

City of Winsted
City Council Work Session
Lewis Room
Tuesday, December 6, 2016
5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Steve Stotko
Council Member George Schulenberg
Council Member Bonita Quast
Council Member Patty Fitzgerald
Council Member Tom Ollig

Staff Present: Mr. Daniel Tienter, City Administrator
Ms. Raquel Kirchoff, City Clerk-Treasurer
Mr. Jake Saulsbury, City Engineer, Bolton & Menk, Incorporated

I. Call to Order

Mayor Stotko called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Northgate Circle Drainage

Mr. Tienter stated that Mr. Mills was invited to this Work Session but could not attend due to a scheduling conflict. Mr. Tienter stated that Mr. Mills would be at tonight's City Council meeting.

Mr. Tienter stated that at a previous City Council Work Session, the City Council reviewed storm sewer work in the Northgate Circle area at a cost of approximately \$40,000 and decided not to move forward with this project at this time.

Mr. Tienter stated that the City Council directed the City Engineer to look at the area near 621 Northgate Circle again and determine if a berm or some other alternative would help the drainage concern.

Mr. Jake Saulsbury, Bolton and Menk, Incorporated, reviewed his memo provided to the City Council as follows.

Background

The property owner at 621 Northgate Circle has expressed concerns for occasional flooding on his property and on the street adjacent to his property. The area subject to flooding is at the east end of Northgate Circle. The existing storm water conveyance system consists of two catch basins in the cul-de-sac, which tie into a 12-inch line that runs northeast between 621 Northgate Circle and 619 Northgate Circle.

Mr. Saulsbury stated that original lines and pipes that were installed in the area were installed to engineering standards at the time of installation. Mr. Saulsbury stated that it is not uncommon for engineering standards to change over years.

Recommendations

The original recommendation was to upsize the outlet pipe to an 18-inch pipe and replace the inlet structure in the cul-de-sac. The total estimated project cost to complete these improvements is \$40,000.

Installing a berm to protect the property at 621 Northgate Circle is a lower cost option, however, the berm would push the water onto the property to the south and possibly cause the same issue on the neighbor's lot. Other than a berm, a swale could be graded along the property line (over the outlet pipe) to the northeast. This also requires the modification of the recently located manhole into a catch basin in order to collect the water. Currently, the structure sits in a neighbor's private garden. This garden would need to be removed or relocated in order for this option to work. This structure and this garden does sit within an existing drainage and utility easement. Therefore, no easement or property acquisition would be needed but coordination with the property owner would be required. The total estimated project cost to complete these improvements is \$2,000 - \$6,000. The higher end of this range may be necessary if the manhole cannot easily be converted to a catch basin and/or if the resultant swale grade requires the installation of drain tile.

The City Council Members discussed the option provided by the City Engineer.

Council Member Quast stated that Campbell Field has a similar issue and their drainage issues cannot be resolved until the street improvement project to Main Avenue in the very distant future. The Winsted Baseball Association/Winsted Wildcats must contribute to a temporary repair to help alleviate some of the drainage issue until the Main Avenue Street Improvement project.

Mr. Tienter stated that the City has heard drainage concerns from other property owners in the city and the City's past practice has been that the City Engineer will meet with the property owner and provide information regarding how the property can be corrected and then typically it is the responsibility of the property owner to proceed with the City Engineer's recommendations if they so choose. Mr. Tienter continued by stating that in this instance, the City would likely convert the manhole to an inlet at the City's cost, because it is the City's infrastructure. Mr. Tienter stated that the City pays for the cost for the engineer's recommendation.

The City Council Members stated that the City may consider converting the manhole to a catch basin at the City's expense if Mr. Mills would complete the berm/swale at his expense. Council Member Fitzgerald stated that an agreement should be in place regarding this.

Council Member Ollig summarized the issue at 621 Northgate Circle by stating that when it rains, the drain cannot accept certain amounts of rain without taking a while to catch up. Because of this, woodchips on the lot at 621 Northgate Circle are washed away.

Council Member Ollig stated that he is not in favor of the City completing a \$40,000 improvement project at this time because woodchips are being washed away. The City Council Members agreed.

III. Assistant to the City Administrator Position

Mr. Tienter stated that on May 3, 2016, the City Council (Council) accepted the resignation of Ms. Deborah Boelter from the position of City Clerk–Treasurer. On June 21, 2016, following a thorough application process the Council promoted Ms. Raquel Kirchoff, Deputy City Clerk and Ms. Amanda Zeidler, Utility Billing and Payroll Clerk, to City Clerk– Treasurer and Deputy City Clerk, respectively. Ultimately, this process left vacant the Utility Billing and Payroll Clerk position.

