

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS MN
ANOKA COUNTY

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
FEBRUARY 19, 2019

1. **CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The regular City Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Steve Feldman.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members present: Mayor Steve Feldman, Councilmembers Kevin Robinson, Joe Muehlbauer, Robert Bauer and Sarah Udvig.

Also present; Assistant City Attorney Dave Schaps (Barna, Guzy & Steffen), City Engineer Craig Jochum (Hakanson Anderson), City Administrator Joe Kohlmann, Community Development Director Kate Thunstrom, Police Chief Todd Schwieger, Liquor Store Manager John Schmidt, Finance Director Darcy Mulvihill, and City Clerk Barb Held.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION BY MUEHLBAUER SECOND ROBINSON APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL AGENDA. Motion carried 5-0.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION BY BAUER SECOND UDVIG TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS A- F AS FOLLOWS:

- A. City Council Minutes – February 4, 2019
- B. City Council Minutes Special Meeting – January 29, 2019
- C. Hire Jacob Olson as a Water/Wastewater Systems Operator at Step 1 contingent upon passing all pre-employment testing
- D. Statement of Interest in all-Hazard Mitigation Planning - Resolution 2019-05
- E. MnDOT - Memorandum of Understanding for a Temporary Signal
- F. Payment of Claims \$330,164.98 (ACH 251E-252E \$165,927.49 and Check #'s 75471-75542 \$164,237.49)

5. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

None

6. **SPECIAL BUSINESS**

None

7. **PUBLIC HEARING**

None

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

None

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Outdoor Warning Sirens**

Police Chief Schwieger provided a staff report for adding another outdoor warning siren per council request. The additional siren would be in the vicinity of 237th and Nightingale Street intersection. Quotes from Federal Signal Corporation were received for DC (battery) powered and solar options. Also previously discussed at a work session was the conversion of the two existing St. Francis warning sirens to DC (battery) power from AC (electric) power. Currently, both existing warning sirens in the area of Roanoke Street/Ambassador Blvd and Woodbine Street/232nd Avenue operate solely on electricity or AC power. If the power went out in these areas, the sirens would not operate. By converting these two existing sirens to DC power, they would continue to operate even if the power went out. Reasoning for locating the new siren on the eastern portion of the city was due to the amount of new development that has occurred since the original sirens were installed and because of Bethel Wildlife Management. Warning Sirens are to alert people outdoors. The quote for the new battery siren is \$11,348.00 but there would be an additional initial service fee to Connexus Energy for power connection of \$1,316.00 and a monthly flat fee of \$5.00 thereafter. The quote for a new solar siren is \$13,875.00 however; it would eliminate the need to connect to a power source and the \$5.00 per month flat fee. Installation cost for a typical siren is approximately \$12,000 and there would be an additional \$400-\$500 installation fee for the solar siren. The cost of converting the two existing sirens to DC (battery) power is \$5,716.42 per siren. That includes batteries, aluminum battery box and labor.

Chief Schwieger also noted Anoka County Emergency Management along with Anoka County Central Communications (dispatch) will also be performing upgrades to the activation system for all Anoka County warning sirens. The main upgrade will be converting warning sirens to digital activation systems from analog activation. Emergency Management is looking at funding options for the upgrade, which could be several thousands of dollars per siren site depending on various factors. There is no specific timeline for these upgrades but it is recommended funding be allocated in the capital equipment budget for these upgrades in the coming years.

Feldman said he likes the solar option but where are the solar panels located on the poles. How hard is it to maintain the solar panels? One of my concerns is we don't want the public works going up a ladder to clear these off each time it snows. The cost is \$13,875 per siren plus install of \$12,500 for \$26,375 total. The total for the conversions of the two older ones is a no brainer. \$37,807.84 would be the cost of the solar siren and the two conversions. The money is there for this purchase because of the \$80,000 the City received for American Tower Lease renewal. Feldman asked Chief Schwieger what do you think.

Chief Schwieger stated testing them in the winter and the potential snow cover could affect hearing the sirens. The summer time we would not have to worry about that. Feldman said the electric might have more power for the full 12 months out of the

year. You have to be able to count on them when you need them.

Robinson asked if there was any history with the current sirens and if the power has gone out. So there are no current battery backups with our current sirens.

Schwieger stated he does not recall any power outages with them. One issue we had was we had to get a new part on one of the sirens but that is all I recall. The first Wednesday of every month, they are audibly tested. The sirens are tested daily to see if they receive a signal.

Feldman said I believe in energy renewables but there is a place and time. My concern where the solar panels are located on the poles.

