council to consider either contracting with the current planning firm TKDA or issuing a request for proposals. Soltis noted that some communities have begun the RFP process for their comp plans.

The Council was in consensus to proceed with an RFP. Administrator Soltis provided a timeline of dates which would have proposals due by October 7, 2016, interviews in late October, and a selection made by the Council at their November 15, 2016 meeting. No expenditures other than staff time would occur until 2017.

**Simonson, seconded by Hegland, moved to proceed with the Request for Proposals process for development of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The motion carried 5-0.**

Staff will send Requests for Proposals no later than September 15, 2016.

**DISCUSSION ON CHANGES TO THE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR JOB**

**DESCRIPTION AND RECRUITMENT**

Based on discussion at the August 16<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, Administrator Soltis presented a revised Public Works Director job description in an effort to broaden the pool of qualified candidates. Soltis explained that the intent of the changes is to allow someone with experience in the construction field with management skills to be a better fit for the position. Water and sewer certifications were moved from minimum qualifications to desired qualifications.

**Lee, seconded by Simonson, moved to adopt the alternate job description and restart the recruitment process for a Public Works Director. The motion carried 5-0.**

**DISCUSSION ON THE 2017 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND 2017**

**PROPERTY TAX LEVY**

Administrator Soltis explained that the preliminary levy for taxes payable in 2017 must be certified to the County no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>. The levy may be lowered from the preliminary levy with the final adoption of the budget in December, but the levy may not be increased. Soltis provided a table showing the proposed 2017 levy based on budget discussion so far:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>2015 budget</b>	<b>2016 Budget</b>	<b>2017 Proposed</b>
General Fund	\$ 1,564,818	\$ 1,498,148	\$ 1,551,768
Debt Service Fund	\$ 272,691	\$ 148,582	\$ 116,739
Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Local Road Improvement	\$ 345,000	\$ 581,142	\$ 524,000
Economic Development Authority	\$ 2,500	\$ -	\$ 5,000
<b>Total Levy</b>	<b>\$ 2,215,009</b>	<b>\$ 2,257,872</b>	<b>\$ 2,227,507</b>

The total levy in 2017 would decrease by 1.3%, largely attributable to a reduction in the debt service fund.

Council member Schneider stated that the preliminary levy should be set the same as 2016 which allows for a \$30,000 cushion for budget discussions up to its December adoption. The Council was in agreement to set the maximum levy at \$2,257,872, a 0% increase from 2016. A reduction could be considered from there.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

An ordinance for firearms discharge and budget discussions were identified for future agenda items.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk