



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

December 13, 2021

7:00 PM

Fridley Civic Campus, 7071 University Avenue N.E.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lund called the City Council Meeting of December 13, 2021, to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Scott Lund
Councilmember Dave Ostwald
Councilmember Tom Tillberry
Councilmember Stephen Eggert
Councilmember Ann Bolkcom
Walter Wysopal, City Manager
Scott Hickok, Community Development Director
Sarah Sonsalla, City Attorney

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED CONSENT AGENDA

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt the proposed Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve the Minutes from the City Council Meeting of November 22, 2021.

CLAIMS

2. Resolution No. 2021-129, Approving Claims for the Period Ending December 8, 2021

NEW BUSINESS

3. Resolution No. 2021-119, Repealing Resolution No. 2021-115 in its Entirety and Canceling an Interfund Loan in the Amount of \$840,000 for the 53rd Avenue Lift Station Improvement Project.
4. Resolution No. 2021-120, Warding Sanitary Sewer Collection System Lining Project No. 22-450.

5. Resolution No. 2021-123, Awarding Contract for the Farr Lake Danube Pond Dredging Project.
6. Resolution No. 2021-125, Accepting First Installment of American Rescue Plan Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds and Accepting Redistribution of Unrequested Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.
7. Resolution No. 2021-126, Accepting and Confirming Statutory Tort Limits.

ADOPTION OF REGULAR AGENDA

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt the regular agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Bolkcom.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OPEN FORUM, VISITORS: Consideration of Items not on Agenda – 15 minutes.

Sue Dingman commented that she feels strongly that if bidding were completed for a City-wide garbage hauler it would reduce the impact on the roads. She commented on the number of haulers that come down her road and believed that is damaging the roads and causing a safety concern.

Mayor Lund commented that about five years ago there was a lengthy and heated discussion with the residents, and it became a volatile and hostile issue. He stated that they talked about the matter for about two years. He stated that ultimately the decision was voted down by the Council under a great amount of pressure from residents who did not want government involvement in trash haulers.

Ms. Dingman suggested that the issue be placed on the ballot to allow residents to decide.

Mayor Lund commented that it was a volatile issue, and the meetings were well attended. He stated that residents did not like the price fixing and some residents wanted to stay with their current hauler.

Councilmember Bolkcom stated that she believed that the people who supported the idea perhaps did not attend the meetings. She noted that only she and Mayor Lund were a part of those discussions.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

8. Preliminary Assessment Hearing on 2021 Street Rehabilitation Project No. ST2021-01

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilmember Eggert.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THE PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 7:10 P.M.

Brandon Brodhag, Engineer, explained that each year the City performs a street rehabilitation project and highlighted the project area for 2021. He noted that the Council authorized initiation of the project on

July 13, 2020 with the project slated for completion in 2021. He stated that construction was delayed from 2021 to 2022 because there were roads with higher needs in 2021. He provided additional details on the candidate streets within the project and reviewed the work elements proposed for the project. He reviewed the tentative project schedule and provided details on the virtual neighborhood information presentation which was available on the City website. He stated that notices were mailed to 247 properties and the presentation was viewed 63 times. He stated that the Council received the feasibility report at its November 8, 2021 meeting and noted that the report concluded that the project is cost effective, necessary, and feasible. He reviewed the estimated project cost and proposed funding sources. He provided additional details on the two assessable parcel categories and reviewed the calculation steps for low density residential (LDR) property assessment. He also reviewed the recent assessment history per unit noting that all assessments are based off actual construction costs. He reviewed the available payment options for assessments. He stated that staff requests that the City Council continue the preliminary assessment hearing and hear those who wish to address the Council and if so in order, the Council to move to adopt the related resolution 2021-122. He stated that if approved, staff would finalize the design/plans to receive approvals from State Aid, continue to coordinate with private utility companies with schedules, and update the neighborhood via the project page on the City website.

Councilmember Eggert stated that he noticed there were allocations for water and sewer in the project budget and asked for details on the utility work that would be completed with the project.

Mr. Brodhag replied that there would be some utility work and provided additional details on the project segments that would have watermain work, stormwater, and sewer work.

Councilmember Eggert commented that this type of work seems relatively minor for this project.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked how residents can receive updates if they do not use email.

Mr. Brodhag stated that the City has moved towards digital communications through the website and email over the past few years. He stated that residents who do not have that access can reach out to City staff to receive updates in an alternate manner.

