

**WORKSHOP  
OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL  
March 8, 2022**

The City Council held a workshop on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting began at 5:00 PM.

Present: Mayor Paul Reinke

Council Members: Jake Ingebrigtsen  
Colleen Swedberg  
Kevin Zabel  
Susan Olson

Also Present: Christina Volkens, City Administrator  
Kathy Laur, City Clerk  
Nick Newton, Police Chief  
Jason Zimmerman, Finance Director  
Jim Romanik, Public Works Manager  
Andrew Gitzlaff, Community Development Director  
Lori Pulkrabek, Communication Manager  
Shannon Reidlinger, Senior Community Development Specialist  
Dallas Pierson, Planning Commission

**PLANNING PROJECTS UPDATE**

Community Development Director Andy Gitzlaff did a presentation on the city's upcoming planning projects.

1) He started with Glenbrook's small area plan and stated that there is poor vehicle and pedestrian access to the neighborhood, adjacent land uses that are in conflict and limited access to park space. There has been some talk about wanting to expand Cedric's Landing but there are wetland impact issues. There is also development interest along Hwy 36. Glenbrook is eligible for a Washington County Community Development Agency (CDA) Predevelopment Finance Fund Grant. It provides funding up to \$40,000 for the project and requires a 50% local match. The application will be considered at their April 19, 2022 CDA meeting. A resolution of support is required from the City as part of the application. Gitzlaff will bring this forward to the March 22, 2022 City Council meeting if council wants to move forward on it.

2) Mr. Gitzlaff went on to talk about the bike and pedestrian plan update and the need for it to be updated in order to guide the next 10-20 years. He stated that this is an amenity people look at when thinking about moving to the area. Bike and pedestrian improvement applications for funding will be more competitive for grant funds and/or implementation by other road authorities if they are in a plan. The city contracted with Toole Design Group to update the bike and pedestrian plan starting in the summer of 2019. Work was put on hold due to COVID in the spring of 2020. There are six phases to the project. Phases 1 and 2 were complete. Phase 3 is half done and that's when the project was put on hold. It is something the city needs to get back to so it can be completed.

Mr. Gitzlaff has a proposed 10-month schedule to complete the plan including additional public engagement and City Council guidance.

3) Willowbrooke parks programming, master plan and design. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that the planned unit master development agreement, approved on June 22, 2021, is what is used as the guide. White Star Farms is the owner of the land and Lennar is the developer. The city accepted a combination of land and cash for implementation of park improvements consistent with the city's park dedication ordinance. The city received an additional \$122,000 from developers for open space restoration. The city is responsible for open space restoration consistent with the Willowbrooke Landscape Framework Plan and construction of the parks within Willowbrooke. The City executed a master service agreement task order with Stantec for open space restoration for Willowbrooke Phase 1 on March 25, 2021. Staff is working with Stantec on a proposal that is in draft form for Willowbrooke Parks Programming Master Plan and Design. At the end of the preliminary design phase (Phase 2), the goal is to have both City and community stakeholders in alignment with the vision and financial parameters of the project. The Finance Director has set up a separate capital fund for Willowbrooke. Mr. Gitzlaff stated that the park dedication fees received are enough to design a park, but they are not enough to build a park. Bonding will likely be needed for the parks. These parks will not be designed just for Willowbrooke residents. Ideally, he would like to see the design completed by the end of summer, 2022.

Mr. Gitzlaff has been talking with City Administrator Volkens about how we manage all of these different projects knowing that we are still short employees in the Community Development department, specifically a City Planner and Community Development Specialist. That will impact how quickly we can move forward. For the Glenbrook small area plan, he suggested that the new City Planner manage and lead this from May 2022 to February, 2023. For the bike and pedestrian plan, he would like to see that get started soon. Senior Community Development Specialist Reidlinger has the capacity and necessary skill set to work on this project.

Mr. Gitzlaff stated Willowbrooke Parks and Programming is the priority right now and the Council confirmed that. The money for Phase 1 and Phase 2 would come out of the park dedication fees for Willowbrooke. On the heels of this will be Helmo Station park improvements.

