

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
MARCH 4, 2020**

The workshop meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Acting Mayor Johnson at 5:33 p.m.

The following members were present: Acting Mayor Craig Johnson, Council Members: Greg Urban, Patricia Youker and Bob Morse. The following member was absent: Mayor Heidi Gunderson.

Also present were: City Administrator Kevin Watson, Assistant City Administrator Tim Sandvik, Planning/Community Development Director Nolan Wall, Public Works Director Jesse Farrell, Finance Director Bob Sundberg, City Attorney Caroline Bell Beckman, and Deputy City Clerk Peggy Aho.

Others present were:

1. Metro Inet Joint Powers Agreement

City Administrator Watson introduced the item and gave an overview on how IT services are provided for the City through the City of Roseville, Metro I-Net. Because of the difficulty in retaining high quality IT service providers, there has been discussions about setting up a new entity, managed by a board that would have the ability to develop a pay structure that would be competitive with the market. He noted that a new entity would be less susceptible to any volatility within the City of Roseville.

Watson stated that being part of the Roseville In-Net has allowed the City to have reliable IT services from an agency that isn't focused on profit but more focused on services. The City recently received a letter from the City of Roseville, City Manager, about looking into setting up Metro I-Net as a joint powers entity that would provide current I-Net members with continued service with more direct control on things such as cost, personnel, and policies, and would take away any uncertainty of the future of Metro I-Net. Watson said that Kennedy & Graven have put together a draft joint powers agreement for the current members to review and that he will have the City's attorney review the draft agreement

Watson noted, that currently, the City pays about \$9,300 a month or \$112,000 a year. Roseville City Manager said that the new organizational structure may increase the costs for each member and that exact costs have not been determined and are highly dependent on the number of members that join the JPA. He said he presumes costs would increase about 3% over the 2020 cost.

Watson said that at this time, Roseville is seeing a commitment from the City to enter into a Metro I-Net joint powers agreement, subject to final review and approval of the draft JPA.

Finance Director Sundberg said that \$84,000 of the \$112,000 paid this year will cover the cost of labor, and the remaining amount is for software licensing. He said if the City wasn't part of this group, software and licensing costs would be significantly higher than what the City currently pays. Council Member Morse said that collaboration is a good idea. He asked if staff have verified whether there are other businesses/organizations similar to Metro I-Net that could provide the same services to the City. Sundberg replied that another entity that provides the same type of services would very likely cost the City significantly more.

2. Gem Lake Water Meter Fees

Public Works Director/City Engineer Farrell noted that in 2018, the City agreed to sell water and sanitary sewer services to Gem Lake. Staff have found that the meter that Gem Lake installed wasn't working properly because it would not physically record water flows less than 500 gallons per minute.

Farrell noted that Gem Lake recently installed a new meter and Vadnais Heights techs have looked at it and say that it now measures usage correctly and that going forward the City should be able to accurately bill Gem Lake. Farrell noted that the City treated Gem Lake like any other customer, in terms of adding fees to unpaid balances. He said that staff had direction from the Council in the past that if a customer agreed to have a new meter installed, the City their non-readable meter fees. He noted that the City has billed Gem Lake some late fees but Gem Lake has not paid them, and Gem Lake's Mayor said they wouldn't pay the fees. Subsequently the fees and late payment fees have added up. Farrell noted that City staff are recommending that the late fees be waived and asked if the Council agrees with this decision. The Council agreed.

3. Vadnais Road Future Improvements

Public Works Director/City Engineer Farrell said that Vadnais Road has a pavement condition index of about 43 which makes it is a strong candidate for inclusion in the 5 year Street Improvement Plan. He said that while it does not have a lot of traffic at this time, with the upcoming Frattalone project, it will get a lot of use. Farrell asked the Council whether they were okay with designating Vadnais Road as the construction access route and also if the Council might consider reconstructing the road in 2023 or 2024.

Farrell said that he could send a letter out to the residents on Vadnais Road about the construction activity and say in the letter that the City may be looking at doing reconstruction of the road in 2023 or 2024. Council Member Urban said that the Council shouldn't lock itself into reconstructing the road until the Frattalone project has been completed. He suggested telling the residents that the City would do reconstruction of the road after the project is built out and then water service will be available to the residents at

that time. Farrell also talked about improving the intersection of Vadnais east to Centerville Road.

Urban said that the City needs to figure out what the 50% share would be for each homeowner when the road is reconstructed and assessments are set. Farrell noted that City staff are looking at reevaluating the City's assessment policy. He said this could probably be completed in the summer of 2020 with action by the Council later in 2020 and then it could be used when setting future assessments.

Urban asked if the Council had discussed this road as a possible future improvement. Farrell replied that this was one of the roads he had previously mentioned.

Urban asked how people on that road would gain by having curb and gutter installed. Farrell said that a lot of cities have a standard road policy. Urban asked why curb and gutter is needed in that area when it currently does not have any but has a ditch that works. Farrell noted that there are benefits of adding curb and gutter but that the City could further evaluate design characteristics in the future.

Urban said that he is not in favor of sending a \$10,000 bill to everyone on that street. City Administrator Watson suggested having discussions with the neighborhood about curb and gutter and see what the majority of the residents want.

Farrell asked if the Council is okay with him suggesting to the residents that Vadnais Road be the designated construction access for the Frattalone project. Urban suggested sending a letter to the residents to tell them that it will be used as a construction access during the construction of the Frattalone development and that the City will strongly consider this road for replacement in the near future once construction of the homes have been completed and also ask the residents if they might be interested in connecting to the City's water services at the time the road is reconstructed.

City Attorney Bell Beckman said that she will look into whether the City can waive the requirement that each individual property owner would have to hook up to water once it is available to them.

Watson said asked if the City can waive the fee and Bell Beckman said yes. Watson said it may be better to do a public meeting at some point to further discuss this issue.

4. Staff Update

City Administrator Watson said that the next workshop will have a closed session on the sale of City owned property.

Council Member Urban said he has received a lot of emails regarding the apartments at Highway. 96 and McMenemy. He also said that because of this project, the City will be looking at increased costs for the Fire Department. He said that at some point the City

should look into merging with a neighboring fire department to share in equipment costs and look at whether a City of our size needs so many full-time fire staff.

Council Member Morse suggested looking at whether the City needs a north and a south station and whether the City can consolidate them. Watson noted that the City had made a decision to offer a higher level of service and that is why it has two fire stations. He said that the Council can discuss this at a future workshop.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Watson, City Administrator

Approved