

**FINANCE/CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES BUILDING
WILLMAR, MINNESOTA**

The meeting of the Finance Committee/Willmar City Council was called to order at 4:45 p.m. in the Council Chambers by Chair Denis Anderson. Members present were Mayor Marv Calvin, Council Members Denis Anderson, Tim Johnson, Rick Fagerlie, Shawn Mueske, Ron Christianson, Steve Ahmann, Andrew Plowman and Audrey Nelsen. Present 9, Absent 0.

Also present were City Administrator Larry Kruse, Finance Director Steve Okins, Police Chief Jim Felt, Fire Chief Frank Hanson, Public Works Director Sean Christensen, CER Director Steve Brisendine, Planning and Development Director Bruce Peterson, Randy Czarnetski, Bob Bonawitz, and CR-BPS Representatives Laura Malwitz and Chad Kraemer.

The gavel was turned over to Mayor Calvin at 4:46 p.m.

Public comments included a request presented by Randy Czarnetski to include funds in the City's local option sales tax proposal for a separate facility dedicated for curling.

Staff explained to the Council that a request had been received to write off a portion of special assessments against the property at Lot 2, Block 1 of Oslo Meadows (parcel 95-604-0020) because it is believed that it is an unbuildable lot. After the assessments were incurred, this property underwent forfeiture to the State of Minnesota. Normally when a property goes through forfeiture, the County Board sets a price on the property equal to the special assessments outstanding. For this particular property, the special assessments total \$11,628.96 however the County established the purchase price at \$8,147.27 leaving a gap of \$3,481.69 in unpaid special assessments.

Bob Bonawitz explained that an abutting neighbor to this property would like to buy the lot which the neighbor deems unbuildable with the recorded drainage easement on the south side because of what is believed to be an apparent platting error. The neighbor would like to limit their investment to the County set price of \$8,147.27. They are petitioning the Council to forego the balance of \$3,481.69.

Staff challenged the unbuildable concept and asked the City Engineer Technician to lay out the buildable dimensions. It was noted that a local developer builds housing units within the Oslo Meadows lot dimensions currently. Subsequent to review by the Finance Committee on June 27, 2016, staff secured a copy of the covenants placed against the platted area. The building requirements (#7, page 4, *Building Area*) are generally 1300 square feet on the main floor. Staff believed this property to be a valid buildable lot and the staff recommendation is not to write off the additional special assessments. However, the citizen buyer respectfully requests the City Council write off the remaining special assessments which are above and beyond the property sale price.

Following discussion, Council Member Christianson made a motion to follow City policy and reassess, if the parcel is purchased, the difference between the total special assessments and the County's established purchase price for this parcel which results in the net amount of \$3,481.69 to be paid over five years. Council Member Fagerlie seconded the motion which carried.

Further comments included a complaint that this particular lot in question has not been mowed for quite some time. Staff will look into this matter.

Staff explained to the Council that on June 1, 2015, the City had approved the Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan contract with CR-BPS. The plan includes consultant services for a needs analysis of City buildings, facilities, land and physical plant operations to prioritize needs for modernization, replacement, and growth. CR-BPS Representatives Laura Malwitz and Chad Kraemer provided the final facility and asset

management program presentation to the Council. This matter was taken for information only.

Staff reviewed with the Council the Five-Year Capital Improvement and Vehicle Replacement Programs and discussed comments and concerns. It was noted that the City Charter requires the Capital Improvement Program be presented for review three months prior to the Mayor's Budget Presentation. The Council receives the report for review and analysis so formal action can be taken during the budget process. This matter was taken for information only.

Staff reported to the Council that following two rounds of paring down the List of Projects of Regional Significance for the proposed Local Option Sales Tax Program, it was identified that the Council supported an investment in the Civic Center, Robbins Island and Community Center. Swansson Field also ranked fairly high. Transportation was identified as the highest priority in the Community Survey, however, freeing up Capital Improvement Plan costs could enable the Council to advance Street projects. The Council requested staff to update the City's Capital Improvement Plan to reflect the Facilities Study and then to identify expenditures in the Capital Improvement Plan which could be "saved", with some of that savings going to increased street and facility maintenance.

Staff identified the following draft ballot question for the Council to consider and amend as they deem necessary: Should the City of Willmar finance Civic Center Improvement; Robbins Island road, parking lot and shelter improvement; Swansson Field Improvements; and a new Community Center with a one-half percent (1/2%) sales tax on all taxable transactions occurring within the City of Willmar. The projects have an estimated cost of \$20 million. The sales tax will expire upon payment of all costs to finance the various projects anticipated to be ten (10) years from the date of implementation. Voters would need to check either () Yes, I am in favor of this sales tax proposal; or () No, I am opposed to this sales tax proposal.

Following considerable discussion, it was the consensus of the Council Members to direct staff to refine specific expenditures estimated for the Civic Center of \$3 million, for Robbins Island of \$3 million, and for Swansson Field of \$2 million. These items will continue to be discussed at the July 18, 2016, council meeting as well as the Willmar Downtown Development proposal submitted as an option for use of local option sales tax funds.

There being no further business to come before the Council the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Attest:

MAYOR

SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL