

BAXTER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Work Session
December 1, 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: City Administrator Gordon Heitke, Community Development Director Josh Doty, Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele, Public Works Director Trevor Walter, Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek, and Chief of Police Jim Exsted

Federal Railroad Administration Train Horn Regulations

City Administrator Heitke explained at a recent City Council meeting, a resident expressed concerns about the sound level of the train horns and the impact it has on their home environment and their pets. The council directed staff to undertake research on horn use and sound levels. Staff questioned if the City has the ability to enforce the regulations. The two issues with the train horns are the sound level of the horn and the length of time the horn is sounded. Chief Exsted explained if it is the Council's expectation for the city to enforce, then the city needs to prove the railroads calibration is wrong and the city does not have the equipment to do so. The city also has to stop the train. Chief Exsted explained he would have to review how to charge out a federal statute. To summarize, Chief Exsted explained it would be very difficult to enforce the noise component, as the city would have to prove the standard the railroad established.

The Council discussed moving forward with exploring silent crossings. Public Works Director Walter explained it will cost over \$1million to update all railroad crossings and the improvement is not included in the five-year capital improvements plan. City Administrator Heitke explained the city would need an estimated cost to upgrade crossings without initiating a large study. City Administrator Heitke explained the silent crossings no longer have to include the city of Brainerd's participation. Staff will review the cost and bring back for council discussion.

Professional Services

City Administrator Heitke explained in 2010, the City Council adopted a "Policy for Requests for Proposals for Professional Services". The purpose of the policy is to either periodically or when certain thresholds are met, request proposals from multiple sources to ensure the City is receiving the best value in professional services. Proposals are normally to be sought for projects exceeding \$15,000 in cost. Last January, staff provided a list of current and planned projects which involved

professional service consultants. The Council wanted to be sure that the Request for Proposals (RFP) Policy for the procurement of professional services would be applied to projects per the intent of the policy. Staff recently fielded a council member question regarding the staff and commission recommendations for the hiring of professional services.

This is an opportune time to review the professional services, which will be needed for projects in 2016, and have a common understanding for which projects and services staff will solicit proposals from multiple sources. Public Works Director Walter reviewed the list of projects being worked on for 2016 that will require professional services.

City Administrator Heitke explained he previously communicated an RFP would be completed on the Excelsior Drive intersection improvement project due to the feasibility report anticipated to exceed the \$15,000 threshold. WSN is proposing to complete the feasibility report for less than the RFP threshold amount. Public Works Director Walter explained WSN could complete the feasibility study for less because they have completed work in the project area. Public Works Director Walter further explained this work was not for private property owners. Public Works Director Walter explained the proposed feasibility study is only for the Excelsior Drive intersection, just east for Forest Drive to TH 371 and from the soccer field just north of Cash Wise Liquor. The Council discussed if the feasibility report should also contain the remaining portion of Excelsior Drive to Inglewood Drive. Public Works Director Walter explained the section of Excelsior Drive just west of Forest Drive to Inglewood Drive is scheduled for a full depth reclamation and should be included with the other full depth reclamation projects, not the Excelsior Drive intersection project.

MOTION by Council Member Holman, seconded by Council Member Barrows to recess the work session at 6:55 p.m. and to resume following the completion of the regular meeting. Motion carries unanimously.

The Council resumed the work session at 7:21 p.m.

Public Works Director Walter explained the environmental review, due to the superfund site, for the Cypress project can be separated from the street portion of the project. The Council discussed the work SEH has completed over the last ten years on the Cypress project.

Public Works Director Walter explained he experienced issues with the chip sealing company exceeding the bid amount. For future chip sealing projects, the contract terms will be drafted with stronger regulations.

The Council discussed the conflict caused by engineering firms who work for both the city and a private party. Staff has the ability to ask engineering firms for AutoCAD drawings through language in the contract. Public Works Director Walter explained the city does add this language to our contracts. The Council discussed if an engineering firm receives work from the City, the firm should not secure work with a private property owner related to the city project. Public Works Director Walter explained IT/GIS Director DeBoer has stated the city does not have the storage capacity for the AutoCAD drawings.

2016-2020 Capital Improvements Plan Update

Finance Director Vacinek explained the 2016-2020 Five Year Capital Improvements Plan (“CIP”) was updated from the October 21, 2015 council meeting to account for the revised estimated figures of the 2016 Fairview Road and Trail Improvements obtained from the November 11, 2015 feasibility study. In addition, the \$250,000 estimated project cost for the OK Park pavilion included in the 2016 Budget was added to the CIP for 2016. The cost of an emergency generator equipment in the sewer fund was revised from an original estimate of \$33,000 to \$45,000.

The additional contributions for the Fairview Road and Trail Improvements can be accommodated in the City’s future levy and sales tax capacity; however, the higher estimated project cost will require additional bonding. The additional financing will utilize almost all of the remaining debt service levy capacity for the next six years if the current debt service levy is to be maintained, based upon the estimated costs of the other projects identified in the CIP.

The Council asked staff to put the CIP on the City’s website in a format easy to navigate.

2016 County Dellwood Drive Improvement Project update

City Administrator Heitke explained the City entered into an agreement to collaborate with Crow Wing County to seek funding for Dellwood Drive. In addition to the City and Crow Wing County, the city of Brainerd is also involved with the project due to 25% of the project being within their city limits. The City has 50% of the project area and the County has 25%. The County is working to clear trees in the project area over the winter. Crow Wing County will continue working on the project engineering. The council will consider an annexation agreement in the future, if the project is handled the same way and the Inglewood Drive project was handled. Staff will report back to the council as the project progresses.

Adjournment

MOTION by Council Member Barrows, seconded by Council Member Nystrom to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. Motion carries unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel Olson
Mayor

Kelly Steele
Assistant City Administrator/Clerk