Councilmember Bolkcom asked if residents can still submit questionnaires.

Mr. Brodhag confirmed that residents can still submit the questionnaires and noted that information assists staff in developing the final design for the project.

Councilmember Bolkcom commented on the different activities people host at their homes during the summer months and asked what could be done to accommodate a resident hosting a special event.

Mr. Brodhag stated that the questionnaire does ask if there is a major event occurring for that resident and noted that staff then works with the contractor to avoid high impacts during that time.

Commissioner Bolkcom asked staff to provide additional details on the State Aid funding.

Mr. Brodhag provided additional details on the MnDOT State Aid program. He stated that Fridley is one of five cities that is considered built out and therefore receives funds for all streets and not just certain routes.

Councilmember Ostwald asked for additional details on the maintenance that occurs during the lifespan of a street.

Mr. Brodhag stated that a street has a lifespan of 40 to 50 years and reviewed the different maintenance activities that occur throughout the life of the road.

Mayor Lund welcomed input from the public.

A resident who lived on 57th Avenue stated that there was not a lot of information on the lifespan of the water and sewer utilities, and he was surprised that only minimal utility work would be done. He was concerned that additional utility work would be needed in the future that would cause the road to be torn up again.

Mayor Lund commented that the City televises sewer lines routinely and especially before road construction to identify needed repairs.

The resident said he took advantage of the offer from the City to televise the lines to his home as well.

Jim Kosluchar, Public Works Director, stated the utilities have been inspected in the project area and the televised records have also been reviewed for the sewer lines. He stated that they have developed a predictive failure method for the waterlines and identified the areas that will be targeted through the project. He stated while they would love to replace all the utilities, it would most likely double or triple the water rates for Fridley. He noted the goal would be to have half of the water system rehabbed by the 100-year life of the infrastructure. He stated that there is a similar goal for sewer lines, noting that the sewer pipes can be lined and some of the pipes have likely been lined before. He stated the potential for failure is analyzed, and those issues are then addressed.

Councilmember Eggert stated when his street was redone, he was able to have the construction crew televise his sanitary sewer and asked if that is available to residents.

Mr. Brodhag confirmed that is part of the questionnaire and is an option provided free to residents. He noted that many residents have signed up for that service and welcomed any additional requests.

Councilmember Eggert stated that if there is a problem identified it would be preferable to have that addressed prior to the road construction.

Sue Dingman asked if there would be an additional charge on the water bills for residents in addition to the assessment for the project.

Mr. Brodhag confirmed that the special assessment would be the only cost to residents.

Ms. Dingman stated that she submitted a questionnaire with several questions and commented that she has not received a response.

Mr. Brodhag commented that he would follow up.

Ms. Dingman stated that she has a salon and is concerned with water shutoffs.

Mr. Brodhag commented that he would not expect any water shutoffs for her street. He stated that those people in areas where water would be shutoff would most likely only have a shutoff of two hours and temporary water service would be used to provide water to those houses.

Ross Nelson stated that there is a bike trail that runs by the ballfields by the high school and asked if that segment would be addressed at some time.

Mr. Brodhag stated that staff has discussed whether that would be included in this project. He noted that there are a few trails that need attention and staff is determining how to best address the issue. He confirmed that information would be included as part of the project updates.

Mike Yager asked if every driveway would be addressed within the easements.

Mr. Brodhag stated that the driveway work would be dependent on what is disturbed.

Mr. Yager asked if it would be possible that some driveways would not be disturbed.

Mr. Brodhag confirmed that to be true.

John Phifer, 700 Marigold, stated that it was noted that his entire street would be reconstructed and asked if the curbs would be lowered.

Mr. Brodhag replied that curb work would only occur on those segments that need repair. He stated that most of the curb is in good condition and therefore those segments would remain.

Mr. Phifer provided details on the elevation of his driveway compared to the curb and asked if that could be addressed.

Mr. Brodhag confirmed that staff could work with him to address that issue.

Mr. Phifer asked if this project could be tabled because of the impacts of COVID to allow residents to build funds for the assessment.

Mayor Lund commented that given that there are 120 miles of City streets and a limited amount of resources, the City needs to follow a schedule for repairs. He stated that this project has been delayed from last year in order to address roads in worse condition during 2021. He stated that he would not vote to postpone the project, as there would likely be resident complaints in the future and prices continue to rise.

Councilmember Bolkcom commented that another issue on that topic would be that some residents would want the project while others do not and that would make it difficult to choose between the wants of different residents. She noted that there are different payment options available, and assessments would not be adopted until November 2022.

A resident name Marilyn who lives on 57th Avenue, asked about the plans for 57th Avenue. She asked what is wrong with the road as it is now.

Mayor Lund commented that the staff review the conditions of streets and prioritizes repairs based on condition.

She stated that as a senior, an assessment is a lot of money. She did not feel there was a need for the street to be repaired as there are not potholes and there is curbing already.

Mr. Brodhag commented that staff inspect the streets annually and review different aspects. He stated that 57th Avenue has not been reconstructed and is showing its lifespan with cracking and patching.

Mayor Lund asked if there is a lot of alligator cracking on the street. He noted that the life expectancy of the road becomes short once that begins to show. He acknowledged that some residents feel that repairs could wait while other residents disagree. He stated that the Council takes a lot of input from residents and staff on the needed repairs. He stated that all the streets are rated on condition and then prioritized accordingly. He stated that repairs are planned on a five-year plan and therefore that information is available to residents.

A resident named Norma who lives on Quincy Street referenced the preliminary estimate and commented that it was a bit of a shock to many retired residents. She asked if the City could guarantee that the assessment would not be higher than \$3,000 and that the assessment could be lowered if the cost comes in lower than anticipated.

Mayor Lund stated that in his 21 years, he can only recall one case when the assessment was higher than estimated. He stated that more often than not, the estimate is a bit higher than the actual cost. He acknowledged that the final cost would not be known until the construction costs are known.

Norma asked if residents would be provided an updated assessment amount if the materials costs were to increase.

Mayor Lund explained how the process would move forward. He stated that often unexpected issues arise more with utilities which are not assessed.

Mr. Kosluchar commented that the City prides itself on keeping costs low as much as possible. He was unsure that the City has ever exceeded its estimate but acknowledged that this is an odd time with supply chain issues. He stated that staff will try to find ways to save dollars on a project. He explained that the City attempts to cluster projects together in one area in order to provide cost savings from the contractor rather than having different segments throughout the city. He stated Council would review the bids once received.

Mayor Lund explained that the City looks at its projects in the winter in order to bid the projects early when contractors are planning their work for the next year in attempt to receive the best pricing.

Councilmember Eggert asked the process a resident would explore for a senior deferment of the assessment.

Patrick Maghrak, Assessor, commented that an application would be submitted to the Anoka County Assessor's office, noting that there are some income guidelines. He stated that he could provide an application to anyone that is interested.

Councilmember Bolkcom stated the City does go out for bid on the projects in order to receive the best costs.

Mr. Yager stated that there are some boulevard trees that impede on the curbing. He asked if that would be addressed during the project.

Mr. Brodhag commented that staff would review the curb and determine if there are issues being caused by trees. He stated that most of the time trees that are causing an issue are removed to prevent continued issues. He stated there have been times when trees could be saved with adjustments.

Mr. Yager commented that the tree is also climbing into the power lines, and he would not have a problem with the tree being removed. He asked if that tree removal would be part of the project or assessed to his home.

Mr. Brodhag commented that the cost would be part of the project.

Councilmember Bolkcom commented that the City has programs to provide replacement trees if the resident is interested.

Councilmember Eggert suggested that the resident submit a questionnaire with that issue to ensure it is addressed.

Leona Menyongar, 5755 Washington Street, commented that she has spoken with City staff about her concerns. She stated she is planning a driveway extension and wanted to find out if the contractor for the road project would be interested in doing her driveway extension.

Mr. Brodhag stated that once the contractor is secured for the project, staff could have them review the private driveways to determine if they would like to complete the driveway work. He noted that many times the contractor prefers to stay within the City work and not complete work on private driveways.

Ms. Menyongar stated her daughter will be graduating and noted that staff has told her that they will attempt to coordinate with her. She agreed that her road is need of repairs.

Councilmember Bolkcom stated the City has another program that may be able to assist with her driveway project, the Front Door Grant program. She stated that this is a new program and encouraged the resident to apply.

Korrie Johnson, Acting Finance Director, commented that more information can be found on the City's website. She noted that in January of 2022 the program would be opened again for new applications.

Councilmember Eggert asked if there would be a preference on when work on private driveways should be completed.

Mr. Brodhag stated that they would like to have coordination with the contractor. He noted that they would prefer to have the driveway work before or during construction to prevent additional heavy equipment on a newly paved road.

A resident stated she is unsure if she has submitted a questionnaire and asked if there is a way to double check.