Muehlbauer asked about the upgrades and battery type. Chief Schwieger stated there are no specific date and times on the upgrades to our current sirens.

Bauer stated like you Mayor, I am for renewable energy but for these you can't beat \$5.00 the month. I think the AC/DC is the way to go. I want the new sirens to be reliable.

Udvig stated she is on board with the rest of the council.

Feldman stated a better way to go is AC back up with DC power. Unless we can find out that solar panels can be maintained easier.

Chief Schwieger said if you have the electric source available, I believe it is better way to go. Solar is used more out in areas with no electric available.

Fire Chief Dave Schmidt agreed with Chief Schwieger.

MOTION BY FELDMAN SECOND MUEHLBAUER TO PURCHASE THE ELECTRIC POWERED WITH DC CONTROL/BATTERY CABINET FROM FEDERAL SIGNAL CORPORATION ALONG WITH THE DC CONVERSION FOR THE TWO EXISTING SIRENS WITH THE FUNDS COMING FROM THE AMERICAN TOWER RENEWAL LEASE AND LEFT OVER MONEY BE KEPT IN THE CAPITAL EQUIPMENT FUND. Motion carried 5-0.

B. Joint Powers Agreement with St. Francis Area Schools

City Administrator Joe Kohlmann reported the school district met with the City in April 2018 with their planned improvements for the elementary/middle school site. A formal application was submitted in November 2018 that included a closure of access points to the site and rerouting of traffic planned in the improvements. This plan required a traffic study. Since this time, MnDOT has committed to reexamining the entire corridor, which would directly affect the school district site. The school district has agreed to hold off on the site improvements but wish to proceed with the building

expansions. The agreement before the city council is to release the building permit for the St. Francis Middle/Elementary Schools with the understanding that any and all other site modifications will be placed on hold and no other site improvements shall be undertaken until MnDOT has decided upon a transportation plan and presented to the City and District for the reconfiguration of State Highway 47.

Feldman stated the 10-classroom addition is a good idea. I met with the parents and representatives from MnDOT today to discuss the corridor. This improvement is for the whole corridor not just this one intersection. We are looking for a permanent solution. It may be three years out. A lot of different ideas are being discussed. You cannot make any changes in any area on 229th at this time. You cannot add more traffic to Hwy 47 and Pederson Drive intersection cannot be done. The City at one time was looking at options to have Bridge Street come through to Pederson Drive but we have backed off that at this time. We don't want to add any more traffic to this area. Working with our retail and our St. Francis Forward Plan. Corridor is hands off until MnDOT and the city decides what is going to be done there long term along with the input from the St. Francis Area Schools which is important, businesses owners and community to find out what we are going to do to make this a solved problem. At the meeting today, what we found out was the crosswalk was just a band-aid. It didn't accomplish anything except to shove off an inevitable accident down the road. Today I found out that Kaia is home and that Anne has completed her therapy but Kaia will have brain damage forever. We cannot allow this to go on. As I also mentioned at the meeting and said before at other meetings we are not naïve to believe that this will be a 100% accident free zone, never going to happen. What is going to happen is that if we lessen the amount to property damage only and not fatality and injuries we will have succeeded very well and that is our whole goal here. I hope the St. Francis Area Schools is on board with the city of St. Francis because safety is eminent and a priority here. We were told money is not an issue now and that MnDOT is looking to making this a long-term solution here to make sure our section of this road/corridor through our city is safe and responsible. A fender bender is one thing but injuries and fatalities are another ball game. I want to emphasize that we need you (St. Francis Area Schools), city and all entities on board but understand one thing do your remodeling but hands off of Hwy 47 as we will do too by the way. Superintendent Ferguson said that is why we are here. Feldman stated I appreciate that.

Udvig stated she was thrilled construction will be able to start. Everybody is excited to see the expansion start, good for our students. Thanked St. Francis Area Schools in working with us and staying within the parameters. Good for the community to see the bond money being put to use.

Bauer agree with the school should move forward with adding the classrooms. I think the city, school and state should look at on how the busses flow between the middle school and elementary and getting them in and out. I am still an advocate of Bridge Street going straight through. Half the city's residents are pushed south past the elementary school and then north to Pederson. If that road went straight, I think that traffic would go straight into the businesses instead of having more northbound traffic. I don't think that has been suggested to MnDOT yet and if not I will contact them.

Feldman said the area of Bridge Street and Ambassador Blvd. is a cluster in drop off and pick up times. St Francis Areas Schools already knows that. Like St. Francis Forward Plan report said the school is not going to move so let's move forward and work together. Safety is the number one priority. Not everyone is going to get what they want. We cannot allow an accident like this to happen again. These girls are affected their whole life. Luckily, they are alive to see the changes. In the meeting today with the parents, you can feel the agony they are going through.

