

**WORKSHOP  
OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL  
October 8 2019  
5 PM**

**Attendance**

The City Council held a workshop on Tuesday, October 8, 2019, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota.

Present: Mayor Paul Reinke

Council Members: Jake Ingebrigtsen  
Susan Olson  
Colleen Swedberg  
Kevin Zabel

Absent: None

Also Present: Jeff Anderson, Fire Chief  
Susan Barry, City Clerk  
Bart Fischer, City Administrator  
Chelsea Petersen, Administrative Services Director  
Dallas Pierson, Planning Commission  
Kevin Wold, Deputy Fire Chief

**Fire Department Pension**

Jeff Anderson, Fire Chief, provided an overview of the volunteer firefighter retirement plan and asked the City Council to support an increase in the benefit level.

After discussing contribution level increases from \$7,500 to \$8,100 and the effect on the fund from potential fluctuations in the stock market, the City Council supported increasing the benefit level from \$6,800 to \$7,800, effective January 1, 2020.

Council Member Olson asked to review the request again next year.

**2020 Budgets: Utility Budget**

Administrative Services Director Petersen reviewed the street light, surface water, water, and sanitary sewer utility budgets. She recommended no changes to the street light or surface water rates and four percent increases to the water and sanitary sewer usage rates for 2020. Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that a rate study had not been done for a number of years and recommended hiring a company to conduct one next year, at an estimated cost of \$10-12,000, paid for out of the Enterprise Fund.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that she would research the option of having an electrician on staff in lieu of continuing to contract for service.

In response to a question from Council Member Swedberg, Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that the \$39,181 noted for "Interest, Misc. Revenue" for the street light utility fund appeared to be a coding issue and was being reviewed by staff.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that she would need to research the large transfer out of the surface water fund in 2018 and whether it was used for a roadway improvement project.

In response to questions from Council Member Zabel, Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that the purchase of equipment, such as a street sweeper, falls under the capital improvements budget and commented on the importance of keeping a healthy balance in the surface water fund to address maintenance and flood control issues that can arise during years with significant rainfall.

The City Council briefly discussed whether surface water funds could be used for some costs relating to the city annual street improvement project.

Administrative Services Director Petersen recommended four percent increases to the water and sewer usage rates, but no changes to the base rates.

Mayor Reinke suggested using surface water funds to offset water operation costs so that usage rates would not need to increase for 2020.

Council Member Zabel suggested lowering the threshold formulas rather than raise rates to better serve the city's water conservation efforts and commented on the need to learn more about the water usage of customers.

Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that the rate study could help develop formulas.

It was the consensus of the City Council to utilize surface water management funds to eliminate the need to increase water usage rates for 2020.

Staff was directed to proceed with having a rate study conducted in 2020.

### **Local Sales Tax**

Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that Senator Wiger had drafted a bill relating to the city's local sales tax initiative that would help fund the police department expansion and construction of a new public works facility. She added that Mayor Reinke would be corresponding with the city's other legislators about co-sponsoring the bill.

Council Member Zabel suggested reaching out to Senator Housley.

Mayor Reinke would be the initial contact to Senator Housley, with Council Member Ingebrigtsen following up.

Administrative Services Director Petersen noted that she is serving on a committee working on local sales taxes and that there may be other options, such as increasing franchise fees, to explore should the sales tax option not move forward. She also noted that Communication Specialist MacLeod would be developing a one-page fact sheet relating to the initiative to present to legislators.

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Mayor Reinke noted that staff was also gathering information on how property taxes would be affected if raised to fund the two projects.

Council Member Zabel suggested asking the League of Minnesota Cities about other communities that are also looking at a local sales tax.

In reference to the Public Works facility, Mayor Reinke noted that he had asked Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier for input on air filtration and storage modifications that would address some of the issues until such time as a new facility is available. He also noted that he was working to assemble a task force of local businesses to work with the city on the local sales tax item.

### **Cable Commission**

Mayor Reinke indicated that some cities were planning to leave the Ramsey-Washington Counties Cable Commission and suggested that the city look at ways to improve the commission and review other options.

### **Council Discussion**

The City Council discussed the process being developed to hire an interim city administrator and an executive search firm.

City Administrator Fischer inquired about the additional workshop held after regular meetings.

It was the consensus of the City Council to continue to hold workshops once a month after regular meetings.

(Workshop recessed at 6:56 PM).

(Workshop reconvened at 7:50 PM).

Present: Mayor Paul Reinke  
Council Members: Jake Ingebrigtsen  
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  
Chelsea Petersen, Administrative Services Director  
Dallas Pierson, Planning Commission

### **Public Works Building Addition and Public Building Funding Sources**

Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier provided an overview of issues relating to the existing public works facility. He shared that he recently toured the new public works facility in Fridley. Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier noted that no decision has yet been made by 3M on selling or donating property (valued at \$2 million) to the city to house a new public works campus but 3M is doing soil borings and conducting an environmental impact study. Referring to the current site, he suggested drilling additional wells to establish a centralized water treatment operation as well as adding soil processing and community composting and keeping the salt storage, cold storage, and archive storage at that location. Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier supported having all divisions housed at the new location.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier noted that costs relating to the demolition of the existing building are not available at this time and would need to part of a future study as well as the 3M settlement.

Mayor Reinke did not see a surface water treatment facility going in at that location.

Public Works Director/City Engineer talked about locating treatment facilities downstream of waste water facilities.

City Administrator Fischer added that most communities prefer groundwater treatment systems, not surface water.

Council Member Zabel expressed concern with long-term operating costs of treatment facilities when the settlement money is no longer a factor.

City Administrator Fischer recommended having plans developed for the public works facility to be built at the 3M property in order to provide the solid numbers needed to pursue the local sales tax option.

Mayor Reinke added that a determination will need to be made on the level of construction project detail required by the Legislature.

Council Member Zabel suggested asking those communities that have been granted local sales taxes to provide information on what they provided.

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, City Administrator Fischer indicated that costs for preparing plans could be financed out of the building fund.

Council Member Zabel asked that all additional costs, such as road access and demolition, be identified as well.

### **Other**

In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier explained that a resident may contact the Police or Public Works departments to request a temporary exemption for the city's winter parking regulations.

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In response to a question from Council Member Zabel, Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier noted that the I-694 northbound ramp would open in three weeks.

In response to a question from Mayor Reinke, Public Works Director/City Engineer Bachmeier noted that the Inwood bridge would be completed in 2019.

**Adjournment**

The workshop adjourned at 8:16 PM.