



Approved: September 12, 2016

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
AUGUST 29, 2016
8:30 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor Grant called to order the City Council Work Session at 8:32 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Grant; Councilmembers Brenda Holden, Fran Holmes, Dave McClung and Jonathan Wicklund

Absent: None

Also present: Interim City Administrator Sue Iverson; Acting Public Works Director John Anderson; Senior Planner Matthew Bachler; Finance Analyst, Dave Perrault; and Deputy Clerk Jolene Trauba

1. AGENDA ITEMS

A. Utility Billing/Water Shutoff Policy

Acting Public Works Director Anderson stated the City Council requested a discussion be held on the policy as it relates to delinquent utility bills and whether the City should shut off water on past due accounts or roll delinquent bills into quarterly assessments to the property.

Acting Public Works Director Anderson reported the City Attorney has supplied an email on this topic. This email contains comments from both the City Building Official and the City Attorney both favoring remaining with the current policy to certify delinquent bills instead of disconnecting service. In addition, the Attorney has provided a link to a League of Minnesota Cities memo on the topic and the portion of said memo that pertains to utility billing/water shut offs.

Acting Public Works Director Anderson explained from a Public Works standpoint, that if directed in accordance with the City's adopted policy, Public Works can shut off water. He noted that from time to time the shut off valve may not be accessible, may not operate if it has not been turned recently, or may start leaking when operated. If a water shut off valve requires repair, this is a City cost and therefore the City may incur repair costs during a water shut off.

Mayor Grant was in favor of utility bills being certified with the County and that this continue to be public information.

Councilmember Holden questioned how much the City was not collecting in utility bills.

Interim City Administrator Iverson stated the only time the City was not fully collecting on a utility bill was if a property owner were to file bankruptcy prior to the outstanding bill being certified by the City Council. This was the reason the City certified its outstanding utilities on a quarterly basis.

Councilmember Holden believed that if certain residents wanted their utility bills to be certified to the County on their property tax statements, the City should continue this practice.

Councilmember McClung suggested that a letter be provided to residents notifying them that if outstanding utility amounts are not paid in full, the information will be made public and the outstanding amount will be certified to the County.

Interim City Administrator Iverson discussed the letters that were already being sent by the City.

Councilmember Wicklund requested staff forward these letters to the Council for further review.

B. County Road E Bridge Pedestrian Lighting Review

Acting Public Works Director Anderson stated on March 28, 2016, the City Council directed staff to proceed with contracting for installation of lighting on the County Rd E/TH51 bridge. The staff memo on this item was specific in its description that the lighting was intended to light the pedestrian facility on the south side of the bridge. The contractor has installed the lighting and Councilmember Holmes brought forward a concern that the lights should cover more of the bridge surface and that her understanding was the lights would cover more of the bridge.

Councilmember Holden asked if additional lights would be placed on the County Road E Bridge.

Councilmember Wicklund believed the existing lights were adequate given the level of pedestrian traffic on this bridge.

Mayor Grant stated he has seen the lights and indicated they were not very bright.

Councilmember Holmes explained the lights were adequate for the south side of the bridge, but not for the north side of the bridge. She commented she does see Bethel or high school students walking along the north side of the bridge fairly often. She stated it was her expectation that the entire bridge would be properly lit by the newly installed lighting. She suggested brighter bulbs be installed in the existing light poles.

Councilmember Holden questioned how North St. Paul received funding for their bridge aesthetics.

Acting Public Works Director Anderson stated North St. Paul may have contributed a significant amount of dollars to assist with the bridge project, pedestrian walkways and lighting.

Councilmember Wicklund supported Councilmember Holmes suggestion to install brighter bulbs in the existing light poles. He asked if the north side of the bridge would accept additional light poles.

Acting Public Works Director Anderson explained this side of the bridge was not fitted with conduit.

Mayor Grant understood the north side of the bridge would need new light poles and fixtures in order to cast more light onto the north side of the bridge. He requested staff investigate the cost for new fixtures and poles prior to the Council making a decision on this matter.

C. Snow Plow, Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy

Acting Public Works Director Anderson stated the City Council discussed the policy on January 19, 2016, and requested it be brought back with edits during the summer months. Staff has edited the policy to reflect the current snow plowing practice and is looking for feedback from the City Council.

Mayor Grant had no concerns with the policy.

Councilmember Holden requested one change to the document noting salt shall be loaded at the source and striking the words “from Ramsey County”.

Mayor Grant recommended this item be brought back to the Council for approval on an upcoming Consent Agenda.

D. LMC Policy for Donation of Equipment

Finance Analyst Perrault stated the Council expressed interest in adopting a policy to donate surplus City equipment to nonprofit organizations pursuant to state law. The League of Minnesota Cities recently published information regarding background information, applicable state statutes, and a model policy for cities to consider adopting. Attached is the background information, and the model policy for Council to review and provide feedback.

Policy Highlights:

- Council will set the standard for how and when surplus equipment is identified and approved for donation
- Council will set the standard for which organizations will be allowed to accept donated equipment
- Provides additional tort immunity to municipalities assuming there was no fraud or intentional misrepresentation

Finance Analyst Perrault indicated staff would like direction from the Council on whether or not they would like to proceed and approve a policy regarding the donation of surplus City equipment to nonprofit organizations.

Further discussion ensued regarding the new donation of equipment policy.

Mayor Grant recommended the policy be brought back to the Council for approval on an upcoming Consent Agenda.

E. Personnel Committee Update

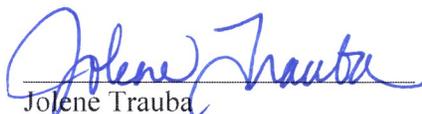
Mayor Grant stated the Personnel Committee would be interviewing three Public Works Superintendent candidates on Tuesday, August 30. He reported the City would be interviewing applicants for the City Administrator position on September 13 beginning at 6:00 p.m.

2. COUNCIL COMMENTS AND STAFF UPDATES

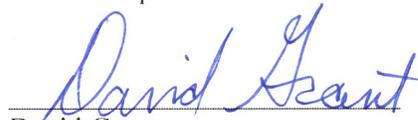
None.

ADJOURN

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session at 8:59 p.m.



Jolene Trauba
Deputy Clerk



David Grant
Mayor