

City of Stevens Point Meeting Minutes

Special Common Council

Monday, June 1, 2009

Mayor Andrew Halverson, presiding

PRESENT: Alderpersons Mallison, O'Meara, Wiza, Heart, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks, and Moore.

Absent: Alderperson Walther.

ALSO PRESENT: City Attorney Molepske; City Clerk Moe; Comptroller/Treasurer Schlice; Directors Gardner, Popoff, Schrader, Halverson; Chris Loken; Ron Zimmerman; Reid Rocheleau; Scott Beduhn; Cathy Dugan; Francesco Sciarrone; Mary Ann Laszewski; Jamie Gebert; Patrick Planton; Tony Patton; Dave Carlson, Meredith Thorn (Journal); Gene Kemmeter (Gazette).

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2. Consideration of Resolution - Adoption of Citizens Participation Plan. Application Steps | Certifications | Resolution

Ald. Brooks asked why the City needs to have this plan in place since we have done these grant applications previously.

Dave Carlson, SEH Consultants, replied that the City needs to bring its plan up to the current standard in order to make it more efficient. Under the old plan they would lose about a month of construction time.

Ald. Heart asked what the deadline is for the grant application.

Mr. Carlson replied that there is no deadline but stressed it is an on-demand/first-come first-serve program. The sooner the City gets its application in the better opportunity it has in getting the highest amount of funding possible.

Ald. Heart noted that the plan's oversight provision includes citizen participation. She asked what was done to ensure that people would be here for tonight's public hearing.

Mr. Carlson replied that due to the fact this is a community-wide benefit project the notice in the newspaper and other typical posting activity was sufficient.

Ald. Trzebiatowski asked why the plan was not ready earlier in the construction season.

Mr. Carlson replied that it took time to complete the plan and specifications in order to get the project ready.

Ald. Wiza asked what the differences are between the existing City plan and the one being proposed.

Mr. Carlson said that the City does have a plan and the new one just changes the number of public hearings needed and made various grammatical changes to bring it up to date.

Ald. Wiza asked about the City's designee who will oversee the program.

The Mayor replied that the Director of Community Development will oversee the project.

Ald. Wiza expressed concern about whether the City is actually going to follow this plan or if it is just to apply for the grant. He doesn't believe they should pass a resolution if the City is not going to follow through.

Ald. O'Meara spoke about the concept of environmental justice and public notification requirements related to Block grants.

Ald. Heart asked why waiting until the regular Council meeting would jeopardize the project.

Mayor Halverson replied that it is well within the Council's authority to wait, but the faster the City submits the application the better chance it has to be approved and get more funding.

Director Gardner also noted that it is an 18 month project and they would like to get as much done before winter as possible. He also said that if the Council moved or held another public hearing, the City would have to give two weeks notice. If the Council wanted a public hearing at the regularly scheduled Council meeting, it would have had to have been noticed in the newspaper last week.

Ald. O'Meara noted that if there is public concern over the project they can have more public hearings in the future.

Ald. Stroik moved, Ald. Molski seconded, to approve the Adoption of the Citizens Participation Plan.

Ald. Wiza wants to have action at the next Council meeting to appoint the designee.

City Attorney Molepske notes that in the Resolution it states that the Mayor is the designee. He can delegate responsibility to other individuals as needed.

Ald. Brooks noted that the persons working on the proposals and programs may change from application to application based on the specifics of the project.

Call for the Vote:

Roll Call: Ayes: Mallison, O'Meara, Heart, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks, and Moore.

Nays: Wiza. Motion adopted.

3. Public Hearing - Authorizing Submission and Implementation of the Community Development Block Grant Application for Well No. 11.

Dave Carlson, SEH Consultants, described the Community Development Block Grant Program. The Community Development Block Grant Program is administered by the Department of Commerce. David Carlson presented information about the available funding and opportunities for housing, alternative funding uses, public facilities and economic development needs, when they applied to the City, and that the City could apply for those funds. There are three main categories: Housing - loans for low to moderate income families for necessary repairs and loans to landlords to make improvements to their buildings with the condition that the building be available to moderate and low income families. Economic Development - grants to communities to create a revolving loan fund to assist with business expansion and creation of living-wage jobs. Public Facilities - an aid program for public facilities. The program is done on an on-demand basis and has a matching fund requirement. Projects must benefit moderate to low income households either through removing blight, targeting a specific area that has a concentration of moderate to low income, or has a community-wide benefit. The City's project qualifies under the community-wide benefit section.

Director Gardner discussed the City's general needs. John Gardner talked about the Community Goals and Development needs of the City, including housing, public facilities and economic development, in particular based upon the City's Comprehensive Plan. This discussion included community goals and strategies. He discussed that no displacement would occur as part of this project, and that there would be only beneficial impacts from the project on low income residents. He stated that the City's residential population is greater than 50 percent low to moderate income. Half of the households in the community are traditional families and half are not. The City also has a larger than average young population but is under-represented in the 25-65 age group. The City is also above average in the population older than 65 years of age. In 1999 the median household income in the City was \$33,178, while the Village of Plover was \$51,238. Family income, excluding students, in the City is over represented in the lower income brackets and under represented in the upper income brackets as compared to peers. He also stated that 50% of households are owner occupied and 50% rental. He noted that almost a third of housing in the City was built before 1939, illustrating that much of the infrastructure tends to be older. He said the City has the highest tax rate in the county and that it would be even higher if not for the annexations that have taken place since 1990. He also noted that the City has a successful housing program in addition to economic development grants through the Community Development Block Grant program. The City has efficient land use, better transportation, and is an engine that creates jobs. We want to encourage development to stabilize the tax rate and encourage redevelopment of existing areas. Development in the city is better because we develop more densely which is better for the environment.

