

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 26, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Wozniak called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. and at his request, Public Works Director Marc Culver called the roll.

Present: Chair Joe Wozniak; Vice Chair Bryant Ficek; and Members Jarrod Cicha, Shane Spencer and Mike Collins.

Absent: Member Nancy Misra and Michael Joyce (Excused)

Staff Present: Public Works Director Marc Culver; and City Engineer/Assistant Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Approval of September 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Comments and corrections to draft minutes had been submitted by PWETC commissioners prior to tonight's meeting and those revisions incorporated into the draft presented in meeting materials.

Motion

Member Ficek moved, Member Wozniak seconded, approval of the September 28, 2021 meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

4. Communication Items

City Engineer Jesse Freihammer provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated October 26, 2020.

Member Ficek asked regarding the local sales tax going to the Legislation by the Council, will there be a limit on the number of years or will it be indefinite.

Mr. Culver indicated the time period could be up to twenty years, but essentially once enough money is collected to pay for the projects identified then the sales tax would stop.

Member Ficek asked regarding the railroad crossing item, will this be a quiet zone or just a couple day work zone.

Mr. Freihammer indicated this would be a two-day work zone replacing the gate.

Chair Wozniak asked if Tamarack Park was one of the six pathway approved.

Mr. Culver indicated Tamarack Park was one of them. He explained there was a lot of conversation about that park and Eustis Park. Staff is going to communicate with the neighborhood as fast as possible and staff will be putting together an estimate of what it would cost to do an alleyway type of facility adjacent to the pathway. Given the fact that there is a wetland there, either the City would have to fill in a wetland or they would have to go around the wetland through park property. The latter probably is not a feasible option because the City would not give up park land. There would be a significant cost to it, given some of the geometric and topographic issues through the wetland as well as the environmental impact to also consider.

5. 2022 Proposed Utility Rates

Mr. Culver explained each year City staff proposed utility rates for the following budget year. The rates are for all City utility funds including water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer and recycling. The Commission is asked to provide feedback on the proposed utility rates.

Vice-Chair Ficek wondered about the water, there was a big change to go to the usage fee, and he wondered if that changed any behaviors.

Mr. Culver explained what is interesting is the first year under the new rate structure the State went through a drought. They actually saw a substantial increase in the amount of irrigation, at least early in the summer. The City also implemented watering restrictions as well in August. There was a significant drop in water usage between July and August due to suggested watering restrictions. He explained 2021 was not a good year to gauge that by.

Vice-Chair Ficek indicated material costs went up substantially. He wondered when the calculations were made and is the City thinking about inflation and how that comes into play and whether the estimates are higher or lower on the capital costs across the board.

Mr. Culver did not know if the City saw substantial increases in construction costs this year but next year could be very interesting.

Mr. Freihammer explained that every year when staff does its budget CIP they project out twenty years on the Capital Replacement and try to keep it up to date, especially for the lift stations, to see what they are currently paying.

Vice-Chair Ficek asked if the City should look at figures to see if an increase to the stormwater fund to try to build a surplus and try to plan for improvements in the future.

Mr. Culver indicated they have not. There has been internal discussion but nothing has been looked at. He indicated staff should look at this because they will end up spending the capital dollars in the future. For next year's CIP process they should probably bump up the expenditures in some of the out years, looking five years and beyond.

Member Collins indicated he had a question about the storm sewer system. He understood staff has not pinpointed all of the problems yet, but he wondered if staff had an idea of where they would start if they had to.

Mr. Culver explained one of the big liabilities out there is the ponds. Staff knows they have a lot of ponds that need dredging. Unfortunately, a lot of the costs related to that is the disposal of the material. It needs to be tested for contamination and then it would need to be placed in a landfill, which is very expensive. Staff has a decent idea about the cost. The other side is staff is seeing some sink holes and outlet structures that are separating from the pipe that are very difficult to get to. Staff has a growing list of known issues that will need to be taken care of. Staff does not have a handle on the magnitude of that at this time, particularly the pipes themselves underground.

Mr. Freihammer indicated on the storm sewer system the City is very reactionary and when the City does a road mill and overlay the only thing that might be upgraded is the catch basins because there are usually inspections done on those and, if failing, they get replaced. Very rarely is the mainline pipe excavated and replaced.

Chair Wozniak asked if there is any relationship between how much the City spends on stormwater management and how much precipitation the City gets in a year.

