

OPEN COUNCIL WORK SESSION
July 25, 2016 at 5:45 p.m.
MUNICIPAL CENTER
ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE ROOM

1. Roll Call

Mayor David Meisinger called the work session to order at 5:45 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Meisinger and Councilmembers Halverson, Bellows, Iago, Napier and Vitelli. Clpn. Armon had an excused absence.

Others: 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, Assistant Park Director Dave Schletty, Attorney Korine Land and City Clerk Chantal Doriott.

2. Approve Agenda

Councilmembers added:

- Art on the Avenue Discussion
- Redevelopment Tools Discussion

3. Review the Regular Meeting Consent Agenda

Councilmembers added:

- Consent agenda item G. List of Claims – add Dairy Queen payment
- Move item 13.A. to 12.E.1.
- Attorney Land will address a letter the city received regarding potential discrimination.

4. Agenda Item(s)

4.A. Robert Street Median Landscape Design Discussion (Requested by Councilperson Bellows)

Clpn. Bellows said he has been looking at the median and noticed at the end there was course stone and other possible placement issues. The open space and random placement makes the area look unprofessional. There are also places the stones are uneven. He would like this to look as nice as possible. Unfortunately, the plan did not include stone all around and he wonders if the stone should be placed at the ends rather than having them placed haphazardly. This “finding” comes from what Clpn. Bellows inferred or was implicated. Director Beckwith said this design was approved by Council. Council was advised to drive Robert and review what is in place. Maybe we can get a picture of the area. Staff will address this at the next work session.

Clpn. Bellows questioned the Robert St. street lights/signal as they don't appear to be consistent with other city street signals. Director Beckwith explained the signals at intersections are per

MnDOT standards. The Robert St. signals have a cobra-style light at the top. The entire standard including the arm is galvanized. Clpn. Bellows thinks it clashes with what we have in place. Painting galvanized metal is not advised. Other maintenance items were discussed and Director Beckwith added that he had called the manufacture. There is a process they could do when they are manufacturing the “arm” in which they remove a layer and resurface it but you can’t paint galvanized steel. This is a MnDOT standard for galvanized steel. Clpn. Bellows would like to review the bid specs and what was approved by Council.

4.B. Informational Item - False Alarm Response Data

Police Chief Manila Shaver explained there were questions on false alarm fees at a previous meeting. The data included in the agenda packet deals with this issue.

Clpn. Bellows has an issue that we are not asking for compensation for the time that our police deal with these false alarms. The owner of the system should be taking care of the cost borne from the police answering the call. The first three alarm calls are set by Council ordinance.

Clpn. Napier agrees with Clpn. Bellows when the calls are excessive. Having alarms does make our community safer.

Clpn. Iago added that if the Police are out on false alarm calls other calls could begin to “stack”. When an Officer goes back time after time, again and again, they also might get a little complacent.

This will be brought forth at the regular meeting. Mayor Meisinger asked Chief Shaver if he would estimate the number of calls that are three or more.

4.C. Staff Updates

4.C.1. Status of Harmon Park Grass and Trees – Dave Schletty

Staff met with a vendor last week and basically reviewed everything and they agree the grass is in poor shape. The blue grass is growing and what you see that looks dead is rye grass. The green grass is there. We are working with them on cutting and fertilizing. We might do a little over-seeding. The grass is there and it’s established. The School District did agree to pick up the cost of the fertilizer. The city will apply it. There has been heavy use on our grass and they believe it will look better with time. The consultant said it was installed correctly. Check the spec to see if there is a warranty or something we are overlooking.

Regarding watering – we are getting decent coverage and it’s not the cause of the dry grass. We are looking for a booster pump.

- Clpn. Vitelli is not happy with the design of the irrigation system. Director Beckwith added that St. Paul Water might get involved. Staff will check to see who is responsible for checking the water pressure. Clpn. Bellows added if we knew right away about the pressure why did we wait until now to address it. Director Schletty said staff went back to the contractor and he suggested the addition of a booster pump and we decided to wait

with such a purchase. Clpn. Iago said if the system was checked in the beginning that is when it should have been addressed. He has spoken to residents and the manager about quite a few issues with water and the field looks horrible. We need to be firmer with contractors and vendors.

- Clpn. Halverson said we have a lot of money tied up in this park and we need to do something about the issues. What happened and who is responsible?
- Clpn. Vitelli is concerned about the soil – the color looks gray. Director Schletty said the top soil was approved before it was put down. Clpn. Vitelli said it was unacceptable.
- Clpn. Bellows asked if the system was designed for water pressure and did someone check to see if the pressure was present when they hooked up the system.
- The trees are also unacceptable. Director Schletty explained the trees were put in over a year ago and staff has notified the contractor that some need to be replaced as they are dead. The contractor has not given a time line as to when they will be replaced. They can do this in the fall as now (summer) is not a good time to plant trees. Director Schletty further explained that the city is holding contractor funds and can use this money for the tree replacement if needed. Council asked staff to work with Attorney Land on such a transaction.

4.C.2. Status of Robert Street Tree Installation

Director Beckwith explained the tree has a two year establishment plan and is outlined in the LS Black contract. Staff has been working with a botanist who has suggested replacing the 3 inch tree with a 2 inch tree.

- Clpn. Bellows could be in favor of the 2 inch tree if contractor agrees.
- Council told Director Beckwith to ask the contractor if he will work with staff on the replacement.

5. Discuss Special Council meeting to canvass Primary Election results and hold an Open Council Work Session to review the proposed 2017 General Fund Budget.

Assistant Manager Le will email Council several dates for the special meeting and work session; meeting notices will be published in accordance with law.

6. Adjourn

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



David Meisinger
Mayor
City of West St. Paul