Patrick Planton, SEH Consultants, said that his company was retained back in December to design Well No. 11 and was ready to go with the bidding process in March. However it was decided that the City would try for funding from the stimulus program which had an application deadline at the end of April. During April it was also decided to apply for this Block grant worth upwards of \$750,000. He reviewed the history of the City's water supply system. Most of the wells are around the Plover River because of the amount of bedrock in the area. He stated that there is a limited area where the City can drill a new well due to the bedrock and high nitrates. He said the City has done well in developing its Master Plan. Since 1991 the area north of the airport has been noted as a site for a potential well. The last Master Plan that was done in 2007 stated that the City was short 500 gallons of water per minute. He said the City can no longer wait to construct the well. SEH Consultants recommends building a larger well to encompass the well needs for both Well No. 11 and Well No. 12 at the same location. The best location is just north of the Plover River and just south of Highway 66 known as the Boy Scout property. The well site is centered as far away from the surrounding septic systems as possible. He concluded by saying that this project has been in the works for over 20 years and addresses the current and future needs of the City. It will address the DNR's recommendations and will improve supply reliability and water quality. The biggest benefit is that the land is City owned, has a large amount of water available and has large distances from neighbors and the Plover River.

Ald. Stroik asked if there was any danger in drying up any of the neighbors' wells.

Mr. Planton stated that there should be no danger of drying up anyone's wells in the future.

Ald. Trzebiatowski noted that the Boy Scout property has land east of there up to Brilowski Road. He asked if that area's water had been tested.

Mr. Planton stated that they tested several sites and noted that the biggest problems with the land east of the river are the high nitrates and lower water capacity.

Reid Rocheleau said he doesn't understand the connection between the Block grant and the well.

Kathy Dugan empathizes with Mr. Rocheleau. She feels that the average citizen who has not followed water issues would be perplexed. She asked about Well No. 5 and if the City is blending the water to reduce the amount of nitrates.

Mr. Planton said that it is.

Ms. Dugan asked if the aquifer that Well No. 11 would be drawing water from is connected to the Plover River.

Ald. Heart noted that in the Public Participation Plan that was just approved it calls for input from citizens on their views on the program needs and impacts.

Ms. Dugan asked if the well will have an impact on the Plover River.

Mayor Halverson said the aquifer also feeds the Plover River.

Ms. Dugan said that is important for people to realize this is an issue and that we also have to talk about conservation.

Jamie Gebert summarized the presentation on the Community Development Block Grant.

4. Consideration of Resolution on the Above.

Ald. Wiza believes although we are adding another well people need to start thinking of water conservation and noted that the Water Department has good resources available for those individuals who are interested.

Direct Halverson stated that there are tips on their web site as well as the annual consumer confidence report that they send out before July 1st. The Department also conducts a leak detection program annually after their flushing program which saves millions of gallons of water.

Ald. Heart asked if there was any other notification or publicity besides the notices in the Gazette.

Director Gardner replied as this is city-wide application of funds and therefore the City used the City-wide media, the official newspaper.

Ald. Heart was concerned that the City's Groundwater Citizen Advisory Committee was not notified and that this hearing was held at a special meeting and not during a regularly scheduled Council meeting where more participation might have occurred. She believes that when the City adopts a plan and has the hearing five minutes later we are doing a disservice to the public. She knows that we are in the middle of summer but the City could wait two weeks to have more public participation. She feels it is unfortunate planning by City staff to not give more time. She hopes that in the future, if they truly want public participation, the City will do more than a regular notice. She encouraged the City to seek out that public participation.

Mayor Halverson noted that it this is not a standard notice - it is a two week notice. He said that the current water system is under capacity and that this project is not just for new growth. The effects of a new well will be seen in several positive ways. If there is a major fire in the middle of July and Well No. 5 spikes above 10 parts per million, the City will have to turn it off and we lose half of the downtown because we do not have enough water pressure it will be noticed.

Ald. O'Meara said that building a new well does not cause sprawl, growth is in the Comprehensive Plan developed by the governing body. If the placement of wells is affecting municipal growth then the governing body is not doing their job with their comprehensive planning.

Ald. Molski moved, Ald. Trzebiatowski seconded to Authorize Submission and Implementation of the Community Development Block Grant Application for Well No. 11.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mallison, O'Meara, Wiza, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks, and Moore.
Nays: Heart. Motion adopted.

5. Consideration of the minutes and actions taken at the Special Personnel meeting of June 1, 2009.

Clerk Moe read the minutes into the record.

Ald. Wiza moved, Ald. Molski seconded, to approve the minutes and actions taken at the Special Personnel meeting of June 1, 2009.

Ald. Wiza noted that any interim Director of Public Works will have to be approved by Council as well as the new hire to fill that vacancy.

Mayor Halverson said that is correct along with any financial ramifications thereof.

Ald. Stroik would like the City to reconsider paying moving expenses and other upfront costs when hiring.

Roll Call: Ayes: Majority
Nays: None
Abstain: O'Meara, Motion adopted.

6. Consideration of the minutes and actions taken at the Special Board of Public Works meeting of June 1, 2009.

Ald. Trzebiatowski moved, Ald. Mallison seconded to approve the minutes and actions taken at the Special Board of Public Works meeting of June 1, 2009.

Roll Call: Ayes: Mallison, O'Meara, Wiza, Heart, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Stroik, Brooks, and Moore.
Nays: None. Motion adopted.

7. Adjourned at 7:43 P.M.

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