

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: December 13, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present: Gisselman, Kellbach, McElhaney (Rasmussen and Thao were excused.)

Also Present: Mayor Mielke, Lindman, Buckner, Wesolowski, Niksich, Mohelnitzky

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and received by the *Wausau Daily Herald* in the proper manner.

Noting the presence of a quorum, at approximately 5:30 p.m. Chairman Gisselman called the meeting to order.

Public Comment for matters not appearing on the agenda

Terry Kilian, 133 East Thomas Street, does not want to present any additional documentation but would like to express her opinion about the facts. This committee has a responsibility of serving the citizens of Wausau, representing actions that are for the best welfare for these people. Environmental issues have become increasingly more important because of the industrial nature of certain areas of the city. Those areas appear to be quite wide spread. Environmental issues are now in the forefront. People throughout the city, state and country are developing awareness of the impact of environmental toxicity on their health and wellbeing. This committee and others have made decisions that have caused tremendous concerns for citizens. These concerns are not ploys and are not issues being made as scare tactics. They are issues being raised out of concern for their families, neighbors and loved ones. This committee has had to make decisions based on information that has been provided to them by individuals and groups that were thought to be authorities in the area. When people in the committee's position make decisions with the information provided, hopefully that decision is made for the best interest of citizens not with the best interest of a select few. New information has been provided to Council. This information has been presented from a scientist who is the national leader in the field of environmental toxicity. This information describes the potential risks that can exist to residents if there is not a thorough process. To be presented with new data and relevant information and to move forward with decisions made on past, incomplete, inaccurate data is not mature, not responsible and in her opinion not ethical. The committee will only gain the respect of residents if they look genuinely and sincerely at the new information and reconsider past decisions. Making a poor decision or a mistake is not the problem. Making a poor decision and being reticent to change that decision when new relevant information is provided is the mistake that will cause a real problem for the city. People are in general respected more highly when they are able to admit a better decision could have been made had they had adequate and complete information. She asked the committee to please protect the residents of the City by doing sufficient testing of Riverside Park and the Thomas Street corridor with guidance from neutral, qualified people and with input of the residents.

Judith Miller, 903 Kickbusch Street, is a member of Citizens for a Clean Wausau and appeared to request more testing of the Thomas Street area and Riverside Park. Dr. Stephen Lester, Harvard trained scientist; Science Director for the Center for Health, Environment and Justice; lead toxicologist on the Love Canal contamination; and author of the letter that was read into Council record by Citizens for a Clean Wausau, was interviewed this morning on the radio regarding the issues of contamination in Wausau. Dr. Lester spoke about dust and the fact that dioxin is not a heavy molecule and attaches to dust and other debris in the air. Dust floats a long way and affects everyone in the city. Dr. Lester was asked why he termed the DNR letter report as "inadequate and incomplete." He replied that omitting any assessment of cancer risks posed by the levels of contamination in five of the samples simply makes no sense and he cannot imagine why they would not have included this. Miller understands that the DNR is apparently formulating a response to Dr. Lester's criticism. She cannot imagine what rational they might offer when there is a risk of a cancer diagnosis with exposure to dioxins as Dr. Lester confirmed this morning. It may be that the DNR did not have enough data to make that determination. When asked what the next step would be to remediate the contamination, Dr. Lester answered that there should be more testing because decisions are being made that are not based on good science. Citizens for a Clean Wausau ask for that good science and ask this committee to recommend more testing in the Thomas Street neighborhood and in Riverside Park. They also ask for a collaborative public process that involves City officials and concerned private

citizens in order to ensure all concerns are addressed. Wausau's future and health depend on a thorough and accurate analysis of the potentially life threatening risk from this long standing contamination.

Nicole Schwabach, 920 Jefferson Street, submitted two petitions today to the City Clerk. She appeared on behalf of the residents in the city block bordered by Jefferson Street on the south, Scott Street on the north, 10th Street on the east and LaSalle Street on the west. There are 17 homes that surround this block. An alley runs east to west between Jefferson and Scott. The alley is terrible; it is not maintained and it is very narrow and very steep. Schwabach and other residents have been in contact with the city asking for assistance in plowing but have been told alleys are not the city's responsibility. Unfortunately seven residents rely on this alley for access to their homes. It falls on seven households to pay a private entity to have the alley plowed. Of the seven homes, only four pay the costs which are topping over \$1,000. Her portion is estimated at \$275. Four households are maintaining the alley for everyone that needs it. The alley is also the pathway for power and cable lines that all households on this block rely on. Not only are they addressing access for their own homes, but they are also making sure the pathway is clear for the power and cable companies. She feels this is an undue burden. There are a few other instances where winter maintenance is provided in some alleys so they are also asking for consideration. The second petition is regarding parking. On LaSalle Street parking is allowed on the west side of the street. One person always parks on LaSalle Street directly across from the alley. As the winter progresses, even if the person they have hired clears it regularly, it becomes a very icy and treacherous situation. She has been involved in two accidents in the alley and has stopped getting her car fixed because she knows there will be another accident. Her neighbor runs into his garage door every year because he cannot stop. They are terrified they will hit a citizen or a car parked on LaSalle Street. She is asking for a parking restriction directly across from the alley, even if it is just no parking between two signs. People do rely on parking on this street so they are not asking for the entire block to be restricted.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve minutes of the November 8, 2018 meeting**
- B. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement for Rivers Edge Storage LLC at 2414 and 2514 North 3rd Street**
- C. Action on Stormwater Maintenance Agreement for AJR Properties East, LLC at 9919 Innovation Way**
- D. Action on Easement with Benjamin Bliven and Danielle Bliven at 305 South 20th Street**
- E. Action on Preliminary Resolution Levying Special Assessments for 2019 Street Construction Projects**

