

MINUTES PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

MARCH 13, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mel Schaefer at 5:00 p.m. Members present were Donovan Mayer, Matt Quade, Dave Peschong, and Keith Hemmesch. Advisory members present were Ron Mergen, Public Works Director and Chuck DeWolf, Bolton & Menk, Inc. Belinda Ludwig was also present.

Motion was made by Quade to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2013 Public Works Committee meeting with the correction that Mel Schaefer was absent and the meeting was opened by Vice Chair Keith Hemmesch. Seconded by Quade and unanimously carried.

UTILITY BILLING – LATE FEES

It was requested by Council that the Committee review the utility billing late fee and establish a late fee waiver policy. The current ordinance was reviewed noting that there is a current late fee of 10% with a maximum fee of \$500.00. Ludwig explained the entire billing and late fee process including the late fee, shut off notices, and payment plan information. Ludwig also elaborated that this is time consuming and each quarter there is always approximately 160 late accounts. It was discussed that on a residential bill the fee is not out of line and that in comparison the larger accounts are not out of line either.

It was asked that for what reasons should the City waive the late fee. The reasons could be endless; "I misplaced my bill", "I forgot to pay but I've never been late", "death in the family", etc. Members all agreed it would be too time consuming to keep a list of excuses and track them. It was also discussed to give Eckerly and Mergen the authority to waive the fee on a case by case bases; however, then they would have to answer to why one was given a waiver and not the next. It was also mentioned that staff has to answer to the auditors as to why the City does an adjustment. It was discussed that the City has an ordinance with the late fee in it and the City should follow it.

Motion was made by Hemmesch to make no changes to the current ordinance and that there is no waiver of any late fee for any amount and recommend such to the City Council. Seconded by Peschong and unanimously carried.

WATER PLANT REHAB

DeWolf reported that the design is nearly complete and will be submitted to the Department of Health for review. The project will be bid in June, 2013.

WASTE WATER RE-SCOPING PROJECT

DeWolf updated the Committee on the construction; that the majority of work being done is on the main lift building and pumps are being installed in the irrigation pump station.

MPCA – FORMER MIDTOWN SERVICE STATION

A letter from MPCA was reviewed. The letter noted that Well No. 6 has not failed, it is currently on line. It was suggested that the City Attorney review the Joint Powers agreement and the information from the Engineers regarding the short fall of capacity to see if the City has any recourse. It was further reported that the proposed monitoring wells will need a variance from the Department of Health.

STREET SWEEPER

Mergen reported on the visit to MacQueen. There was no recommendation at this time and that some of the units were not in any better condition than the City's current unit. Some of the biggest points of interest are the hydraulic versus chain drive, auto lube system, and the number of hours on a machine. Staff and Committee members are going to look at a unit in Willmar and report back at the next meeting.

CARROLL CT WATER PRESSURE

The past history of Council action on this was reviewed. The latest action was to pay for half the cost of installation of a booster pump for the resident that did not take advantage of the initial offer. A lengthy discussion followed that the fix was only a bandage. It was asked what the City is going to do when these pumps wear out. The City needs to fix the problem. Also discussed was the history of how the City got to where it is at. A booster station is estimated at \$100,000.00 and a new tower is estimated at \$1.5 million dollars. The area a new tower would serve was discussed; however, most of the area is not in the City limits.

Motion was made by Peschong that the City pay half of the costs of any maintenance, repairs, or replacement of the booster pumps in this area and recommend such to the City Council. The motion passed 4:1(Schaefer, yes; Hemmesch, yes; Peschong, yes; Quade, yes; and Mayer, no). Seconded by Quade and unanimously carried.

HWY. 55 & CO. RD. 181 INTERSECTION

DeWolf reported that the agreement with MnDOT is complete and a bid date will be set for April, 2013.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.