Mr. Culver explained what is interesting is with the changes in climate there are more intense rainfalls and rain events and that does actually have an impact on the stormwater system. A lot of the requirements the City has for new developments and redevelopments or even reconstruction are because of that. The City recognizes that the current stormwater system is under designed for today, and certainly for tomorrow, as the rain events become more intense. It is not that the City is getting

more water annually, it is that they are getting more water in one event and the stormwater system then becomes surcharged and it cannot handle that and the pipes overflow. He asked how they handle that and delay the water from getting into the storm water system and that is why they see all the new rain gardens and basins and underground storage systems, which is great but there is a capital cost to install those and there is a growing capital expense to maintain those. The City water system and sewer system are pretty much staying the same. The stormwater system is growing and the City is adding more components to the system, not necessarily pipes but what they call best management practices, retention devices, rain gardens and basins, which all require some sort of maintenance or at some point reconstruction.

Vice Chair Ficek asked if staff knew how the increased proposed tier for recycling compares to previous years.

Mr. Culver indicated there was a pretty substantial increase and shift in the rate structure. All of the other utility rates have pretty much only increased by five to six percent. The recycling fee has probably been the most volatile from that perspective because when the City was paying on the revenue structure or cost share structure and making one hundred thousand a year to paying in an additional seventy thousand dollars a year, the City had to make some pretty dramatic changes to the fee structure there.

Chair Wozniak indicated when they were talking about the recycling fee and slides about increasing the rate to \$13.00 or \$14.00 per quarter from \$12.60, he liked the idea of starting a fund to support purchasing carts several years from now and he would be willing to make that recommendation as a part of an action the Commission makes on these utility rates. He indicated he would not go much beyond \$13.30 per quarter for 2022, however, he would suggest going to \$15.00 for 2023 and even \$17.00 for 2024 because it is not that big a jump from \$13.00 or \$13.30 to \$15.00 and then \$15.00 to \$17.00. He did not know how much money would be raised but it could not hurt to look at the numbers and see how that works out. He explained he would support increasing the rate to start generating a fund to purchase carts at the end of the current contract and he would look at modifying some of the numbers shown and increase it more in the second and third years. As part of that, he would try to find out if staff can get some figures on how much the City might save by having their own carts compared to having a vendor's carts.

Member Cicha agreed that the numbers do make sense to increase the recycling to build up that kind of capital. He indicated the whole concept of recycling is sustainability and bringing in all these new carts into the system, does that concept work together and is there any way they can try to offset the purchase of the new carts with some other type of sustainable action.

Mr. Culver explained they would be looking at current numbers which is around sixteen thousand carts plus some percentage for stock. The carts that are out there

now, Eureka purchased this batch of carts in 2013, that was when the City moved from the bins to the carts. There are some new carts out there that needed replacing but the bulk of them are going on ten years old so the question would be, how long will Eureka keep the carts out there before replacing them and what could the City do with those old carts. He indicated if the City purchased their own carts he thought Eureka might attempt to repurpose those as much as they could with some of their existing customers because they are not branded for Roseville. That is a very good question from a sustainability perspective.

Motion

Member Ficek moved, Member Spencer seconded, to recommend the increases in the rates as proposed to the City Council with a larger fee for the recycling fee to start building up a surplus for future use and to add the study for potential cost impacts using City owned carts versus vendor owned carts.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

6. Introduction to Crosswalk Treatments

Mr. Culver explained the Commission is asked to provide feedback about the use of crosswalks on City roadways. He reviewed the information with the Commission.

Member Spencer indicated with the construction at Rosedale and the apartments coming in, have they looked at upgrading more of the crosswalks in that area.

Mr. Freihammer explained all of those are on county roads. The County is upgrading all of the crossings and putting updated ADA ramps as well as upgraded countdown timers as well as the APS system. There are no current plans to add more crossings.

Chair Wozniak thought people are using trails more than previously and, given that and they have not seen or heard of crashes with pedestrians, he thought the markings were doing what they are supposed to do and that is drawing attention to drivers to let pedestrians cross where they legally can.

7. Items for Next Meeting – November 2021

Discussion ensued regarding the November PWETC agenda:

- Public Works 2021 Work Plan
- Continuation of Crosswalk Treatments Discussion
- Discuss Super Meeting
- Public Works Tour

8. Adjourn

Motion

Member Ficek moved, Member Cicha seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:28 p.m.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Motion carried.