Mr. Brodhag provided his contact information for the resident to follow up.

Ms. Dingman stated that she has handicap visitors that come to her property. She stated she has temporary ramps and asked if a curb cut could be made at her property which would allow wheelchair access.

Mr. Kosluchar commented that if that serves the property, that could perhaps be worked out with the contractor through a cost share. He noted that perhaps the resident pays the unit price. He stated that staff would review the curbing first and if the curbing is being replaced that would present an opportunity. He encouraged the resident to follow up with staff.

Councilmember Tillberry commented that staff are available for any additional questions residents may have.

Mr. Phifer commented that there is a water pond at the end of Marigold which was not draining properly. He asked if that would be part of this project.

Mr. Brodhag stated that the rain garden was part of a 2019 project and is not functioning as well as intended. He stated that staff removed the top foot of material and dug down another three feet to remove clay pockets. He stated that currently that is a sand rain garden to see how that would function and noted that plants would be added in the spring.

Mr. Kosluchar stated that they also reviewed running a pipe which had an estimated cost of \$50,000 but staff wanted to try to address the soil issues and that seems to be addressing the problem at a much lower cost.

Councilmember Bolkcom noted that staff would still have time to ensure the rain garden is functioning properly before the road project begins.

Motion made by Councilmember Eggert to close the public hearing, Seconded by Councilmember Tillberry.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THE PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 8:11 P.M.

Mayor Lund noted that action will be taken on this item later on the agenda tonight.

9. Truth in Taxation Public Hearing, Proposed 2022 Budget and Property Tax Levy

Motion made by Councilmember Eggert to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilmember Bolcom.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THE PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 8:13 P.M.

Korrie Johnson, Acting Finance Director, highlighted the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award that the City received in January 2021. She stated the City does not plan to apply for the award in 2022 because of the changes that have been enacted through that program. She reviewed the budget goals and objectives and economic expectations anticipated. She also noted that several factors cause uncertainty in economic forecasts and provided examples. She reviewed the general budget assumptions and noted that the proposed 2022 budget does not include any adjustments for the pending park system improvement plan, expiring collective bargaining agreements, or pending fiscal recovery funds allocation plan. She reviewed the proposed 2022 budget noting that the proposed budget assumes a 4.7 percent increase to the property taxes compared to 2021. She provided details on the proposed general fund revenues and local government aid noting a projected increase in general fund revenue of 5.6 percent. She noted that is attributed to the increase in market value. She highlighted the general fund expenditures and provided a balance history of the general fund. She provided details on the special revenue funds including the cable television fund, solid waste abatement fund, police activity fund, and Springbrook Nature Center fund. She also provided details on the capital project funds including the building capital improvement fund, street improvement fund, parks capital improvement fund, information technology projects fund, capital equipment fund, and community investment fund. She reviewed the details proposed for the enterprise funds including the water utility fund, sanitary sewer utility fund, storm water utility fund, and municipal liquor fund. She stated that the proposed 2022 budget assumes an overall property tax levy increase of about 2.97 percent. She reviewed information on the City's net tax capacity noting that commercial properties are the largest contributors. She reviewed information on impact of the proposed property taxes on different property values. She also provided comparisons to other comparable metro cities. She recommended that the Council accept any public comments.

Mayor Lund thanked staff for an excellent presentation.

Wally Wysopal, City Manager, commented that it is the practice of the City to present this information and wait one week before requesting final approval. He stated that action will be taken on this item on December 20.

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to close the public hearing, Seconded by Councilmember Eggert.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THE PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 8:51 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS

10. Resolution No. 2021-122, Ordering Final Plans, Specifications and Calling for Bids: 2021 Street Rehabilitation Project No. ST2021-01

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt Resolution No. 2021-122, Ordering Final Plans, Specifications and Calling for Bids: 2021 Street Rehabilitation Project No. ST2021-01. Seconded by Councilmember Bolcom.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

INFORMAL STATUS REPORTS

Councilmember Bolcom commented that North Suburban Center for the Arts will be hosting a holiday tea event on Saturday from 12 to 3 p.m. She stated the organization continues fundraising for the new building. She commended City staff for the excellent job plowing over the weekend. She reminded residents that they cannot push snow into the street.

Councilmember Ostwald noted that holiday lights can be recycled at City Hall.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Eggert.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL VOTING AYE, MAYOR LUND DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:56 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Moore
City Clerk

Scott J. Lund
Mayor