

MEDINA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 7, 2010

The City Council of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on December 7, 2010 at 7:05 p.m. in the City Hall Chambers. Mayor Crosby presided.

I. ROLL CALL

Members present: Crosby, Johnson, Siitari, Smith, and Weir.

Members absent: None.

Also present: City Attorney Ron Batty, City Engineer Tom Kellogg, Police Sergeant Jason Nelson, City Planner Dusty Finke, Public Works Superintendent Steve Scherer, Finance Director Jeanne Day, City Administrator Chad Adams and Recording Secretary Amanda Staple.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of the November 22, 2010 Special City Council Meeting Minutes

*Moved by Weir, seconded by Smith, to approve the November 22, 2010 Special City Council meeting minutes as amended. **Motion passed unanimously.***

B. Approval of the November 22, 2010 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

It was noted on page four, line 26, it should state: "...relayed the position of the Council, which was that any projects to be so considered should be in the existing capital improvement plan." On page one, under Also present: City Engineer Tom Kellogg should not be listed at present as he was absent from the meeting.

*Moved by Weir, seconded by Smith, to approve the November 22, 2010 Regular City Council meeting minutes as amended. **Motion passed unanimously.***

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Accept \$59.09 Donation from "Turner for Medina Council"

B. Accept \$100 Donation from Alaris Financial

C. Approve League of Minnesota Cities Liability Coverage Waiver Form

D. Approve Maintenance Agreement for Siren Receiver/Decoders with Embedded Systems, Inc.

E. Approve Recording Secretary Service Agreement with TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

F. Authorize Sale of Police Squad Vehicle at Public Auction

G. Extend Dale Cooney's Management Internship through May 31, 2011

H. Resolution Certifying Delinquent City Charges for Services to Hennepin County Auditor for Collection in 2012

*Moved by Weir, seconded by Siitari, to approve the consent agenda. **Motion passed unanimously.***

VI. COMMENTS

A. Comments from Citizens on Items not on the Agenda

There were none.

B. Park Commission

Park Commissioner Ben Benson stated that the Park Commission has not met since the previous Council meeting. He stated that he would be speaking with Scherer to further discuss the creation of a policy regarding proposed citizen projects. He noted that the Commission would meet again the following week.

C. Planning Commission

Finke advised that the Planning Commission had not met since the last Council update and would meet again next week to review and prioritize projects for the City Council to review at the annual goal setting session.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2011 Budget

Crosby stated that it is the intent of the City Council to adopt a budget and certify an amount to Hennepin County for a tax levy. He summarized the previous meetings, Council discussions, and mailings that have been sent in this regard.

1. Budget and Tax Levy Presentation

Adams reported that the first budget prepared for the Council was completed in August and showed an increase in the tax levy of 3.42 percent to a tax rate of 19.43 percent. He advised that the Council adopted a preliminary tax levy increase of 2.50 percent, to a tax rate of 19.19 percent, on September 7, 2010. He stated that the budget had been reduced further and as of December 7, 2010 the proposed tax levy increase is 1.32 percent, to a tax rate of 19.03 percent. He advised the debt service levy alone for the new road improvements was at a 1.40 percent tax levy increase, meaning the operating tax levy was being reduced. He reviewed the 2011 major budget issues including the tax levy limits, the fact that the City of Medina does not receive State Local Government Aid, State Mandates increases must be funded, there are building permit and development revenue shortfalls, and the City of Medina now qualifies for Municipal State Aid. He advised that as of September 7, 2010, 57.6 percent of Medina residential single-family residences will have a total tax decrease and noted that with the further reduction that percentage would increase. He stated 88 percent of businesses were slated to receive a total tax decrease as of September 7th. He summarized the major 2011 budget reductions. He reviewed the long-term needs of the City including roads, fire, a public works facility, and equipment replacement; and explained how the needs could be funded into the future. He explained how the financial management plan helps to plan for, and analyze, the long-term needs of the City. He provided a comparison of the proposed 2011 tax rate of Medina to those of neighboring communities and noted Medina was the second lowest of the nearest 11 communities. He reviewed the proposed utility rate increases.