Muehlbauer no objections of them moving forward with the building expansion. Working together will help both entities.

Robinson not a whole lot to add. I meet with Kate (Community Development Director) and she brought me up to speed. The agreement sets it in stone that we have rules and regulations for a reason it is a benefit for all. Let's get the expansion going and we will see what happens with Hwy 47.

School Superintendent Troy Ferguson said we are here to show support. Our attorney looked at it and good to go with the agreement. Worked with Joe (City Administrator), he work hard to get this to us. We are here for support and will take it to our board February 25.

Feldman said the corridor will look a whole lot different in several years. MnDOT will be doing some temporary work and will put it in place in the meantime. It will take support from city, school, county and state to accomplish the whole goal. Starts at public works building north to Ambassador Blvd, a corridor change. We will also be mindful of the businesses too.

MOTION BY UDVIG SECOND MUEHLBAUER ENTER INTO A BUILDING PERMIT RELEASE AGREEMENT WITH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 15. Motion carried 5-0.

10. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

None

11. **REPORTS**

A. Department Reports - Public Works Monthly Report

Staff Reports were part of the packet. No questions or comments from the council.

B. Councilmember Reports-

Udvig thank Public Works for snow removal. Ask the residents to be patient, only so much place to put the snow. If we have to haul it away that is an additional expense. The banks are getting higher and more of an expense to remove the snow. Listening to different people, our city streets are maintained better than some other surrounding area cities.

Bauer said the next couple of days could be tough with more potential snow. Have winter survival kits/blankets/snacks in your vehicle. Thanked public works for their work on the city streets.

Muehlbauer not much to report. Looking forward to hearing from Oak Grove on the agreement. Kohlmann said they couldn't get the quick turnaround to have it ready for the packet. From what I heard from them there are a few minor points that we have to clarify. Muehlbauer stated we are still looking for viable solutions for the sound system. Winning with Cops movie night I believe is coming up February 23 and looking forward in attending.

Robinson reported about a week and one half ago I had the opportunity to meet individually with Joe, Kate and the Fire Chief. Really got apprised of what is going on and a much better understanding. Believe it or not these guys are worker bees. They have a lot going on. We scheduled for a 30-40 minute meeting ended up lasting about 2 hours each. I do extend my gratitude for them spending the time to meet with me. It means a lot to me and makes me a better servant for the citizens as well. My first planning and zoning meeting is tomorrow, thank you mayor for the opportunity to be a liaison to them. I know I will be there baring the amount of snow. An email will be sent out if the meeting is cancelled.

Feldman stated he wants to point out to viewing audience and staff too. Paul our Public Works Director told me that unlike the city of Minneapolis where trucks are assigned to a district with multiple drivers. We have each employee assigned to a vehicle or piece of equipment and they don't have anyone to replace them. Our guys work hard, they are on a 24/7 standby. As Udvig alluded to early this is Minnesota, be patient. The crew is working hard.

Feldman said regarding the Oak Grove agreement minor, that is the key word on our end. On our end we did everything we could of possibly done with the agreement. I don't know why any city would want to deal with wastewater when they don't have to. I can say to you, I am open myself to a certain level but I would also say enough is enough. Make it happen or don't make it happen live with your mistake as we have lived with ours. Would I like to see it happen for local regionalization. I hope it works. I don't know how much more we can do.

Feldman asked City Engineer Craig Jochum about the bids. Official bid opening is Monday, February 25 at 2 pm for Riverbank Lane Kings Hwy Street Improvement project.

Feldman said I sent you (Jochum) a link from MN Legislative about the MN Aid program for ideas for future expenditures. Local Government Aid Program (LGA) might be expanded to 2002 level.

Be safe and patient with the snow. Agree with Bauer have blankets and survival kits in your vehicle.

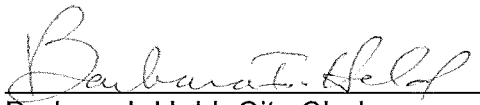
Udvig stated the Winning with Cops movie night event is March 22 at the police department at 6:30 pm

C. Upcoming Events -

Feb 20 Planning Comm. Meeting @ St. Francis Area Schools District Office 7:00 pm
Mar 4 City Council Meeting @ St. Francis Area Schools District Office 6:00 pm
Mar 10 Daylight Savings Time Starts
Mar 18 City Council Meeting @ St. Francis Area Schools District Office 6:00 pm

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Feldman adjourned the regular city council at 6:44 pm.


Barbara I. Held, City Clerk