

**WORKSHOP MEETING  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS  
MAY 21, 2019**

The workshop meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Mayor Gunderson at 5:30 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Heidi Gunderson, Council Members: Craig Johnson, Greg Urban, Patricia Youker and Bob Morse. The following member was absent: None.

Also present were: City Administrator Kevin Watson, Assistant City Administrator Tim Sandvik, Planning/Community Development Director Nolan Wall, Finance Director Bob Sundberg, Fire Chief Ed Leier, Public Works Director Jesse Farrell, City Attorney Erich Hartmann, and Deputy City Clerk Peggy Aho.

Others present were: Scott Haupt, S.E.H., Michael Scholl, Northeast Bank, Pete Flom and Ulysses Awsumb, Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation and Tim Prindiville, Prindiville Law, PA.

**1. Update on Veterans Village:**

City Administrator Watson noted that the City partnered with Journey Homes for Veteran Homes to be built on property owned by the City. As part of the Purchase and Development Agreement, Journey Homes agreed to pay the City \$75,000 for the property. Recently, Journey Homes has come under scrutiny, including potential dissolution. Watson noted that the City has been contact by GMHC and Northeast Bank about amending the Purchase and Development Agreement to assign GMHC as the responsible party for completing the homes at 825, 827 and 829 Garceau Lane.

Ulysses Awsumb, GMHC, stated that they are planning to complete the full project to the expectations laid out in the Development Agreement including the final buildout of the homes, completing the landscaping, building a sidewalk and installing street lighting. Awsumb noted that GMHC is also seeking relief from the City on the \$75,000 payment owed to the City. GMHC is requesting that the payment be reduced to \$37,500. Council Member Urban asked what the end use of the property will be. Awsumb replied that they plan on selling the homes at market rate. Council Member Johnson said that he appreciates GMHC coming in to discuss this with the Council and thanked Awsumb for the pro forma which was produced for the Council's review.

Awsumb said that they are ready to move forward on completing the development of the project and will also look at the potential of adding another unit on the one lot (turning the single family home into a town home). He said that they would be willing to share in any profits if an additional unit can be added. Mayor Gunderson said that she thinks the City should agree to amending the Development Agreement and reducing the amount owed to the City as requested. Council Member Morse said that he agrees and that

having this project completed would improve the neighborhood and the community. Awsumb said that he will send over a proposed amendment to the Development Agreement for review by the City. Watson said that the City will have its bond attorney review it and then bring the Amendment before the Council for consideration at a future meeting.

## **2. Intro to Stormwater S.E.H. Proposal:**

Public Works Director Farrell gave an overview of the City's stormwater management infrastructure. Farrell suggested that the Council takes steps to analyze its existing system, and where necessary, make targeted improvements in a programmed manner. He suggested that the City do a study on how water moves on land and within the storm sewer system and develop an H/H report. Farrell suggested that the City begin with a high-level professional analysis of the City's existing system, which will identify areas that would benefit from a closer analysis.

Farrell said that if this is the direction the Council would like to go, he could bring back a proposal which would include cost and scope. Farrell said that the map of the infrastructure the City has available to it at this time is not sophisticated. It shows lines on a map but not the same as a model. Council Member Urban said that perhaps it would be better to spend money on addressing a certain ditch or pond rather than software for a model. Farrell said that a model would be a way to monitor the infrastructure needs and give the Council information on what needs to be repaired and Farrell emphasized that this type of effort would give the City the information necessary to prioritize, plan and program its efforts so that we are undertake the right project at the right time. Urban said that he thinks there is a lot of readily apparent stuff already that needs to be repaired.

Mayor Gunderson asked if there are other types of software that may be a little less costly than what Farrell is proposing that would track the same type of data. City Administrator Watson said that the intent of this idea is the H/H model could be a tool for Council to identify future needs within the system and budget for them. Farrell noted that he would also like to do a similar project with the water mains and that the City has a lot of infrastructure that needs to be inventoried.

Gunderson asked if there is any possibility of cost sharing with VLAWMO and Ramsey County. Farrell replied that that may be a possibility. Gunderson asked the Council if they are interested in having Farrell pursue the idea of doing an H/H modal. Urban said it is a good idea, but he doesn't think there is an immediate need for this. Farrell noted that it would provide a benefit to the property owners presently dealing with challenges that accompany high water throughout the region, and in the future when intense rainfall occurs. Council Member Youker asked if the City should be looking at collaborating with others because it seems like an awful lot of money for the City to spend. Council Member Johnson asked Farrell to keep a log of where people are calling from regarding water issues and that the City should wait on implementing this.

**3. Update on Koehler Trail:**

Assistant City Administrator Sandvik gave an overview of the Alternatives Analysis that has been completed on the Koehler Trail project. He said that he is looking for direction from the Council on what the next steps should be. Mayor Gunderson said that the estimated costs are high for all alternatives and that it would be important to know of any potential additional costs. She said the next step would be to bring the Alternatives Analysis back to the Task Force for their review. City Administrator Watson said that it is important to consider that this is a long term project and that the City can pursue grants and then flush out what the best option would be.

**4. Follow-up on Goals Session:**

City Administrator Watson reviewed the final report drafted by Phil Kern. The report is based off of what was discussed at the goals session. He said that the number one priority of the Council is to develop a street investment plan. The 2019-2021 Work Plan, developed as a result of the goals session is on the Council agenda for approval.

**5. Staff Updates: None.**

**6. Future City Council Requests:**

Public Works Director Farrell provided a summary of what State Aid funding is and how the Buerkle Road project, as spec'd, is not qualified to use state aid. Farrell noted that the City can designate 20 percent of its streets as MSAS. The City annually receives about \$511,000. \$330,000 of that goes into the construction fund and \$179,000 would go into the maintenance fund. In order to qualify to use state aid funding for construction, a project must be designed and constructed according to State Aid standards and must be approved prior to any work being awarded work.

Council Member Urban said the City has already authorized S.E.H. to redo the design of the Buerkle Road project and the project is estimated to cost \$600,000 but it would not qualify for state aid funds because of the design. Urban asked what the Project would cost if done to State Aid standards. Farrell responded it would be estimated at \$1 million. Urban said that over a year ago the City looked at doing a quick overlay on the Road and then it went from that to a \$1 million Project and then the City dialed it back to \$500,000. He said that the Council believed that State Aid funds would help pay for the project. Urban said that it makes sense to him to do the \$1 million dollar project and use State Aid funds to help pay for it. Mayor Gunderson said that she agrees that there may be a better option for this project. Urban also said that the City needs to do something this year and not wait another year and that he would rather use more state aid money on this project than use just City funds.

Farrell noted that Buerkle Road may be part of jurisdictional realignment and that he sees it as a possible strong candidate to give to the County.

Council Member Johnson said that he hasn't heard why the City shouldn't stop the track it is on now and do a project that would be better and would qualify for State Aid funding.

Farrell said that if the Project changes, the City would have to back up and do another Feasibility Analysis which would mean working with other parties including the County, railroad and the Metropolitan Council. Urban said if nothing else the City needs to do something near the tracks.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kevin Watson, City Administrator

APPROVED