Johnson suggested that in the future the City review the possibility of using water revenue bonds as a financing mechanism for water improvements.

Adams reviewed the major accomplishments of 2010.

Bob Franklin, 2819 Lakeshore Avenue, complimented the City Council and staff for their work on the budget. He commented that the proposed budget is both responsible and responsive to citizen comments. He believed that the challenge would be in the future when larger expenditures arise.

Jack Wahlfors 1525 Deerhill Road, thanked the Council and City staff for their work. He stated that he is immensely pleased with the services provided by City staff.

2. Resolution Approving 2011 Final Tax Levy

*Moved by Johnson, seconded by Smith, to approve the resolution approving the 2011 final tax levy. **Motion passed unanimously.***

3. Resolution Approving 2011 Final Budget

*Moved by Weir, seconded by Smith, to approve the resolution approving the 2011 final budget. **Motion passed unanimously.***

Smith thanked City staff for all of their hard work in preparation of the budget and levy information.

B. Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Change the Future Land Use from Rural Residential to Agricultural. Rezoning (Zoning Map Amendment) from Rural Residential to Agricultural Preserve – Jo Ann Reiser Wahlfors and Elizabeth Ringer of 1525 Deerhill Road and 1700 Deerhill Road

Finke advised that the Planning Commission previously discussed this item and recommends approval of the request to complete a comprehensive plan amendment to change the future land use from rural residential to agricultural and for rezoning of the properties from rural residential to agricultural preserve. He displayed a map highlighting the future land use plan of the City and pointed out the properties in discussion. He provided the definitions of the agricultural and rural residential land uses. He then explained the Metropolitan Agricultural Preserve Program and advised that the rezoning of these properties would make both properties eligible to apply for this program. He explained the difference between the Metropolitan Agricultural Preserve Program and the Green Acres Program. He reported that there are 42 other parcels in the City over 40 acres in size and outside of the MUSA which could be eligible for the Metro Ag Preserve Program, and noted 17 of those properties are not currently enrolled in the Green Acres Program. He advised that 99 other parcels in the City are enrolled in the Green Acres Program. He stated that at the public hearing held by the Planning Commission two property owners spoke in favor of the request, and advised that the Planning Commission recommended unanimous approval of the request subject to one condition.

Crosby noted that his family owns property neighboring these properties, which is currently in the Metro Ag Preserve Program.

Weir stated that she is also familiar with the properties and noted that the Wahlfors property has a pick your own berry farm which has been in existence for many years.

She commented that the Ringer property also grows some vegetables and flowers. She was in favor of the request and commented that in recent years approximately 200 acres were removed from the Metro Ag Preserve Program.

Smith stated that she would also be in favor of the request as she was also familiar with the properties and believed in preserving the land.

Jack Wahlfors, 1525 Deerhill Road, stated that he is aware that a property neighboring his property is going to be developed and believed that was the right of that property owner. He stated that in a perfect world he would keep the properties as they are now, and would like to keep his berry picking farm for as long as possible. He commented that the property of his neighbor, included in this request, is very different from his but also provides a unique service to the community. He stated that he would like to keep these two unique parcels for the community to enjoy.

Crosby commented that by changing the zoning and land use of these two parcels it will extend the area of undeveloped land currently in that area.

Moved by Weir, seconded by Smith, to direct staff to prepare a resolution to complete a comprehensive plan amendment to change the future land use from rural residential to agricultural for the properties located at 1525 and 1700 Deerhill Road, with the condition that the parcels at 1700 Deerhill Road be combined. Motion passed unanimously.