Mayor Reinke mentioned a conversation with a board member from the Chamber of Commerce on business retention. This board member was unaware of the movement towards a partnership with the Oakdale Area Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Gitzlaff said that at the February meeting the Chamber Board was supportive of the partnership with the City for a business retention program.

### **ANIMAL IMPOUND CONTRACT**

Police Chief Newton reviewed the current contract with the City of St. Paul Animal Control for impounding animals. Recently, St. Paul terminated its services with suburban cities. The police department has until May 6, 2022 to find a new solution. After some research, he has found two potential solutions. 1) Companion Animal Control (CAC) and 2) the Animal Humane Society (AHS). CAC is a no kill shelter and it would cost the city about \$8,000 a year. They offer other services as

well. They will pick up and transport the animals to a shelter and post pictures of the animals on their website. The AHS is less expensive at about \$6,400 a year, but the animal services contract authorizes them to euthanize animals at their discretion. They impound only.

After discussion among council members, Mayor Reinke summarized that it was the consensus of the council that “no kill” was the direction they are in favor of going.

### **ELECTRONIC PAYMENT PROCESSING FEES**

Finance Director Zimmerman stated that this was a continuation of the discussion on OpenGov’s Citizen Services platform. Council directed staff to provide a summary of electronic payment methods for city services. He discussed utility billing payments over the last 15 years with Payment Services Network (PSN) and its costs. He also discussed that the city will begin ambulance billing through LifeQuest beginning April 1, 2022 and the associated fees. Ambulance billing would be subject to a 2.35% fee. Further, Mr. Zimmerman talked about OpenGov Citizen Service’s specifically permitting and licensing software and those costs.

Mr. Zimmerman recommended utility billing electronic fees be absorbed by the water and sewer fund which is the current structure, at the City’s cost, and not direct the cost be borne by the utility customer. and OpenGov permitting and licensing fees would be absorbed by the user.

Mayor Reinke started off saying that staff’s recommendation seemed reasonable.

Council Member Zabel stated he was comfortable with utility billing going to the end user.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen said the city has to let the customer know there will be a service charge before they “hit send.”

Council Member Swedberg stated she is generally ok with this. She would like to keep it the way it is and she does not like the ambulance fee.

Council Member Olson said she does not want to pass on the utility fees.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen said he was fine passing on the fees. It is a convenience.

The majority supports the proposal as presented.

### **SALES TAX FOR PROPOSED POLICE FACILITY AND PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY – LANGUAGE FOR BALLOT**

City Administrator Volkens has had a lot of input on the proposed language for the 2022 general election ballot questions regarding the half-cent sales tax increase. Ms. Volkens specifically noted: 1) The first question should be about the Public Works facility and the second question about the

police facility – she explained the reasoning behind this proposed order; 2) The language proposed was reviewed and does the Council want any changes? Much of the language proposed is legally necessary and in the approved legislation for the authority to request the half-cent sales tax from voters, and; 3) she remains concerned with how the 0.5% sales tax is noted and that it may imply 1% total. Ms. Volkens asked for council feedback.

Council Member Swedberg said she preferred “rehabilitation” instead of “construction” for the Police Facility language. Ms. Volkens said “remodel” may be a good word as well as that is really what the City is doing. Mayor Reinke suggested “renovation.” The consensus was that “renovation” was the best word. Mayor Reinke stated that it was imperative to get the new public works building. Once that is complete, the police department would move into the old public works building while the police department is being renovated.

Council Member Zabel felt some of the language at the end of each ballot question should be moved to the beginning of the question.

Ms. Volkens told the council that this item would be brought back to them one more time for approval after consultation with the Consultant being hired to manage the public education.

### **SPECIAL PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURE UPDATE**

Finance Director Zimmerman updated the Council on the status of uncompleted projects. Staff has prepared a spending summary as of February 28, 2022.

