

**City of West St. Paul  
Open Council Work Session  
February 22, 2016**

**1. Roll Call**

Mayor David Meisinger called the work session to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Meisinger and Councilmembers Armon, Halverson, Bellows, Iago, Napier and Vitelli.

Others: City Manager Matt Fulton, Assistant City Manager and HR Director Sherrie Le, Community Development Director Jim Hartshorn, Police Chief Manila Shaver, Fire Chief Mike Pott, Finance Director Joan Carlson, Public Works and Park Director Ross Beckwith, Attorney Korine Land, Fire Chief Mike Pott, City Engineer Darin Rezac and City Clerk Chantal Doriott.

**2. Approve Agenda**

Council approved the work session agenda. The Council will first hear information on the I/I program and when reps from the YMCA arrive, we will start to hear information on the YMCA discussion item. We will then hear information on the I/I program.

**3. Review the Regular Meeting Consent Agenda**

Council approved the consent agenda items and added:

- Under Consent – consider SMFD appointment
- The Mayor would like to hear Council comments during the work session to avoid redundancy during the regular meeting.

**4. Agenda Item(s)**

**4.A. YMCA Discussion about WSP Options**

City Manager Matt Fulton opened the discussion and asked the following YMCA staff to introduce themselves: Mike Lavin, District Executive and Katie Lowe, Executive Director and Pat Connolly, Director of Real Estate

Manager Fulton explained the West St. Paul YMCA is currently undergoing a strategic planning process regarding its facility locations within the Twin Cities Market area in an effort to plan for its successful future. In October, 2014, the City and YMCA entered into a “Memorandum of Understanding” relating to a mutual interest in exploring the potential for doing a collaborative project that would include a new YMCA and City Hall. While a jointly funded community survey was completed regarding this idea, additional efforts were essentially shelved when the City Hall project needed to be deferred due to financing limitations and the YMCA commenced its strategic planning effort.

As the YMCA anticipates its future, it is timely and appropriate for YMCA representatives to discuss its future with the City Council, including any ongoing interest in exploring the idea of a collaborative project with the City. If there is interest, additional work would be necessary to define the specifics surrounding how such a partnership would be organized and financed. The logical location for such a project would be somewhere on the municipal golf course, likely at the intersection of Thompson Avenue and Oakdale St. In order to maximize any redevelopment interests on Robert Street, a land swap with the YMCA would help to maximize the City's ability to assist with land assembly for any future economic redevelopment project that might include the YMCA site. The YMCA currently owns 9.58 acres and has an assessed market value of \$3,887,500. The YMCA is a tax-exempt organization. As the Council is aware, the City has a lease agreement with the YMCA to use a portion of the YMCA property for use by the Thompson Oaks Municipal Golf Course.

If the City Council is not interested in pursuing a collaborative project with the YMCA, the idea of a land swap is still something to discuss with the YMCA in the interest of helping the YMCA have a location to construct a future new facility.

Mike Lavin said the YMCA is interested in meeting with supporters to find out what the YMCA needs are in this community; how do we serve moving forward and meet gaps. The YMCA is just starting a process right now and they have hired an outside firm to assist in these efforts. Mr. Connolly said there is a firm they are working with – evaluating all the Y's. Their first thought is what we should do with the existing property and this information should be ready in a couple weeks; this is a priority. Their current facility is small and old and hopefully there is a new chapter ready to get started.

Manager Fulton asked for clarification of a land swap. In the context of keeping the YMCA in West St. Paul, on an alternative site, we review many tools and techniques. A land swap was done in Forest Lake. We will need to use very tool that is appropriate to the community. How much space is needed? Minimum is a 6 acre parcel and that could be small. It's the size for the current structure; it leaves very little green space. We have some examples of buildings that are in close proximity to parks that we can access to meet community needs. Mr. Connolly has seen a variety of ways that the YMCA can come or grow in a community. There are 23 acres at the golf course with 20 developable acres.

Clpn. Vitelli doesn't see the city being prepared for a city hall anytime soon but he is in favor of development of the golf course and having the YMCA stay in West St. Paul; he is in favor of land swap. Where do you stand with the redevelopment prospect? Very productive conversation is under way. There is no specific "thing" on paper but we have been honest and laid the cards on the table. If the redevelopment group wants to move forward fairly quickly – are you open to consideration and ways to keep a presence here on a temporary basis? At the Midway location we built a new building and during the time they were in a temporary location, we served the members the best we can. Discussion continued regarding the land swap and redevelopment ideas. Manager Fulton asked the YMCA if you did a land swap do you think the strategic plan would be to do a collaborative project or possibly a larger project such as in Eagan. The YMCA has been serving West St. Paul for over 40 years so there's a little different depth and consideration in these legacy communities. The more you can cost share and collaborate, the better for everyone. Considering a land swap versus financial transaction – the cash seems like a better way to do business. Having the redeveloper and the YMCA and city seems a little more complicated. Manager Fulton said this project could be