McElhaney moved to approve the consent agenda items. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

Discussion and possible action on renewing North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition Cooperative Agreement

Niksich stated this is to renew an agreement that would last five years. An agreement has been in place for roughly ten years. This is a coalition of a number of communities that are all MS4's. The communities meet regularly to discuss various best practices, regulation changes, and to meet the DNR MS4 stormwater requirements for education and outreach. There is an annual fee of \$1,500, which is used towards outreach and education.

Kellbach moved to approve renewing the North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition Cooperative Agreement. McElhaney seconded and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

Discussion and possible action on 2019 Street Reconstruction Project of 1st Street from Short Street north to the dead end

Wesolowski explained that every year staff applies for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. When he first started, funding was used to offset assessments on street reconstruction projects. The past couple of years, the funding was used on sidewalk replacement projects. Funding was again applied for sidewalk

replacement in 2019. However, since then it was brought to our attention that they do not consider spot replacement of sidewalk as eligible for this funding. Engineering staff met with Community Development staff, who suggested looking at a street reconstruction project. The area along 1st Street from Short Street to the north was recently developed and the street is in need of reconstruction. They have offered to look for additional funding, up to \$250,000, for a street project. If approved by CISM, this would go to a public hearing before the Community Development Block Grant advisory committee next week. This would give us an option to reconstruct another street.

McElhaney asked if the funding would cover most of the money needed for the reconstruction project. Wesolowski said it would cover the complete reconstruction other than sewer and water costs. The reconstruction costs would not be assessed.

McElhaney moved to approve moving forward with the 2019 Street Reconstruction Project of 1st Street from Short Street north. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

Discussion and possible action on 2018 MS4 Stormwater Management Plan – Brown and Caldwell

Niksich indicated that Brown and Caldwell was the consultant used to update the Stormwater Management Plan. Brown and Caldwell looked into two major factors; total suspended solids that the city discharges into the Wisconsin River and total phosphorus discharged into the Wisconsin River. Recently the DNR has published a Wisconsin River TMDL (total maximum daily load) that is in draft format but will go to the EPA in early 2019 for final approval. This will enact a required removal percentage to the City of 68.8%. Through this stormwater plan it was found that the City is only removing 28.1% of total phosphorus. The City will have to make steps in the future to meet the 68.8%. This will be a major financial burden. An implementation schedule was provided as part of the plan. In years 2022 and 2023 we are to start looking at implementation of different BMP's, which will run roughly \$2.3 million to add or convert stormwater ponds throughout the city. Approval of the plan will get the ball rolling to look at BMP's and implementation towards meeting upcoming requirements for total phosphorus reduction.

Kellbach moved to accept the 2018 MS4 Stormwater Management Plan as prepared by Brown and Caldwell. McElhaney seconded and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

Discussion and possible action on transferring City property for reconstruction of South 1st Avenue pursuant to Transportation Project Plat 6999-18-03, Parcel 78 – 401 South 1st Avenue

Wesolowski indicated that this parcel is where the former West Side Battery was located and hopefully will become Urban Street Bistro. For the reconstruction of 1st Avenue, a small 68' area will be needed for sidewalk and a small easement is needed to build the street. Before this property is turned over to Urban Street Bistro, staff would like to convert the needed area to right-of-way and have the easement in place.

McElhaney moved to approve transferring City property for reconstruction of South 1st Avenue pursuant to Transportation Project Plat 6999-18-03, Parcel 78 – 401 South 1st Avenue. Kellbach seconded and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

Discussion and possible action on approving an RFP for the Highway 52 Parkway center line median landscape design

Lindman indicated this proposed RFP is part of TID 6 and includes improvements to the center median along Highway 52 Parkway in the area of the new ENT building and the proposed Fire Station. This RFP is for professional services for landscaping ideas. Approved improvements would take place in 2019.