Mr. Tienter stated that given the recent hiring of an Administrative Assistant, and the challenges and training inherent to the transition of two separate employees into new positions, City staff opted to not immediately begin the hiring process for the Utility Billing and Payroll Clerk position. City staff also utilized this delay and transition to examine the job duties and essential responsibilities of each recently hired position to realize greater efficiencies and improve effectiveness.

Between September and November, City staff met multiple times to review the position descriptions and discuss the transition process. Based on these meetings and the needs of the organization, City staff recommend converting the Utility Billing and Payroll Clerk into an Assistant to the City Administrator (Assistant) position. This revised position would still perform many of the duties of the previous position, such as greeting callers and visitors, maintaining the City's website, recording meeting minutes and utility billing, but would provide more direct support to the City Administrator. The payroll and insurance responsibilities would be transferred to the Deputy City Clerk.

As City staff discussed, the City Administrator requires regular support and assistance with a wide range of policy initiatives, projects and unusual questions or requests. Often the City Administrator will seek assistance from different City staff balancing these needs against their regular job responsibilities. By converting the Utility Billing and Payroll Clerk to an Assistant, the City Administrator may rely on one individual staff member while allowing other City staff to focus on their day-to-day job duties improving the efficiency of all City staff. It is important to note that the job title of Assistant to the City Administrator is a standard industry job title for this type of position and is also designed to attract candidates interested in this type of work.

On November 14, 2016, the City Personnel Committee reviewed the attached Assistant and Deputy City Clerk Position Descriptions and recommended it to the City Council for further review. Lastly, given the job duties and level of responsibility, City staff recommend a level of pay consistent with the Deputy City Clerk salary range.

Council Member Fitzgerald asked if the City is able to afford an employee with the education qualifications listed. Mr. Tienter stated that at the minimum qualifications for the position, the City is able to. He continued by stating that the City may not expect a person at higher qualifications to stay with the City long term and can expect some amount of turnover because it is an entry level position.

Council Member Ollig stated that the City Council Members have had discussions about retaining City Administrators and this position may help to do that. It also may be able to carry some of the work if the City Administrator would leave.

Council Member Ollig stated that currently City staff takes leadership from Mr. Tienter. Council Member Ollig stated that he does not want this new position directing City staff in any way. He continued by stating that the only way he would agree to this position is if after the position is filled for six months, the City Council reviewed with City staff how the position is working. Council Member Ollig stated that he wanted to be sensitive to the City's current staff.

Mr. Tienter stated that this position is not an Assistant City Administrator so there is no presumption of any management responsibilities or staff direction.

Mr. Tienter stated that the City has a probationary period and reviews are completed after six months. He continued by stating that the City Council can be updated during this process.

Mr. Tienter stated that the position will be posted after the holidays and the City Council may expect a hiring decision in late February or early March, 2017.

IV. Other

a) League of Minnesota Cities-Elected Officials Training.

Mr. Tienter stated that the League of Minnesota Cities is offering a conference in Bloomington, Minnesota on January 27-28, 2017 for elected and newly-elected officials. Mr. Tienter requested that City Council Members contact City staff if they are interested in attending.

b) Presentation of Colors – First Meeting of the New Year

Mr. Tienter asked if the City Council would be in favor of a Color Guard presenting the colors to inaugurate a new year. The City Council Members were in favor of the idea. Mr. Tienter stated that City staff would contact representatives of the American Legion to see if this could occur at the January 3, 2017 City Council Meeting.

c) Safe Routes to School

Mr. Tienter stated that City Council authorized a resolution of support for a Safe Routes to School planning grant in conjunction with McLeod County, Wright County, the City of Howard Lake, and the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted School District. He continued by stating that the coalition did not secure the grant; however, they are applying for another grant and will be holding a meeting at City Hall on Thursday, December 8, 2016 in regards to this grant. Mr. Tienter stated that the City Council will likely consider another resolution of support in the future.

d) Performance Reviews

Mr. Tienter stated that City staff is in the process of completing performance reviews and that recommendations will be made to the City Council to authorize Step increases from the Compensation Plan at the December 20, 2016 City Council meeting, for eligible employees that had a satisfactory performance review.

e) Reception for Council Member Quast

Mr. Tienter stated that a reception will be planned for Council Member Quast who will be retiring from the City Council after the last City Council meeting in 2016.

f) Special City Council Meeting Cancellation – December 1, 2016

Mr. Tienter stated that the Special City Council Meeting scheduled for December 1, 2016 was cancelled because Tetra Pak, 801 Kingsley Street South, decided to wait until Spring, 2017 to begin construction on their parking lot, loading dock and waiting area expansion.

V. Adjourn

Council Member Quast motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Fitzgerald seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Steve Stotko

Steve Stotko
Mayor
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Raquel Kirchoff

Raquel Kirchoff, CMC
City Clerk-Treasurer
City of Winsted