

**WORKSHOP MEETING  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS  
JUNE 4, 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, and Bob Morse. The following member was absent: Council Member Patricia Youker.

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

Others present were: Liz Moscatelli, VHEDC, and Scott Haupt, S.E.H.

**1. Update from VHEDC Executive Director Moscatelli**

Liz Moscatelli, VHEDC Executive Director, thanked the Council for having her at the Workshop to introduce herself to the Council and staff. She noted that she began working at VHEDC in April. She said that she is impressed with many of VHEDC's programs including the GenZ program, the Northeast Metro Young Professionals group, the Partnersforgood which is a non-profit board. She noted that they held a job fair recently and over 40 businesses were present as was Ramsey County, and Ramsey County's Workforce Group and also a Veterans Group. She said that VHEDC plans on continuing to hold the Metro Expo, a business appreciation event and the annual dinner.

**2. Buerkle Road Project**

Public Works Director Farrell noted that the project funding for the Buerkle Road project wasn't brought to the Council's attention at an earlier date. Farrell noted that when this project was discussed last year a funding source was. Different alternatives to fixing the road were discussed. He discussed how the initial thought, he assumes, was to use State Aid funds because it is a State Aid Route not developed and the project not included in the 2019 Adopted Budget.

Farrell said that the good news is that the County is not going to ask for any money for the Rice Street project so the State Aid funds will be opened up for other projects. He said that the City receives about \$300,000 a year in construction funds that goes into our state aid fund each year. Cities can request an advance of up to 4 times their annual allotment. So with the City's annual allotment of \$300,000, we could request up to \$1.2 million.

Farrell said he would like to talk about different alternatives for this construction project.

Farrell laid out four different alternatives: 1) a full reconstruction; 2) a pavement reconstruction; 3) a pavement repair; or 4) pavement patching and pothole filling. Council Member Urban asked if the City wanted to reconstruct Greenhaven as a mill and overlay, would it qualify for State Aid funding. Farrell replied that it would because it has less traffic. Urban asked if staff has finished prioritizing the upcoming year's street improvements project, and asked if any of the State Aid qualified streets are on the list for the coming years. Farrell said that work on the pavement rating is beginning tomorrow and that it is his hunch that there are a lot of projects in the City wanting funds.

Council Member Johnson asked for a definition of a State Aid road and the requirements for us to make it a State Aid road. Farrell said that the City is allowed to designate 10% of its roads for State Aid funding and typically you want to designate the ones that are the busiest and serve the most and are heavily travelled. He said he would like to take a look at making system revisions to the City's designation in order to optimize how much funding the City can get. Mayor Gunderson asked if it is up to the City to designate the roads. Farrell yes it is up to us and the State reviews it. City Administrator Watson said that in theory if Buerkle Road was properly reconstructed 30 years ago it would now qualify for a mill and overlay. Farrell replied yes.

Farrell noted that if the Council choose to do Option #3, pavement repair, at a cost of about \$80,000, the City may be able to address the pavement between Fanum Road and the railroad tracks. We wouldn't be solving all of the problems but we would be attacking the very worst area of the pavement and is a level of investment the council should be comfortable making.

Farrell stated that it is his number one recommendation would be to do Option 2, and his second recommendation would be Option 3 for about \$80,000. His third best would be the status quo and keep filling pot holes. He doesn't think spending this much for full reconstruction would make sense in 2020 because there are too many future unknowns to the preliminary estimate of \$2 million.

Urban asked what the odds are that the bus line will come down this road. Farrell said that it appears likely. Urban asked when the bus line does come through, can we say that this road was not designed to have a bus line, and ask that the County make the improvements.

City Administrator Watson said that the Option 3 gets us a couple years out and Rush Line will be much further along and then we can negotiate with Rush Line to help with a full reconstruction. Gunderson said there are so many questions marks with the full construction project, and thinks she doesn't have enough information on a \$2 million project to decide to go that way. Urban said he could support the \$80,000 fix. Gunderson also noted that she couldn't support the status quo or just filling pot holes.

Council Member Johnson asked if Farrell could verify that the storm sewer project would qualify for State Aid funding. Farrell said he believes storm sewer would qualify. Scott Haupt, S.E.H, said that typically MnDOT would have to review it and most likely it would be eligible for 100% or a split.

Johnson asked why we wouldn't do the storm sewer connection now instead of waiting. Urban said that storm sewer regulations change so much that any work done now may not meet regulations in a couple years.

Farrell said we either need to continue with the project as it was proposed at the last meeting or stop it and then get quotes on Option 3. Watson said that staff can get quotes for Option 3 and bring back for Council consideration at the meeting in July. Urban said that makes sense to do Option 3 now based on current circumstances. Gunderson agreed, as did Council Member Morse.

Urban asked Farrell to bring a list to a future Workshop the current list of City State Aid roads and any recommended changes.

**3. 2020 Budget Review: Administration and Finance Funds:**

City Administrator Watson began the budget discussion by going through 2018 expenditures, line by line, from the Ledger. Watson reviewed the following funds: 210, City Council; 220, Administration; 230, Outside Agencies; 250, Finance; 260, Legal; 270, City Hall; and 280, Technology Support. Mayor Gunderson noted that she has requested a deep dive into the budget so that as a Council we know what the City is spending money on and can look for opportunities to save and that having it broken down by fund is a good way to look at it.

**4. Organics Collection:**

Mayor Gunderson said that the Council has talked about organics collection before and Tim Sandvik has more information. Sandvik noted that there are three different ways to collect organics waste, none are currently available in the City. Three alternatives are: curbside, single stream collection or collection site. Residents using Polco said they would be more likely to participate in organics collection if it was collected curbside. Sandvik noted that Ramsey County wants to promote the opportunity for a collection site. Sandvik said that the cost of implementing a collection site would be minimum. Ramsey County will provide the enclosure and pick-up service and that the City would have to provide plowing/maintenance to the site. Sandvik said if the Council is interested in pursuing this idea, he can bring an action item before the Council to authorize the negotiations of a Memorandum of Agreement with Ramsey County to today's Council meeting. Council Member Morse, Johnson and Urban and Mayor Gunderson said that they support the idea. City Administrator Watson said that it will be added to the consent agenda at today's meeting and at a future meeting staff will bring the Memorandum of Agreement for approval.

**5. Staff Updates:**

Planning/Community Development Director Wall said that he has added to the Council consent agenda an item for approval. The item is a Final Plat for Caribou Coffee in Little Canada.

**6. Future City Council Requests:**

Council Member Urban noted that he would like added to a future Workshop agenda an item for discussion of City's current policy with regards to vehicles incidental to permitted uses in their respective zoning district and a discussion of the Halvorson property on County Road D about their current code enforcement situation. City Attorney Beckman said that the Halvorson property has been cleaned up and all criminal charges will be dismissed

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kevin Watson, City Administrator