- 1) The ambulance hasn't been delivered yet, but Chief Wold is optimistic that it should be delivered sometime mid-summer 2022.
- 2) There is some money for lobbying pending council's decision and direction.
- 3) Online Time Cards; the number is higher than what was approved because of turnover in the department in addition to some changes needed in the process and clarity about the product. There is some risk that we may go over \$7,500, but Mr. Zimmerman will keep an eye on it.
- 4) Public Works Manager Romanik stated that when the original budget was set, the Park Harper Sweeper was available for purchase under state contract purchasing. During the process while the budget was being approved, the contract expired and was no longer available for purchase through the state contract. The original money that was budgeted was no longer enough. Between Mr. Romanik and Parks Supervisor Koesling, it was decided that the Park Harper Sweeper is the priority over the flail mower.

Council Member Zabel inquired about the two IT items that were skipped in 2021 including phone components. Mr. Zimmerman replied that after talking to IT Specialist Pat Kandia, it was determined that no more money would go into current technology. Ms. Volkens stated that the city needs a new phone system. Until that evaluation is done, nothing more will be spent on current phone technology. One of the items was for radar systems in the PD, which Chief Newton said were not needed, as they were able to repurpose units from older squads.

Mayor Reinke said he was in favor of purchasing the Park Harper Sweeper.

**PROPOSED CITY CODE AMENDMENT: TEMPORARY OUTDOOR PATIOS/2022 DEMONSTRATION, CONTINUED DISCUSSION FROM FEBRUARY 8, 2022 WORKSHOP**

Community Development Director Gitzlaff followed up on the discussion that was had at the city council workshop February 8, 2022 regarding the Temporary Outdoor Patios. He went through some of the question's council had and provided answers.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen stated that he would prefer that the City not charge a fee for temporary outdoor patios and has confidence in city staff to handle.

Council Member Zabel suggested that the 30-day process to apply and then be issued a license could be lessened to two weeks if staff is approving. He also stated that noise is still an issue for him especially for businesses that abut houses. He believes the business should not be able to have a variance for noise if adjacent to residential uses.

Council Member Olson's concern is that there may be businesses that don't abut houses and neighbors won't be affected, now we are limiting them.

Council Member Swedberg suggested that something be added to the application that states the applicant check a box that the property owner agrees. Director Gitzlaff noted that there is a signature box on the application as well for the property owner if different than the business owner. She's ok with a \$100 fee and also with staff approving the license.

Council stated their general support for the temporary outdoor patio license with a \$100 license fee and approval at the staff level.

This item will be placed on the March 22, 2022 City Council meeting for a public hearing and approval.

**COUNCIL TOPICS**

Mayor Reinke received a call from Nancy Livingston, Senator Wiger's Chief of Staff and asked if he could come and testify at a hearing Thursday about the sound walls being requested by residents in Oakdale. Senator Wiger has two bills equating to \$3,500,000 as one-time appropriation to construct sound walls on the east side of Hwy 694 where our residents have been complaining the most.

Council Member Zabel stated that the resolution states that we support any legislation that would provide funding. The Council asked that the word "any" be taken out.

City Administrator Volkers added that she looked back at the cost of sound barriers in 2015 and \$3,500,000 only covers one mile of road and there is more than one mile that is being requested.

Mayor Reinke also stated that last Monday he testified on the legislation regarding the White Bear Lake water levels. He was joined by Kristina Handt, City Administrator for Lake Elmo, and Bryan Bear, City Administrator for Hugo. Senator Housley was carrying the bill. Mayor Reinke stated that if this didn't pass it would affect the quality of life for the residents of Oakdale and the east metro in general in regards to water needs.

Council Member Ingebrigtson said he has had the war in Ukraine on his mind and he asked what would happen structurally in Oakdale if there is a nuclear attack? He added he thought it would be so chaotic that any potential plan wouldn't work.

Council Member Olson mentioned that she couldn't hear the meeting during the last City Council meeting. She was listening via YouTube. She also added that Planning Commissioners couldn't read the maps online as it's too difficult and small. Council Member Olson stated people need to speak into the mics. Ms. Volkers said she would talk to IT Specialist Kandia about it and try to work something out.

Council Member Swedberg talked about the landscape revival at Fire Station 1 and that they want to donate \$100 to the fire department for the event being held on Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>.

Council Member Zabel asked about the Arbor Day Give-Away. It will be April 30<sup>th</sup>. More details will follow. A proclamation will be announced at tonight's Regular City Council meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The workshop was adjourned for the Regular City Council meeting at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Laur, City Clerk