

BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Work Session
September 6, 2016

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

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele, Community Development Director Josh Doty, Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek, Parks & Trails Supervisor Roy Rauen, Chief of Police Jim Exsted, and Public Works Director Trevor Walter.

CROW WING POWER GREEN TOUCH FOR THE LOREN THOMPSON PARK BUTTERFLY AND POLLINATION GARDEN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Parks and Trail Supervisor Roy Rauen explained he has been working with Rick Peterson, Crow Wing Power Green Touch Program, to develop a butterfly and pollination garden at Loren Thompson Park. Mr. Peterson explained he first worked with the city on Berrywood Park. The goal of this project is to restore some of the damage that occurred to the park from the July 2015 storm. The Loren Thompson Park project would involve a partnership with Ken Lueken, master gardener, to develop the design. City staff will assist in the on-going maintenance of the landscaped area. All city maintenance costs will come out of the general operations budget of the Parks and Trails Department. Mr. Peterson explained he has a budget of \$3,000 to be allocated over a three-year period, starting this fall. This type of garden will consist of native prairie grasses, flowering plants, chip pathways, hardscape retaining blocks, patio pavers, rest area benches and interpretive signage. The total estimated project cost is \$5,420. Mr. Peterson explained he would be looking for matching grants to cover the project overage cost. Mr. Lueken explained the garden will become a certified butterfly garden and will be eligible for federal funding. The council questioned if the garden would be located too close to the playground. Mr. Peterson explained the location of the garden should not affect the playground area. Mr. Lueken explained there are 400 types in of bees in Minnesota and 200 types of bees in our area. Only two types of bees in our area are known to attack. Mayor Olson thanked the presenter's for their work.

2017 GOVERNMENTAL FUND BUDGET, CONTINUTATION INCLUDING 2017 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek provided an update from the August 30, 2016 budget work session on tax information. Typically, each year the City compares the two most recent spring the abstracts prepared by Crow Wing County. Residential homestead and non-homestead total estimated market value is \$517 million versus \$490 million last year, 5.5% increase from the previous year. The shifting of the tax burden from homestead properties to commercial and industrial may be starting to occur. The overall increase of estimated market value after netting out new construction is 6.41% compared to 4.57% last year. The proposed budget increase is \$74,200 or 1.26% from the 2016 levy. The exact tax rate will not be known until later this year when tax

capacity figures are received. There is about \$98,000 of new revenue that could be generated if the tax rate remained roughly the same. Council Member Holman explained the council would need to consider the capital improvements plan very closely due to staff workloads. Community Development Director Doty explained the pedestrian budget study has been funded in the current budget. The Council asked staff to move forward with soliciting requests for proposals for the pedestrian bridge study.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel Olson
Mayor

Kelly Steele
Assistant City Administrator