

BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Work Session
May 5, 2015

Mayor Darrel Olson called the Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Darrel Olson and Council Members Quinn Nystrom, Steve Barrows, Todd Holman, and Mark Cross

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele, Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek, and Public Works Director/City Engineer Trevor Walter

Feasibility Study for Crow Wing County, 2015 Inglewood Drive Street Improvement Project from Woida Road to CSAH 77 (Pine Beach Road)

Aric Welch, WSN, explained the purpose of the agenda item is to review roadway improvements being considered on Inglewood Drive, between Woida Road and Pine Beach Road (CSAH 77). The roadway in the project area is currently under the jurisdictions of Crow Wing County and the City of Baxter based on abutting property ownership. Three parcels abutting the roadway are currently within the Baxter municipal limits and the remaining parcels are located in the First Assessment District (unorganized territory) of Crow Wing County.

Recently, Crow Wing County applied for and secured a grant through the Local Road Improvement Program (“LRIP”) for upgrading the roadway. Planned improvements include widening the roadway, increasing the design strength of the roadway and securing a defined right-of-way corridor. As a result of the varying jurisdiction in the project, the City of Baxter would have a share of the proposed costs.

The existing roadway is rural bituminous surfaced roadway approximately 24’ in width. Drainage is handled by swales located on either side of the paved surface. No major improvements have been done to the road for many years and the roadway is in poor condition.

The total estimated construction cost for proposed improvements is \$532,500 as provided by Crow Wing County. The LRIP grant was based on 75% of the construction costs being grant and the remaining 25% coming from a local match. Mr. Welch explained the grant amount is a maximum and is fixed as long as the grant amount does not exceed 90% of the construction costs. If bids come in higher than the estimates, the local share would increase. If bids are considerably lower than the estimates, the grant amount could cover up to 90% of the bid amount. The City of Baxter’s proposed cost share is \$35,942. This cost only reflects construction costs and does not include costs such as engineering, administration, legal, and right-of-way acquisitions. Funding for the City’s share will be obtained via City contribution and special assessments to benefited property owners. Mr. Welch reviewed two scenarios for estimating assessments.

Mr. Welch explained he finds the proposed improvements are feasible for construction. The project is estimated to take one month to complete. Mr. Welch also explained the process to move forward with the

project. The council consensus was to install no parking and bike lanes signs. Staff can carry out the request with Crow Wing County without having to amend the feasibility report.

Feasibility Study for 2015 Dellwood Drive/Novotny Road Utility and Street Improvement Project

Mr. Welch explained he is recommending the council add a water service loop and stub or at a minimum, install a fire hydrant in conjunction with the improvement project. The purpose of the water loop is to resolve water issues for this area. To complete the project, easements would be required from Hilltop Trailer and the Holiday Inn. Installing the fire hydrant would allow the loop to be completed in the future. The Council consensus was to direct staff to get a cost proposal for the utility easements.

Fire Service Update

Assistant City Administrator Steele explained the hiring process for the new fire chief was discussed at last week's Fire Advisory Board meeting. The city of Brainerd invited Baxter to participate in the interview process. If the Council wishes to participate in the hiring process, the Baxter representative needs to be determined by May 15 and be available to participate in interviews the following week.

During the 2015 budget discussions last fall, the Council directed staff to investigate options for providing fire services for the City of Baxter. This action was prompted by the amount being paid for fire services and the possibility that Baxter might be able to operate its own department for the same cost or less over the long term. The Council requested staff to identify and develop options for consideration in 2015.

Staff is currently gathering information related to the two options of either establishing a Baxter fire department or establishing a joints powers fire department.

Staff will provide periodic updates on the progress of this effort.

The Council discussed a third option is to continue under the current arraignment. Council discussed exploring a joint shared relationship with Brainerd. A grant was received to study the service area and direction should wait until after the study has been received. Gary Scheeler, Brainerd City Council, asked the Council if they would want paid staff or paid on call staff. The Council indicated they would like to review the study before providing any comments. The consensus of the Council was to participate in the hiring process for the new fire chief. Council Member Barrows volunteered to represent Baxter in the hiring process.

Crow Wing County CUP

Crow Wing County has asked for the City to comment on the Loren Patnode application to accommodate the relocation of another business operation through the expansion of his existing cabinetry business. The City of Baxter was asked to comment because the existing cabinetry business borders the City of Baxter and residential city streets are being used for access to the manufacturing facility.

The Council discussed if the City or Crow Wing County has jurisdiction to hear the application for a home business. The home is located in the City of Baxter and the business is location in Crow Wing County.

It is the City's understanding the request for comment was to provide an opportunity for the City to submit any additional conditions to those already suggested by county staff. The Council discussed there are no conditions that will make this use appropriate in this location and directed staff to submit a formal request to the Crow Wing County Planning Commission to deny the conditional use permit application.

MOTION by Council Member Cross, seconded by Council Member Holman to adjourn at 6:42 p.m.
Motion carries unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel Olson
Mayor

Kelly Steele
Assistant City Administrator/Clerk