

**WORKSHOP
OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL
September 24, 2019
5 PM**

Attendance

The City Council held a workshop on Tuesday, September 24, 2019, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota.

Present: Mayor Paul Reinke

Council Members: Jake Ingebrigtsen (arrived 5:22 PM)
Susan Olson
Colleen Swedberg
Kevin Zabel

Absent: None

Also Present: Brian Bachmeier, Public Works Director/City Engineer
Susan Barry, City Clerk
Bart Fischer, City Administrator
Alyssa MacLeod, Communications Specialist
Chelsea Petersen, Administrative Services Director
Dallas Pierson, Planning Commission
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent

Discovery Center Siding Options

Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier provided a brief overview of material options for residing the Discovery Center.

In response to questions relating to seeking an insurance claim for the damage to the siding, Administrative Services Director Petersen explained that three bid estimates would be submitted to the city's insurance provider.

The City Council supported the request to be presented at the regular meeting to approve a proposal submitted by JG Hause Construction to reside the Discovery Center.

Community Survey

Communications Specialist MacLeod discussed on the value of conducting community surveys on a regular basis as a way of gaining broad input and reviewed survey options, survey companies, methods and cost estimates.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Communications Specialist MacLeod noted that the city's last survey was done in 2016 and that communities typically conduct surveys every three years.

In response to a question from Council Member Swedberg, Communications Specialist MacLeod explained that the survey company would provide baseline questions from which the city could select and build upon.

Council Member Zabel commented on the importance of the survey questions being made available to participants in more than one format.

(Council Member Ingebrigtsen arrived).

Council Member Olson did not want participants to have to invest the time needed to respond to 176 questions in the 2016 survey.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the City Council to go with the National Community Survey option and for Communications Specialist MacLeod to come back with a detailed plan for proceeding with a community survey.

Council Member Olson added that she favors doing one survey and then ascertaining the benefits.

Council Discussion

Cable

Council Member Zabel noted that the city's representative on the Ramsey-Washington Counties Cable Commission advised him that the city has \$22,000 allocated to make equipment upgrades in 2019. He said that spending guidelines would need to be identified but suggested outfitting the Hadley Room with video and broadcast capabilities and noted that other suggestion would be Surface devices at the dais.

Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that she would be speaking with the executive director of the cable commission to get information on how the city may spend the funds.

Mayor Reinke announced that Vadnais Heights was leaving the cable commission consortium and would then receive fees directly from Comcast to produce and broadcast their own programs.

Council Member Zabel commented on the numerous events the cable company produces for Oakdale throughout the year.

Mayor Reinke supported remaining with the cable commission at this time and establishing a committee to discuss the city's participation in the cable commission, expanded production efforts, and future options.

Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit

Also Present:

- Kris Beck, Gold Line
- Linnea Graffunder-Bartels, Senior Community Development Specialist
- Stan Karwoski, Washington County Commissioner
- Lyssa Leitner, Gold Line
- Jan Lucke, Gold Line
- Emily Shively, City Planner
- Bob Streatar, Community Development Director

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Gold Line Staff provided a detailed overview and update of the bus rapid transit project going into the southern portion of Oakdale, along I-94.

Washington County Commissioner Karwoski talked about the county's strong commitment to seeing the project to fruition.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen expressed concern with the potential of cost overruns and additional funding needed from Oakdale.

Lyssa Leitner explained that as the project cannot exceed the amount of federal funding, contingencies have been carefully calculated and assigned to the components of the project.

Kris Beck added that the contingencies are designed to cover unknowns such as: soil conditions, project delays, labor shortages, and material shortages.

Ms. Lucke replied that per federal requirements, 30 to 35 percent contingencies are in place.

Commissioner Karwoski shared that legislative funding was in the works for costs relating to the 4th Street bridge and that no costs for that bridge, or the Bielenberg bridge, would be borne by Oakdale.

Ms. Lucke noted that the ownership and maintenance responsibilities of the bridges have yet to be determined.

Ms. Leitner stated that the Gold Line staff was working closely with city staff to identify right-of-way for future trail needs.

Council Member Zabel expressed concern with the number of different types of dedicated roadway occurring in the two mile stretch through Oakdale.

Ms. Leitner reviewed some of the factors used to determine the varying types: distance from I-94, snow storage, impact on adjoining properties, minimal taking of property, and intersection transitions.

Commissioner Karwoski added that the bus rapid transit line in San Diego also has a variety of lane transitions and utilized different colors to help distinguish the changes.

Ms. Lucke reviewed cost responsibilities for the county and the city.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen expressed concerns about the costs associated with the project; however, after hearing additional input from the county, he stated that his concerns had been adequately addressed.

Commissioner Karwoski indicated that although the County's vote is an unknown, he believes the county will approve the final project.

Mayor Reinke noted that should the county vote to not support the project, the city would need to withdraw its support.

Council Member Olson stated that she would not have supported the project at the beginning stages but supports it at this point in time.

Council Information

Titan Park

Council Member Swedberg noted that a determination is needed on whether proceeds from the sale of Titan Park would go into the park fund.

Administrative Services Director Petersen explained that staff was in the process of determining how the parcel was acquired by the city to then determine whether it can be sold or needs to be returned to the developer.

Mayor Reinke commented on the need to identify a fund for proceeds whenever the city sells property.

In response to a question from Council Member Ingebrigtsen, City Administrator Fischer noted that should the parcel not be available to be sold, the city would continue to maintain it.

Park Maintenance Fund

Council Member Swedberg noted that parks and recreation levy needed to be increased.

Council Member Zabel asked that staff and advisory body members be encouraged to seek out and apply for third party grants funds for city park improvements.

Council member Olson commented on having the Parks and Recreation Commission focus on more substantial projects than backstops and ice rinks.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Council Member Swedberg noted that the Parks and Recreation Commission supported fencing off the wetland and creating a small dog area at the Oakdale Bark Park.

(The City Council recessed at 6:56 PM).

(The City Council reconvened the workshop at 7:40 PM).

Future Public Safety Staffing Discussion

Also Present: Jeff Anderson, Fire Chief
 Bill Sullivan, Chief of Police
 Kevin Wold, Deputy Fire Chief

Fire Chief Anderson commented on the continued local and national difficulties filling paid on-call firefighter slots and indicated the “target number” for hiring for Oakdale would be ten.

Fire Chief Anderson commented on cost savings that would be realized by disbanding the Oakdale Volunteer Department Inc.; however, the corporation must remain in place until the department transitions completely to a full-time career staff.

Mayor Reinke asked that Administrative Services Director Petersen and Fire Chief Anderson assemble a plan with options and funding information on transitioning to a full-time only department.

Police Chief Sullivan also spoke to difficulties attracting candidates to hire as well as factors that can arise during a career that affect staffing levels.

The group briefly discussed issues that can arise with combination fire and police departments and regional departments.

Updates on Break-Ins

Police Chief Sullivan noted that the number of break-ins was consistent with 2018.

Walton Ice Rink

Council Member Swedberg shared that Mahtomedi Hockey would be willing to rent ice space at Walton Park once the rink has been fixed.

Board and Commission Bylaws, Code, Appointment/Reappointment Policy Review

The City Council reviewed the proposed changes to the by-laws, codes, and the appointment/reappointment policy for the city's five advisory bodies.

It was the consensus of the City Council was that a person cannot serve as chair on two advisory bodies simultaneously and that the Pledge of Allegiance be included on all advisory body agendas.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen noted that Economic Development Commissioner Purkat would be moving out of Oakdale.

Adjournment

The workshop adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Barry, City Clerk