



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
August 7, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Present: Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Deirdre Kvale, Jahn Dyvik, and Tom Skjaret

Staff Present: City Administrator: Scott Weske; Public Works Director: Sean Diercks; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: Council: Michelle Jerde (with emergency notice)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MAYOR'S COMMENTS - LONG LAKE NEWS, MEETING REVIEW AND UPDATES

Mayor Miner offered the following comments and updates:

Mayor Miner noted that Council member Jerde was not in attendance at the meeting and had needed to leave to address an emergency.

August 6 was Night to Unite or National Night Out across the country. The Wayzata Crime Prevention Coalition (WCPC) held their annual Night to Unite luncheon at the Wayzata Country Club, and resident Tim Hultmann was surprised to receive the Jim Fish Award in recognition of the years of work he's done with the WCPC. At the luncheon, Wayzata Police Chief Risvold reviewed notable crime fighting and arrests over the past year in Wayzata and Long Lake; as well as emphasized an important crime prevention tip, encouraging residents to keep their garage doors closed during the daytime and when at home. During the evening, Night to Unite gatherings were held at various locations throughout Long Lake; with Police and Fire vehicles and officers visiting Night to Unite events from about 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Mayor Miner had ridden with firefighters in a fire truck to visit Long Lake get togethers, and McGruff (Tim Hultmann) rode with Police Chief Risvold. Mayor Miner noted it had been nice to see residents talking with each other, their neighbors, and interacting with public safety officials.

The annual Church of St George Corn Days summer festival will be held this weekend, August 10 and 11. Mayor Miner asked City Clerk Moeller to send a Corn Days informational message out on the City Listserv. The annual Corn Days Parade will be held on Sunday, and members of the City Council are invited to accompany the antique fire truck in the parade. Parade vehicles will be lining up along Willow Drive before the parade starts at 12:00 noon.

APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Skjaret, to approve the Agenda as presented. Ayes: all.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda consisted of:

- A. Approve Minutes of July 23, 2019 City Council Meeting

- B. Receive Unofficial Draft Minutes of July 16, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting
- C. Approve Vendor Claims and Payroll
- D. Adopt Resolution No. 2019-32 Accepting the Donation of \$5,000 From the Northwest Tonka Lions Club to the Long Lake Fire Department
- E. Adopt Resolution No. 2019-33 Accepting the Donation of \$2,000 From CenterPoint Energy Through Their Community Partnership Grant Program to the Long Lake Fire Department
- F. Adopt Resolution No. 2019-34 Approving Issuance of Special Event Permit #S2019-08 for the 2019 Lakeview Block Party to be Held August 25, 2019

*A motion was made by Skjaret, seconded by Dyvik, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
Ayes: all.*

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

No one appeared to address the City Council during Open Correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Discussion of Solar Technology for City Facilities

Mayor Miner recalled that during the Council's goal setting session, discussion of exploring solar technology for City facilities was mentioned. Recently, Mayor Miner had spoken with a couple residents who were familiar with solar technology installations to gain information. Concurrently, Administrator Weske and staff have been meeting with vendors regarding considering solar technology implementation as well. Thus far, it appears City Hall in particular would present a good location to benefit from a solar installation; and though less ideal, Public Works could potentially be a site if infrastructure improvements were to be made. Mayor Miner stated that resident Jane Davidson has spent much of her career on solar energy, had prepared a memo regarding solar options for municipalities, and he invited her to speak.

