CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS MN
ANOKA COUNTY
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 25, 2018

Mayor Steve Feldman called the Special Meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Members present: Mayor Steve Feldman, Councilmembers Jerry Tveit, Joe Muehlbauer, Robert Bauer and Rich Skordahl.

Also present: City Administrator Joe Kohlmann, Assistant City Attorney Dave Schaps (Barna, Guzy & Steffen), Assistant City Engineer Shane Nelson (Hakanson Anderson), Public Works Director Paul Teicher.

1) American Tower Lease
Asst. City Attorney Schaps explained the resolution approving the lease amendment with American Tower Asset Sub, LLC as described in the packet.

Tveit said that he thinks it would be foolish not to move forward with this. Money doesn't grow on trees and $20,000 is $20,000. We've already approved the plans, and they haven't changed.

Bauer understands the 125 square feet, but doesn't understand why the rush? Is there an increased property value that the 125 square feet brings? He doesn't have a problem with it. He just wants to know that it's legal and covered.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION 2018-22 APPROVING THE LEASE AMENDMENT WITH AMERICAN TOWER ASSET SUB LLC BY BAUER, SECONDED BY MUEHLBAUER; ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSES.

Feldman continued the discussion and stated that we are talking about a siren for $24,000. When this was originally talked about, there was going to be a $60,000 one time charge that it was going to be put into the capital improvement fund for future expenditures. Now it's $80,000. He would like to see if the council would consider the fact that they will have $24,000 in the material cost for the siren, plus another $1,000 or so for Connexus to hook it up, so $25,000 total. He doesn't know if the grant will ever come into fruition over time, but what he does know is there is a dead zone because of the city's expansion since 1996, and in his opinion there is a need for another siren in that area to obtain a larger range of emergency notifications. If a siren saves just one family from any hazard, it's worth $25,000 to him. This is the goose that laid the golden egg. We could take $25,000 from this $80,000, put $55,000 into the Capital Improvement Fund, and get our siren sooner than later.

Skordahl asked if the sirens were in the Capital Improvement Plan. They will fail some day and we should try to figure out a plan to deal with that 20 years down the line. He did not realize that they were that expensive.

Skordahl also mentioned that he had remembered a conversation they had at a previous council meeting where they were going to use this antenna money to pay something else off.

Tveit said that he's not opposed to doing this. At the last council meeting it was agreed that they would wait and see if they could get a grant. He would hate to find out that there is money available, but since you already spent the money you aren't able to get reimbursed. If grant money is not available, he definitely agrees they should do it. If it were him though, he would first exhaust the avenues of looking at a grant first. The area has never been covered and people aren't expecting it to be covered right now, so he doesn't think we are losing anything by checking the options.

Feldman said he doesn't want to be in a rush to do this either. He only brought up the idea because of the timing and it wasn't something they saw coming. If we exhaust it and can't find it, at least we have the funds available.

Bauer questioned the location of the tower and also mentioned the fact that if it's county ran, why not get county tax money to facilitate adding one. He's not opposed to adding one because there is that need.

Council agreed to direct staff to look at grant dollars, federal, state or county, and come back to council with a timeframe and availability. Council would then take it from there and make a decision based on those findings. Either way there's funding in place if we can't get grant money.

2) Riverbank Lane/Kings Hwy Street Improvement

Feldman started off the discussion by explaining all scenarios as described in the packet. Scenario #2C leaves us vulnerable to litigation. He thinks it's important that we do not change our policy. Our City Planner, Ben Gozola of Sambatek has warned us about the idea of changing policies and ordinances. We don't want to start a precedent because there are nine miles of gravel roads in the city and once this gets done, residents living on those roads will be talking about it on their end.

Feldman worked out another option that he would like to present to council. His option is almost like Scenario 2C, but taking out the maintenance part of storm water. The old total as of October 17th was \$461,079. The new total is \$482,600. His proposal is 50% city, 50% residents. \$156,524 pavement, plus \$326,076 storm water. City portion of the new storm water amount would be \$195,645.60 which would be 60% of that storm water amount. Resident's portion of the new storm water amount, plus pavement assessed would be \$286,954, which is 40% of the storm water, 100% of the pavement.

