

MINUTES

1. CONVENE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Mayor Zerby called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

A. Roll Call

Present. Mayor Zerby; Councilmembers Labadie, Siakel, Sundberg and Johnson (arrived at 5:45 P.M.); City Attorney Keane; City Administrator Lerud; City Clerk Thone; Planning Director Darling; Director of Public Works Brown; and, City Engineer Fauske

Absent: None

Others Present: Andy Brotzler, Bill Alms, Carolyn Allmendinger, Nate Onken

B. Review Agenda

Sundberg moved, Labadie seconded, approving the agenda as presented. Motion passed 4/0.

2. GRANT STREET DRAINAGE

City Engineer Fauske stated that at the September 24, 2018 Work Session there was discussion of the drainage study for the area. She noted that the study has been updated based on information provided by the residents as well as some additional field work to confirm the information. She introduced Bill Alms and Andy Brotzler from WSB, who can answer technical questions the Council may have. She stated that there was a meeting last week with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to keep them informed on the drainage issues in the area and some of the preliminary ideas being discussed to address them. She gave some information about the history of past flooding in the area. She noted that one of the storm sewer pipes was formerly a fifteen-inch pipe and was replaced with a twelve-inch pipe as part of the watermain project. She noted that it has been determined that the appropriate size pipe for this area to drain properly would be a twenty-one-inch storm pipe. She gave some history of a watermain flush that conducted that caused sediment to fill in the ditch in the area and caused problems in the area.

Nate Onken, 5925 Grant Street, stated that he watched the City of Excelsior conduct the watermain flush and saw the large sink hole it created that caused all of the dirt and debris to drain down and filled up the ditch.

Carolyn Allmendinger, 5915 Grant Street, introduced herself and noted that they had moved into their home in February of 2014.

City Engineer Fauske noted that the storm sewer that was installed with the watermain extension was installed to match the ground elevation which means the pipe was raised up. She noted that

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there is also a storm sewer pipe between the yards of 5915 and 5925 that transitions from eight inches to twelve inches. She stated that the Public Works Department jetted water through the storm sewer to make sure it was clear because there was some sort of obstruction in the pipe.

Councilmember Johnson arrived at the meeting.

City Engineer Fauske stated that the design of this area was based on the elevation, however they were not aware of change in the elevation with the ditch being filled in with material from the watermain flushing. Mr. Onken stated that there are catch basins at all four corners of the intersection but the water does not drain into any of them, and instead goes into the nearby yards and then drains into the pipes.

Mayor Zerby expressed his frustration that the City spent a lot of money on this project with the idea that it would improve things and not make it worse. Councilmember Sundberg stated that this should have been included in the design process. Mr. Alms stated that as part of a project, there are some things that are design related and other things that fall under an "in kind" replacement and there was the mistaken assumption that a twelve-inch pipe was simply being replaced in kind.

Mayor Zerby stated that he does not think the City has ever taken the approach of just putting back what was already there, but instead tries to look at the area and see how the problems can be addressed, similar to what was recently done along Riviera Lane. He stated that if he paid someone to fix his leaky roof and after they fixed the roof, it actually leaked more, he would be very upset with the vendor.

Councilmember Siakel asked Ms. Allmendinger and Mr. Onken if they had had any issues with flooding in their homes or if it was a yard and driveway issue causing them concern. Mr. Onken explained that he has refused to make any improvements in his basement until something is done to improve the situation because it has just gotten systematically worse as time goes on. He stated that his yard is always wet and muddy.

Ms. Allmendinger distributed pictures of the flooding in the area. She stated that since they moved in, they have installed a sump pump. She stated that she cannot quantify the stress she feels when she sees the radar or hears rain in the forecast. She explained that she also is afraid to take a trip in May because she does not know what she would do if it rained while she was gone.

Mayor Zerby stated that there are four proposals included in the packet to fix the issue that range from about \$90,000 to \$300,000 on top of the money spent to do the project the first time. He noted that the least expensive option still includes a fifteen-inch storm sewer pipe.

City Engineer Fauske stated that she would like the Council to give direction on which option they would like to proceed with and then the other conversations can be had about how it is paid for. Mayor Zerby stated that he thinks it should be the other way around and he would like to know what WSB is willing to do to help resolve the situation.

Councilmember Siakel stated that something needs to be done and a decision needs to be made. Councilmember Sundberg stated that she agrees that it needs to be done correctly but it still comes back to responsibility. She stated that she does not think that the City of Excelsior should be contacted until that answer has been answered.

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Mayor Zerby stated that he is not in favor of any of the options that remove homes. He stated that option number five is very expensive, so he is somewhere between option number one and option number four. He stated that he would like to know how this is going to be paid for and is not looking at the City funding the entire project.

Councilmember Labadie stated that she agrees with the comments by the Mayor and other Councilmembers. She agrees that putting in a pipe that is any less than a twenty-one-inch pipe should not be done since that is what the professionals are recommending. She stated that she does not understand why an option for a fifteen-inch pipe was even included.

Councilmember Sundberg asked if City Attorney Keane could give a legal opinion on this situation. City Administrator Lerud stated that the City Attorney Keane can provide a legal opinion at a future meeting. Councilmember Labadie stated that she feels time is of the essence here and agrees that getting direction from legal counsel is a good idea.

Mayor Zerby asked if Public Works Director Brown had spoken with the public works department from the City of Excelsior. Public Works Director Brown stated that he had not spoken with them yet. City Engineer Fauske noted that they have had some preliminary conversations with the city engineer for Excelsior.

