

**CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
Via Zoom**

**Monday, January 25, 2021 at 4:30 P.M.**

**ROLL CALL:** Councilors Geissler, Hauschild, Nelson, Peterson, Mayor Boucher

**ABSENT:**

**CITY STAFF:** John Mulder, City Administrator; Eric Johnson, Community Development Director; Jim Crace, Police Chief; David Bolf, City Engineer

**OTHERS:**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- 1.** City Engineer Services: In 2015, the City began hiring project engineers for projects over \$500,000 with some exceptions so the City Engineer would provide oversight of the engineer's work without any conflict about overseeing their won work. This created a second layer of engineering on those larger projects which added costs, but also provided an additional layer of protection and oversight to those projects. The Council discussed how the current City Engineer, Northland Consulting Engineers (NCE) might be allowed to provide engineering for projects over \$500,000. The consensus was that it would be okay of NCE submitted proposals, but that decision should be made prior to RFP's being sent out and that all parties would know if NCE was being allowed to submit a proposal. The Council also discussed that when NCE was the engineer that either the Public Works Director or City Administrator sign off as the owner's representative on changer orders and/or pay requests. The Council asked the City Administrator to prepare a policy statement on city engineer services for review at the February 16, 2021 City Council pre-agenda meeting.
- 2.** Planning Services: John Mulder reported that we were not planning on contracting with ARDC for ongoing planning services, but only on as an as needed basis. The City has budgeted for another staff position in 2021 to assist with administrative work related to the Road Improvement Plan, MS4 Compliances GIS database management and assisting the Community Development on planning issues. The plan is to have a draft job description for the City Council to review sometime in the second quarter of 2021.
- 3.** Legal Services: John Mulder listed some possible pros and cons of either hiring a City Attorney as a staff person or hiring a firm/individual as contracted service. While no specific date has been set, it is a significant issue because of the long term institutional knowledge of the City Attorney. The Council discussed whether to include both prosecution and the City Attorney civil work in any change. The consensus was to leave some options open at this time, but proceed with a draft request for proposal (RFP) for legal services which the Council could review. Based on that, the City could proceed with talking with potential candidates or interested parties. A draft RFP will be prepared for Council to review on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Any transition plan would have the existing attorney stay on in limited capacity to assist the new attorney.
- 4.** Priority Planning: John Mulder reviewed the results from the planning discussion in January 2019 and the progress made on the issues that had been identified. Council members were then asked what they would like to see accomplished over the next 2-4 years. Following the creation of the list below, each member was asked to vote on their top 4 priorities with 1 being the most important of their

top priority and 4 being the least important priority. The individual results follow the item on the list below.

Community Recreation Initiative. bonding and sales tax 1 1 1 1  
3 components (Ice Arena, Trials, Fichtner Park)  
Trails as part of the Community Recreation 1  
Hermantown Dog Park  
Broadband 2 2 2 3  
Zip code – as it relates to Sales Tax 3 3 3  
LGA dollars – change formula 4 4 4  
Comp community strategic plan (heavy community involvement) 2 2  
Re-start Advance Hermantown – create new destiny drivers 4  
Blandin Leadership Program  
Recruit business proactively 3 4  
Housing – PUD, different options/standards for developers  
Exempt seasonal agriculture watering from sewer charges (swimming pool)  
Public safety resources  
Water/Sewer extensions  
Affordable housing

5. Recess: The meeting recessed at approximately 6:20 p.m.

---

Mayor

ATTEST:

---

Clerk