Moved by Smith, seconded by Weir, to direct staff to prepare a resolution to rezone the properties located at 1525 and 1700 Deerhill Road from rural residential to agricultural preserve. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Active Park Study Area

Finke provided background information regarding the request and advised that the active study area is in the vicinity of Highway 55 and Arrowhead Drive/Mohawk Drive. He reviewed the criteria that staff used for this study. He stated that the Park Commission had an interest in identifying possible sports fields and provided the size requirements needed for different sports activities, such as soccer fields. He highlighted the area of the City in which the comprehensive plan identified a possible park for the future. He reviewed the recommendations from the Park Commission and City staff and noted that up to four park facilities were identified within the specified area. He explained that the purpose of the active park study is so that this plan can be presented early on in the discussion for future developments.

Park Commissioner Benson stated that this area is north of Highway 55 and is planned for higher density. He explained that this area currently does not have a lot of parks and advised that the future residents of that area would want parks close to their homes. He stated that the City is blessed with baseball fields but lacks soccer and open fields. He believed that most of the items would be development driven, with the exception of the trailhead connection.

Finke noted that the Park Commission used a more general description and advised that staff added more specific and descriptive language.

*Moved by Smith, seconded by Weir, to approve the Active Park Study Plan for Area 1, with the suggested staff language. **Motion passed unanimously.***

VIII. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

A. City Hall Improvements

1. Office Furniture Purchase and Installation Services Agreement with Alternative Business Furniture, Inc.

Adams noted that in 2010 minimal repairs have been proposed. He advised that this item is included in the 2010 budget.

Weir commented that most of the items would be movable to a new facility.

*Moved by Johnson, seconded by Weir, to approve the Office Furniture Purchase and Installation Services Agreement with Alternative Business Furniture, Inc. **Motion passed unanimously.***

B. Qwest Contract Negotiations Update

Adams provided an update on the negotiations and stated that Qwest replied that the City is required to accept the termination clause/penalty as part of the bulk rate agreement. He advised that a non-bulk rate is also offered at much higher expense. Adams also noted the termination clause/penalty within the bulk-rate agreement was required by federal tariff laws as explained by Qwest.

XI. MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

A. Citizen Requests to Construct Projects

Crosby highlighted the previous discussion and opinions of the Council, which were that only projects existing generally in a current CIP would be considered, and that projects requiring ongoing maintenance would not be preferred.

Scherer stated that some projects may be offered to be funded for construction which may not be identified on the CIP.

Weir commented that some proposed projects could be seen as clutter and they add to hardcover in parks.

Smith stated that it is great to develop a policy of this nature, as sometimes it is hard to decline an offer from a nice person.

Park Commissioner Benson questioned if the City wants to discourage people from coming forward with good ideas. He commented that what is seen as clutter to one person may not be seen that way by another person.

Weir stated that the purpose of the policy is to direct the interest from the public. She advised of two Eagle Scout projects that were completed and very valuable to the City, but were also natural projects that do not require ongoing maintenance; buckthorn removal and two log type benches.

Smith suggested the possibility of creating a wish list of projects that interested parties, such as Eagle Scouts, could complete or assist with.

Crosby stated that the purpose of the policy is not to discourage, but to define the scope of projects that the City would like to encourage.

Weir stated that she would like the Park Commission to create a wish list that would include natural projects and structures, such as buckthorn removal or log type benches that do not require ongoing maintenance.

B. Other

Crosby discussed the issue of a possible wind turbine proposed in Orono. He questioned how the City of Medina would respond to that type of request.

Finke advised that there is an existing ordinance in place to deal with that type of issue.

XII. APPROVAL TO PAY THE BILLS

*Moved by Weir, seconded by Johnson, to approve the bills, EFT 000919-000936 for \$57,984.12 and order check numbers 036268-036322 for \$60,643.92, and payroll EFT 503152-503178 for \$44,693.03 and payroll checks 020296-020329 for \$444.86. **Motion passed unanimously.***

XIII. ADJOURN

*Moved by Smith, seconded by Weir, to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. **Motion passed unanimously.***

T.M. Crosby, Jr., Mayor

Attest:

Chad M. Adams, City Administrator-Clerk