Mr. Alms explained that the fifteen-inch pipe option was presented because that would basically restore the area to the pre-watermain project condition and not trigger having to deal with MnDot, Excelsior and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

Councilmember Labadie asked about Mr. Alms use of the word "trigger" in relation to MnDot and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. She stated that the City is not trying to do this in secret but is trying to fix the problem. She asked what triggering those agencies meant to the project and if it means the City could not proceed.

Mr. Alms explained that triggering those agencies could mean that they will not issue a permit, but it is more likely that it will extend the timeframe by several months for when improvements can be made and will require a more detailed look downstream.

Mayor Zerby stated that he appreciates the explanation of what has changed in this area but he does not think the question has been answered of how we will fix this. He explained that he meant "we" in a sense of WSB and the City together. He stated that he would like to see Excelsior assist the City in cleaning out the channel since they helped it fill in.

Councilmember Siakel stated that she feels there are too many options to consider and would like a recommendation of the best solution.

3. REFUSE HAULING COLLECTION SURVEY

City Administrator Lerud explained the investigation process of organized refuse hauling. He introduced Peter Leatherman who is here to talk about the timeline and methodology for the survey.

Mr. Leatherman gave an overview of their methodology and noted that they are somewhat old fashioned because they conduct phone surveys on both landlines and cell phones. He explained the process for getting a representative sample of residents. He stated that they have proposed

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a sample number of four hundred. He noted that he has surveyed on this issue for about twenty years.

Councilmember Sundberg asked if Mr. Leatherman could share some of the questions that have been asked in other communities that have also looked at organized refuse collection.

Mr. Leatherman stated that after he gets a feel for what the City is looking at, he will use similar wording so the results can be compared in an apples-to-apples comparison which will help the City understand the data better.

Councilmember Sundberg asked how long a typical phone interview for the survey lasts. Mr. Leatherman stated that it depends on the resident but noted that with a twenty-question survey it will average about five or six minutes per call.

Councilmember Siakel asked how the numbers they call are selected. Mr. Leatherman stated that for the landlines they do random number dialing and for cell phone numbers, they purchase a list. He explained the process of getting in touch with people on the phone. Mayor Zerby noted that the City shares a zip code with Excelsior, so many people may be confused about which city they actually live in.

Councilmember Siakel stated that there are people that are absolutely loyal to their trash hauler and want to keep them and on the other side there are residents who feel strongly about recycling and organics which expands the services that are currently offered. She stated that the Council has ended up feeling caught in the middle and not sure if anything should be changed.

City Administrator Lerud explained that the current system is open to four different haulers. He stated that one of the licensed haulers handles recycling throughout the City. Councilmember Johnson noted that recycling is picked up every other week and he has gotten feedback that people would like it to be picked up every week.

City Administrator Lerud noted that organic pick up is offered on a voluntary basis through one of the haulers. Councilmember Siakel noted that the City had received a grant from the County in order to offer organic pick up, so there is some County involvement to help cover some of the costs. Mr. Leatherman suggested that perhaps there should be a question that asks if people are interested in organics and if they are willing to pay a little extra in order to have it.

Councilmember Labadie stated that there has been a packed house during the times where this has been discussed even when it has not officially been on the agenda. She stated that many of the older residents are not aware that if you have disability, all of the trash haulers will offer services above and beyond for people who may have difficulty getting their cans to the curb. She would like to see some sort of question that asks about that and gets the information out there.

Councilmember Sundberg stated that she feels the survey can really serve to educate residents as well. Mr. Leatherman stated that this is public opinion research and he recommends both a pre-test and a post-test information gathering method to gauge what their initial opinion is and then see if that changes based on the information given.

Councilmember Siakel asked if there could be a question on what residents are currently paying. She stated that she thinks there is the perception that everyone is getting the best deal. She

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stated that when there have been discussions there is a large range in what people are actually paying.

Mayor Zerby suggested finding out information such as whether people think there should be more or less haulers, if operation hours should be changed, if they like single day collection, and about what type of service they are getting. He stated that there have also been discussions about a fall clean up day and a spring clean up day for curbside pick up rather than having to bring it in with the cost spread equally to the entire City.

Councilmember Johnson stated that he would definitely like to have questions that probe the level of service provided. He stated that he has heard many people say that they share their garage codes with their haulers which surprised him that people are that trusting.

Councilmember Sundberg stated that she would be interested in finding out if people identify as environmentalists or not. Mr. Leatherman stated that there will probably be more than twenty questions in the first draft he submits to the Council.

Councilmember Sundberg asked how long the full survey process will take once the City decides on the questions. Mr. Leatherman stated that the survey process typically takes two to four weeks and will involve seven to ten business days of phoning. He plans to have a draft survey to the City by the end of next week.

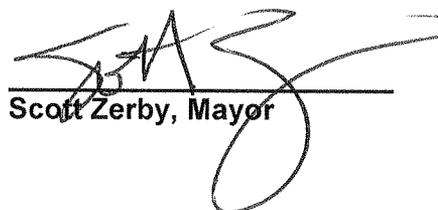
4. ADJOURN

Johnson moved, Siakel seconded, Adjourning the City Council Work Session Meeting of January 14, 2019, at 6:50 P.M. Motion passed 5/0.

ATTEST:



Sandie Thone, City Clerk



Scott Zerby, Mayor