

BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Special Meeting
May 27, 2014

Mayor Darrel Olson called the Special City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members Jim Klein, Todd Holman, Rob Moser, and Mayor Darrel Olson.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Cross

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Gordon Heitke, Assistant City Administrator/Clerk Kelly Steele, Public Works Director/City Engineer Trevor Walter, Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek, and Consulting City Engineer Aric Welch.

Mr. Welch reviewed the outline for the presentation. The Woida Improvement Project has been identified on the City's five year Capital Improvements Plan. The feasibility study for sewer, water, and roadway improvements was completed and accepted by the Council in 2005. The City received an inadequate petition for roadway surfacing improvements from residents of Wildflower Drive and Franklin Drive in 2012. The City held an improvement hearing on November 5, 2013. To continue moving forward with the project, the council will adopt the assessment roll tonight. Homeowners are responsible for the service line from the house to the right-of-way line. All disturbed areas adjacent to existing residential properties will be restored with 4" of native black sand and sod or seed. The total estimated project cost is \$3,197,697. The project cost increased from the improvement hearing due to the addition of the trail and higher bid prices for dewatering and water and sanitary sewer pipe. The trail expense is not assessed. Project costs remaining after deducting city costs are assessed on a per lot basis. An annual assessment payment is estimated to be \$1,611.24. The assessment will be amortized over a 15-year assessment term with an interest rate estimated at 5.2%. Financial hardship deferments are available for senior citizens, disabled, or active military members meeting established criteria. Future connection charges for multiple units on a single lot may be eligible to be deferred if the application is received by June 10, 2014 and criteria is met. Deferments are also available for R-1 or R-S zoned undeveloped separate lots when immediately adjacent to developed R-1 property with the same owner. The City is paying for 58% of the total project cost and assessing 42%. Property owners wanting to appeal the assessment must submit a written objection to the presiding officer tonight. Construction will start in early July and is estimated to be completed by October 24, 2014. Construction will start on the south end of Wildflower and work north. Mailboxes will be clustered during construction. All private improvements located in the right-of-way must be relocated prior to the project commencing.

Valerie Ranger, 7085 Woida Road. Ms. Ranger inquired if mailboxes will be clustered, the deadline to submit payment without having to pay interest, if there is a list of plumbers, and when dewatering will begin. Ms. Ranger asked if homeowners would lose water service for a period of time.

Tim Wright, 14868 Franklin Drive. Mr. Wright inquired the location of fire hydrants. Mr. Wright expressed concerns with the assessment being 25% of the value of his home. Mr. Wright understands the need to repair Woida Road, but does not see the need for city water or sewer on Franklin Drive or Wildflower Drive. After looking at taxable value, Mr. Wright would have to vote no for the project. Mr. Wright thanked the Council for their dedication to the City.

Paul Day, 14867 Franklin Drive. Mr. Day inquired if the City will improve water drainage to Clearwater. Mr. Day explained his lot is 200' wide and asked if he would be eligible for a deferment until his lot is split.

Karen Cheney, 7229 Woida Road. Ms. Cheney stated she has waited 15 years for city sewer. Ms. Cheney asked to be connected to city sewer when Lakeland Vet was connected. The longer we wait to complete the project the higher the cost will be. Ms. Cheney explained her septic would not be in compliance if her home were sold. Ms. Cheney said the project is painful, but we need to look ahead.

Dawn Reed, 14645 Wildflower Drive. Ms. Reed explained her father-in-law has offered to purchase their second lot so they will not be socked with two assessments. Ms. Reed explained there is no possibility the second lot will be built on in the future. Selling the lot will help pay for their assessment. The septic system is located on the lot, so the lot cannot be sold.

Tim Wright, 14868 Franklin Drive. Mr. Wright said the whole project is a lot of money. If a septic fails, the homeowner will pay for a new septic which will last 15 years.

Christine Acherman, 14712 Wildflower Drive. Ms. Acherman explained she is on a fixed income. Ms. Acherman asked if the assessment is more to pay for a contractor. While living on Mille Lacs Lake, she went through a similar project to improve the lake. This project is not to improve environmental concerns. Ms. Acherman stressed residents must connect during the City's dewatering process. Ms. Acherman inquired the rate of the average city water and sewer bill and if she can keep her water meter.

Janie Lapka, 14913 Franklin Drive. Ms. Lapka said from a realtor point of view, the economy is not strong enough to support this project. Ms. Lapka would like to see paved road, but not water and sewer. Ms. Lapka stated property owners received a letter stating the city would not complete the project unless a petition supporting the project is received by 75% of the homeowners. Ms. Lapka would like to see the city pay more and bring the cost down to \$12,000. There are four to five foreclosures in the neighborhood and a few more pending.

The Council discussed 50-60% of the people want to see the project completed. The people who support the project did not attend because they do not want to be on record and upset their neighbors. The Council summarized prior assessment amounts for similar projects. The Council

reviewed the City's contribution to the project cost and the obligation to consider the City as a whole when considering the project.

John Thomey (address not provided). Mr. Thomey asked if the City plans to tear his home down for the construction Clearwater.

Tim Wright, 14868 Franklin Drive. Mr. Wright inquired what the values of homes were with the \$20,000 to 25,000 assessments. Mr. Wright inquired if the citizens can vote if the project should be completed.

Don Narveson, 14757 Wildflower Drive. Mr. Narveson explained he has attended every council meeting and homeowners have to commit time investigating the project. Mr. Narveson explained the citizens have elected the council to complete these projects. All residents have to do is ask the City their questions. If the project does not go through, residents will be looking at a \$25,000 assessment again.

14715 Wildflower Drive (no name provided). The person inquired if there is a monthly fee for city water and if they have to connect to the system. The person stated they should have a choice if city water is used. The person stated he uses a sand point well and does not want to use City water.

Mayor Olson asked if there were any further questions.

MOTION by Council Member Holman, seconded by Council Member Klein to close the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Olson thanked residents for attending. Mayor Olson said residents could see staff after the meeting for deferred assessment applications.

MOTION by Council Member Holman, seconded by Council Member Moser to adjourn at 7:51 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel L. Olson
Mayor

Kelly Steele
Assistant City Administrator/Clerk