complicated. The land swap could allow us more flexibility, etc. There are a lot of questions that need to be answered to the public said Mayor Meisinger. There needs to be structure and there are a lot of layers and details but we are hoping to have you stay in West St. Paul. Council said having the redevelopment project come to fruition is very exciting. They would like the YMCA to stay in West St. Paul. There most likely will not be a new city hall built this year or even next year. Collaborative efforts are what we strive for but the YMCA needs to be aware that the City wants the redevelopment project to move forward. Move in the direction of working privately with the redevelopment opportunity and keep the council informed. Director Hartshorn and Manager Fulton should work together to keep the council updated. Manager Fulton said we are doing that now. Council would be interested in seeing details of the study as permitted so we can think about a proposal on how a land swap can happen or some kind of financial package for council to consider. The YMCA would be very interested in having this type of documentation to start something.

The Land and Water Conservation Act does not apply to the golf course. This act is intended to preserve land.

#### **4.B. Discussion Relating to Inflow and Infiltration Project**

City Manager Fulton gave an overview. The City is engaged in a program intended to ensure that clear water does not end up in the sanitary sewer system. This program is being required by the Metropolitan Council that has a surcharge approach toward communities that allow excessive clear water into the sanitary sewer service. In West St. Paul's case, the surcharge amount is \$2.7 million. The surcharge can be avoided if a similar amount is invested in the public and private sanitary sewer infrastructure to remove the clear water.

While the program was originally commenced in 2008, a more aggressive approach was implemented in 2015. The engineering firm of SEH has been retained to assist the City in this effort. Based on the experience from the past year relating to this project, there are several modifications that the City Council is being asked to consider at this time. Manager Fulton also mentioned concerns regarding lining of the pipes that are going into the main.

1. Hire a temporary employee to provide initial house preview to determine if the property is ready for inspection by SEH and assist property owners in understanding the overall steps required by this program to become compliant. The position description for this position is attached and the proposed rate is \$20-\$25/hour. The position would continue until the I/I program is completed. As part of this effort, the City would take more of a leadership role in helping property owners schedule and accomplish the necessary steps in becoming compliant.
2. Amend Chapter 50.08 of the City Code regarding the discharge of prohibited clear water drainage and sump pumps. The proposed changes simply are intended to clarify the responsibilities of homeowners to participate in the I/I program and ensuring that the sanitary sewer service line is available and accessible. The proposed language clarifies penalties for not participating. The Council will have a first reading of the ordinance at its regular meeting following the work session.
3. In order to avoid street excavation, it is being recommended that any required sanitary sewer service line repairs be limited to no closer than two feet from the sanitary sewer main in the street. Any repair work that would necessitate excavation in the street would be noted in the City's records and corrected at the time of street reconstruction. This would shift the cost of

these repairs to the City although; it would also preserve the integrity of the street, which is a high community priority. Future costs for sanitary sewermain repairs would increase as a result of this approach and would need to be absorbed in municipal sewer rates.

4. A property would be considered compliant upon the submittal and review of a video and signed verification statement from the licensed plumbing company following all required repairs.
5. The I/I Inspection Liaison wage is proposed at a \$20-\$25/hour rate. Hours will depend on need. Annualized, this position, working full-time, would be approximately \$41,600-\$52,000 and funded through the Sanitary Sewer Fund.
6. Additional city expenses relating to assuming reconstruction repairs to sanitary sewer service line/main repair is not possible to calculate at this time and would be incorporated within the capital budget for the Sanitary Sewer Fund.
7. Eliminating a final inspection by SEH will save the City \$200/inspection.

Engineer Darin Rezek spoke about two repair methods.

1. Cut and repair which is not a good choice.
2. Pipe lining – contractors are relatively new and unfortunately there have been needed repairs. Pipe replacement can be done up the right of way line. The resident is responsible up until the connection.

Staff is asking council to consider the recommendations outlined above. Clpn. Halverson said she is not in favor. We should look at the sump pumps as this is 70% of the causes. Staff should have SEH information by the end of the week. Clpns. Armon and Halverson would like to wait until we have the SEH summary before decisions on the program are made. Council has heard many complaints about SEH. Sump pumps emptying into laundry tubs are a huge source of the issue, think some of the council. Also, pipe cracks should be fixed. Have we written specifically to SEH about our dissatisfaction on their performance asked Clpn. Bellows? If it's inspector or customer service issue, they should be dealt with appropriately. Regarding pipe breaks - if the break is after the right of way we should just leave it said Clpn. Napier. Clpn. Iago said we should stop and halt everything (to do with this program). At least sit down with Met Council because this has become a little confusing. SEH has been unpredictable. Someone suggested: notify SEH that the program is on hold and they finish what they were on but they don't get paid until the project is finalized. We could consider the ordinance amendment and approve the first reading tonight.

## **5. Adjourn**

The work session adjourned at 6: 20 p.m.

David Meisinger  
Mayor  
City of West St. Paul