Jane Davidson, 1020 Old Long Lake Road, indicated that she was really glad to see the City consider putting solar on City buildings and complimented Council's forward thinking, particularly Mayor Miner for moving the discussion ahead. She referred to the memo she had provided and noted she was aware Administrator Weske has also done quite a bit of work to research the potential for solar installations as well. She advised that the State Department of Commerce is really supportive in giving thought to how cities can approach solar installations and the individuals she had spoken with had been extremely helpful. She explained that cities are different than individuals for the purpose of purchasing solar technology – individuals can take advantage of tax credits, but cities cannot do so. Options for cities are to purchase an installation outright, or to enter into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Under the terms of a PPA which would be negotiated through an installer, solar panels are purchased by private investors who benefit by receiving the tax credits, and the City would receive the benefit of a reduced price on electricity costs and not being responsible for the full cost of the purchase. She commented that areas for the City to be aware of when negotiating a PPA would be to consider the term length of the agreement; rates to be paid over the term of the agreement; and obtaining favorable terms for ongoing maintenance of the system after the buyout once the term of the agreement is complete. Being able to consider installations on more than one building may create a better position from which the City could negotiate PPA terms. In negotiating a PPA with an installer, she also advised that the City consider negotiating to receive energy credits that apply to an installation, as they have worth to the City and permit a City to advertise as being a "green city". These energy credits are not usually valuable to investors. She added that it is a reasonable time to consider solar technology, as the cost of the infrastructure is changing and efficiency has been steady for the last few years. There are higher efficiency panels in development at laboratories, however, those will not be on the market for some time.

Ms. Davidson responded to Council member questions and provided further clarification on PPAs and solar technology, explaining that installer companies broker a deal with investors who pick up the tab for the equipment purchase and receive tax credits; with a PPA, the rate paid for electricity can be negotiated but what's happening is essentially the electric metering is going backwards; solar installations are connected to the utility grid rather than a battery system, and are not designed to be a backup power source; Xcel Energy uses energy credits to meet their requirements for renewable energy, and with a PPA versus an outright purchase, the City can negotiate for the energy credits and "green city" status; confirmed that because City Hall was not constructed using GO bonds, there is no issue with a PPA of a for-profit benefiting from an arrangement using public property; in a situation where a City would purchase solar or wind technology outright, a City would be paying a substantial up front cost with the idea that it would save money over a long term; at the end of a PPA, typically a 10 year period, a City owns the panels and the energy is free; and a PPA allows a for profit company/investors to buy your solar installation for you and obtain tax credits, with cities receiving reduced electricity costs and energy credits to allow claiming "green city" status. Ms. Davidson confirmed that cities, county and state offices have completed solar installations through a PPA, and the Department of Commerce had provided a list of companies who work with PPAs. Checking to verify that the companies are registered with the Solar Energies Industry Association would be positive, as their registration would mean the companies can be expected to provide a certain level of quality.

Mayor, Council and staff held continued discussion of the potential benefits and infrastructure improvements needed to implement solar. Council member Dyvik pointed out that entering into a PPA for the City Hall location could impact a future developer if they wished to acquire the City Hall site as part of a Virginia Avenue redevelopment; however, Weske suggested it was likely a PPA could include terms for transfer of ownership of infrastructure or other clauses. Weske and Diercks confirmed City Hall is nearly due for a re-roof project, and a re-roof should be completed before a solar installation. Mayor Miner noted that a metal roof would be more expensive than shingles but may be a good choice in preparing for a solar installation.

Mayor Miner questioned whether it was the consensus of Council that staff could continue to work on the potential of a solar installation project for City buildings. All Council members present were supportive of staff continuing to do so.

Update on City Phone System Upgrade Project

City Clerk Moeller described the deteriorating condition of City Hall's aging phone system, original to the building's construction. As the phone system has now been reduced to unsupported hardware and only two functioning phones in the building, staff has been exploring financially feasible alternatives for upgrading to a leased VOIP system which could be integrated with Public Works. The most advantageous proposal was received from the City's current phone/fax line provider, POPP Communications. The City's current monthly bill for analog, fax and long distance for City Hall and Public Works is approximately \$441/month. The proposal received from POPP Communications for lease of new VOIP phones and service licensing would replace the previous analog environment for both City Hall and Public Works, resulting in the City's monthly billing only increasing approximately \$30 more per month. The leased VOIP system would provide for increased functionality, allowing for voicemails to be received both via email and via phone, transfers between buildings, and potentially direct dial numbers for staff as well. Finding the proposal to be favorable, staff has begun the process of moving forward with a phone system upgrade through POPP Communications in hopes of having the system on board in time for the hire of the new full-time employee.

Mayor Miner questioned whether staff would recommend considering upgrading to a keyless entry system for City Hall similar to the system at the fire stations.

Weske indicated that purchasing one for City Hall would be more expense than is necessary at this time. Keys are held by a controlled group, and the facility is not rented out for public use.