Kellbach moved to approve the RFP for the Highway 52 Parkway center line median landscape design. McElhaney seconded and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

Presentation on snow plow operations

Mohelnitzky stated every snow storm is different. To forecast, staff looks at two different weather services. When precipitation is anticipated the Street Supervisors will monitor and have brine sprayed on the priority streets. Examples of priority streets are Grand Avenue, Bridge Street, 17th Avenue, Franklin Street, 28th Avenue, Townline Road, along with high accidents areas such as the curve at 1st Street and Forest Street. Spraying brine ahead of a storm helps so that the snow and ice do not bind to the pavement. Brine is a solution of water and salt. We have a computerized system that gets it to 23.3% of a salt solution that is sprayed on the pavement. Before this technology was used, salt was spread. By the time the salt could activate, most of it ended up in the gutter line. DPW has built their own brine spraying unit and has trucks that can spray brine from the bigger salt units. A unit has also been placed on a small one ton that can turn around on bridges, which provides efficiency and a safer operation. This year an agriculture byproduct was purchased that is blended with the brine. This helps melt snow, sticks to the pavement, and lasts longer than straight salt brine.

As soon as there is any accumulation of snow and ice, 4 salters are sent out to their routes. A number of years ago when salt nearly doubled in price, staff looked at if everything had to be salted during a storm. Routes were modified. Places are continuously identified and added or removed. This year Riverview School was identified as an issue and added back on. There are two salters on the east side and two on the west with the ability to spray brine right on the salt to activate it right away, saving about 30% of salt. Salt needs moisture, friction and heat. Activating it faster works better and is more efficient.

There are 93 miles of roadway that are maintained with salt and brine. When two or more inches of snow have accumulated on side streets, eight additional trucks are dispatched to plow and sand the priority plow routes. The priority routes are set up to split the routes so that every citizen has a priority route about three blocks from their house. There are different classifications of plow routes; plow salt routes, priority plow sand routes and secondary plow sand routes. DPW tries to get the priority plow routes done before staff goes home to get rest. The same individual that plows all day long is the same individual that comes back in five or six hours to make sure roads are clear in the morning. We do not have double staff; meaning there is not a crew for nights and a crew for days.

There are three sidewalk plows, two graders, four end loaders and one pickup truck dispatched to secondary streets if there is more accumulation during the day. Staff tries to open up as many parking lots and main sidewalks as they can. City crews do not plow alleys. Mohelnitzky has been with the City for 35 years and DPW has never done winter maintenance in alleys, with the exception of two. These alleys have houses that are landlocked and do not have access to the street. DPW does alley summer maintenance, such as patching.

Crews will plow the main salt and plow routes during the day until 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. to try to get the public home. A skeleton crew will remain while the main crew goes home to rest as they will be back in at 11:00 p.m. One person works second shift to keep the priority and problem areas open; such as near the hospital, 17th Avenue, Bridge Street, Townline Road, and Spring Street. We will have some stay over if there is available staff. There are 28 plow routes throughout the city. Operators have their own route but many are also involved in team plowing. This is when multiple pieces of equipment get together to clear the entire roadway. Bridge Street takes five units to clear the road. Every main drag has a team plow. Alderpersons have a standing invite to participate in a ride along to see this coordination. Team plowing is done because if snow is not removed from the centerline to the curb it gets scattered. During a team plow the operators try to keep tight without letting traffic pass because if someone crosses a windrow it could cause an accident.

Plow routes are designed to take 8 to 9 hours during an average snow storm of 6". Any accumulation above that will take additional time, which varies on the duration of the snow storm and exhaustion of crews. We do have some sewer and water employees that are trained, but they may get called in for a watermain break or sewer backup. DPW maintains 509 lane miles of street, 19 miles of sidewalk, 15 surface parking lots, 4 parking structures, and the parking lot and hangers at the downtown airport.

So far in the 2018 season, the average cost of a snow storm has been \$42,600. This ranged from a \$3,000 storm to the large event that happened on April 13, 2018 that cost \$134,540. The labor for this event was \$39,000, equipment was \$63,000, sand and salt was \$8,000, salt was \$20,000 and salt brine was \$2,000. DPW has someone on call 24-7, 365 days a year. The on-call schedule is rotated between two supervisors and three senior equipment operators.

McElhaney asked if there was a backup plan in the case of a flu epidemic. Mohelnitzky said in the past they did have the Park Department to rely on. If there was a complete epidemic, we could look at outside contractors. He does not see that happening and does not like to think about that. For an unfamiliar operator, there are so many things in the routes that can damage equipment, such as high manholes, curbs and sidewalks.

Mayor Mielke learned on Monday that there was double the staff at DPW when Mohelnitzky started 35 years ago. He complimented staff and said it is outstanding what DPW does. Mohelnitzky said when he started the city was much smaller and there were over 60 DPW employees. While equipment and training have improved, we also have one heck of a staff and really good operators. Through the years we have gotten the best of the best. Ten years ago we would get 250 applicants for open positions. For the last open position there were four applicants and two of those did not hold a CDL. Because of what we lack in compensation, people do not look at this job as valued. It is important to retain good employees. We have a phenomenal staff and these positions take a high amount of dedication. There have been many holidays and weekends they have to work. The only reason the City can go from Highway X to Highway O and still have a high level of service is because of the dedication and expertise of our employees.

Gisselman thanked and complimented the staff. The City depends on staff 24-7 and they are always there; not only in winter but throughout the entire year.

Future agenda items

No future agenda items were brought forward.

Adjourn

Kellbach moved to adjourn the meeting. McElhaney seconded and the motion carried unanimously 3-0. Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.