The benefits of this new option are that the city is consistent with the current storm water assessment policy, fill and upgradable to both residents and the city, less funds used from the dedicated storm water fund, and no precedence started.

Bauer said that he understands what Feldman is saying about the numbers in Scenario 2C, but you also have to look at the numbers on Scenario 2A. If you tell the residents you are going to do this at 50% / 50%, that negates our policy of 60% / 40% any way you look at it.

Tveit said that he gets frustrated when he hears of a resident getting pulled over by a police officer and the resident telling them that their taxes pay their wages. In reality, only pennies of their taxes are going towards their wages. This is a similar situation. The amount of money that these 29 residents will be paying with their taxes towards this street is really compared to about one day of grading. That grader costs a lot of money. And it's not just the time for the grader, we had to purchase the grader. There's maintenance and storage on the grader. Then we have to add in the employee's time. This stuff is expensive. The amount of money that they are paying in taxes is not enough for this project, even if 100% of their tax dollars went just for this project, and it doesn't. Their tax dollars are going towards police & fire service, general government, the administrative part of it, etc. Now if you start taking all of those items off the amount they pay in city taxes each year, and how much actually goes into street maintenance, then divide it out by population and how much ends up going to their street, they are nowhere near even a quarter of this expense. So that bothers him a lot when people say that they pay their taxes all the time and get nothing for it. It may be a good idea to have the numbers available for residents to see the breakdown of where their tax dollars are going.

Tveit is not opposed to doing any of these projects, and would like to stick to our policy and not set a precedence because he doesn't want anyone coming back saying that anyone was treated special. He also has a loyalty to the other citizens in the city. As a citizen, he doesn't want to pay for their road. He gets no benefit by paving their road. His neighbors do not get a benefit by paving their road. He's trying to balance the benefit for the people living on that road with the 7400 other citizens that live in St. Francis that aren't getting a benefit from this.

Skordahl said that it's been agreed that they all want to stay in policy. Policy tells us that storm sewer improvements completed by the city shall be assessed at 40% resident, 60% city for the total storm water improvement cost. To him, that's one end of the spectrum. The city council may consider increasing the city contribution by utilizing the funds from the storm water utility fund. At one end of the spectrum you can look at it like they pay for the pavement and we pick up everything else. Or, they pay for the pavement and then we divide it up 60% / 40%. Somewhere in the middle lies something else. It sounds like what Mayor Feldman did was try to find something in between the two. He's not sure if 50% / 50% is the right answer or not. One thing that he thinks didn't happen well at the last meeting was that emotions ran a lot of the discussion. We have to find a way to take the emotion out of it. We need to state the facts and explain that we will be staying within policy and let them know what we can do.

Muehlbauer agreed with Skordahl that they just need to lay it out to the residents with the facts.

Kohlmann explained that if you were to call this a street resurfacing project on the most expensive end, you assess 100% of the cost with no question of the entire project, the city doesn't even pick up one dime. If it's a storm water project, which it looks like that's what we are classifying it as, then council has the benchmarks of 60% / 40% on it, but you also have the attitude that you can pay 100% of it. You basically have one extreme to the other on what you are willing to pay for depending on how you classify it.

Feldman said that pavement alone, without the ditches, culverts and holding ponds will not solve this problem. It will just make water run off faster in some other place. He just wants to put this one to rest once and for all so they can move on to other projects. They've put more than enough time into it.

Engineer Nelson said that Scenario 2A best lines up with the city policy.

They discussed the option of annexation within the city. Kohlmann suggested asking Asst. City Attorney Schaps to write up a memo on annexation and what it may or may not mean for this situation.

Kohlmann brought up another issue that there are a couple properties that have two lots and whether or not they will receive two assessments.

Council agreed that the residents will be assessed 100% of the pavement costs, plus they will be assessed 26% of storm water improvements, 74% of storm water improvements will be paid by the city.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.