Wayzata Boulevard W Construction and Landscaping Project Updates

Public Works Director Diercks thanked Council for their discussion of budget concerns during the work session. Moving on, he reported that he had very little for updates on Wayzata Boulevard W as the project is nearing completion. One major punch list item that will be addressed is that it had been discovered the black coating was failing on 13 of the new streetlights installed. Those lights will be removed for recoating one-by-one. Diercks confirmed that the contractor or County have not voiced any comments regarding the question of whether attaching signs to light poles is a good idea for the life of the poles, and noted he will suggest the County use separate posts to install signs rather than placing them on the poles. He also confirmed he has not seen documentation of the four year warranty period on the poles.

Mayor Miner questioned whether there had been conversation of removing the "do not dig here" signs along the lakeshore. Diercks responded that he had not yet approached the County regarding those signs, but he would anticipate they would argue that because the area is a reinforced soil slope (RSS) bank, anyone who would come along and dig in that location would be very destructive to the RSS.

Diercks discussed the following punch list items and offered the following commentary in response to Council questions:

- As part of the punch list, salt tolerant sod for the boulevard area will be installed in August.
- Diercks had informed the construction division of the damage to the concrete island of refuge at Wurzer Trail that needs repair, and he hopes that will be addressed.
- Speed limit signs have been installed and Wayzata Police have been actively monitoring the corridor to control speeders.
- In the landscaping area, one tree had died close to the slope by the lake. Diercks will be notifying the engineers contracted to inspect the work. Council member Dyvik added that two trees by Martha Lane were not looking very good as well.
- Eureka Construction had come in and cut down weeds in the project area.
- Council member Skjaret thanked Diercks for pursuing Eureka Construction to finish work along Wurzer Trail, and they had done a great job. He noted that if there is any standing water, Diercks may want to check the catch basin where it comes out by Heather Lane as that may need more rock. Diercks also had been pleasantly surprised with how the trail is looking.
- Public Works is in the process of completing the final grade on the former BP station site, and truckloads of fill and Class 5 had been hauled in for the work.

Council member Dyvik reviewed the speed limit sections from the final design map for the Phase 2 area.

Related to the landscaping, Council member Dyvik had called the banner designer to compliment her on the work and she had mentioned the hanging flower pots were obscuring the view of the banners. He suggested that perhaps next time around, baskets could be ordered to hang lower. He also noted that the tall banners seem to be loose. Diercks and Weske spoke to the installation of the taller banners, noting that they are stretched apart as far as possible, but shorter banners would not fit on the hardware available.

OTHER BUSINESS

Finance Position Update – Council member Kvale sought an update on the Finance/Utility Officer position posting. Weske confirmed that the posting is now available on the LMC City Jobs site as well as on Indeed. A few applications have been received since the posting, and the application period was posted to close August 27. He noted the budget for the coming year would include expense associated for the new employee, as it is only the start date that is in question.

Corn Days Parade – Council member Dyvik asked if Council members would be walking in the parade. Mayor Miner indicated he plans to walk alongside the fire truck, and Council member Dyvik indicated he would do the same. It was noted that Council member Kvale will be emceeding for the parade.

Planning Commission Attendance – Council member Skjaret stated he would be out of town and unable to attend the next Planning Commission meeting.

Consider Solar Technology Language Changes – City Clerk Moeller noted that as part of a draft Zoning Code housekeeping ordinance she has been working on, she and Planning Consultant Imihy were wondering whether the Council would be supportive of reducing some of the dimensional criteria in Zoning Code specific to solar panel installations. Code specifies the height of panels allowed and requires they be set back at least one foot from a roof edge; however, panels have changed since the green technologies language was originally adopted and are less bulky in size and dimension. Moeller questioned whether Council would support reducing the solar language to retain language that solar installations follow the angle of a roofline, and either removing language regarding the one foot setback from roof edge or modifying it to be less restrictive; thereby improving the ability of residential homeowners to add rooftop solar installations with less likelihood of requiring land use applications for minor deviations. Council members discussed the aesthetics of solar installations and were supportive of seeing a red-lined example of modified language for review.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Moeller
City Clerk