

Public Works Committee
Tuesday, February 17, 2015 @ 6:00 PM
Hall of Fame Room @ City Hall – 381 E Main St

Members Present: Alderpersons Ron Christianson, Tom Majewski, Tom Selsor, Tim Swadley and Mayor Donna Olson

Absent & Excused:

Staff: Planning & Development Director Rodney Scheel, Street Superintendent Karl Manthe, Street Foreman Rick Gullickson and Street Department Secretary Vickie Erdahl

Guests: Marlene Widra, Stephen Lawrence, Kevan Bard, Lisa Schimelpfenig, Cindy McGlynn, John Reimer, and Kevin Connors

Call to Order:

1) **Communications:** *Manthe* stated that there will be an Open House for the Construction Projects on Tuesday, March 3, 2015 @ 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers. Discussion/questions from 6-7 PM will be for Washington St and 7-8 PM will be for the South Alley Project.

2) **Activity Reports:** (Manthe reported).

- Crews were out a few times with our plowing & salting operations. The snow event on February 1st dumped 8.2 inches of snow and the winds caused some pretty deep drifts on many streets adding additional work to the cleanup efforts. Crews have been kept busy since that snow event with hauling snow from Cul-du-sacs, parking lots, and dead-end streets.
- Crews also spent most of January working on major tree trimming throughout entire city. Crews trim completely around the entire tree to prevent branches hanging over street from getting damaged from trucks and equipment and over the sidewalk to prevent low hanging branches from hitting pedestrians. Crews will continue trimming trees while weather allows.
- Fleet Maintenance Manager is keeping all winter equipment in working condition. Plowing can be rough on snow removal equipment, especially when the frost in the streets moves manholes and valve boxes. Fleet Manager is also performing preventive maintenance and repairs on city wide fleet and working on equipment specifications for new purchases for this year.
- Crews took some time to clean up at the Listol property. Staff is looking into options to shut off water service to the house so we can set the temperature in house at a lower setting.
- The Parks Department has been busy with sidewalk cleanup after snow and ice events, and flooding ice rink at Norse Park.
- Other routine tasks completed during last month include; dumping trash barrels downtown, cleaning fleet and garage, monitor water levels at Fourth Street Dam, garage safety inspections (fire extinguishers, eye wash stations, exit lights, fall protection).

Old Business:

NONE

New Business:

3) **Approve January 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Selsor seconded by Swadley to approve minutes. Motion carried 5-0. (Mayor voted yes)

4) **Discussions / Options on Water Levels at Stoughton Fourth Street Dam – Yahara River:** *Manthe* invited Kevin Connors from the Dane County Land & Water Resources to attend the Public Works Meeting to provide information on how the water levels are managed.

Mr. Connors displayed a map to show the chain of lakes and how the water flows through the lakes and down to Stoughton and provided some history and facts.

In 1979 water level orders were put in the state constitution to guide the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to follow which included a six inch operating range and a time frame when maximum and minimum water levels need to be obtained. This order is also what Stoughton staff uses to follow DNR rules for maintaining water levels on the Yahara River. *Connors* stated that from Lake Waubesa to Lake Kegonsa the grade only drops 18 inches in a four mile stretch which is a challenge in getting the water to Stoughton which can easily handle larger water flows from up stream.

Dane County has updated the dams and use remote control to control water levels. Staff is constantly monitoring them and this allows them to be more effective and have quicker response time to situations that arise. *Mr. Reimer* stated that changes in recent years in the type of rain events has made the DNR develop different strategies to handle the situations . more rain falls in a shorter amount of time.

A water level management guide has been developed and is available at the DNR website (www.infosyahara.org). Controlling the water levels is still a work in progress especially for the area of La Follette Park in Stoughton and the water flow to the Yahara River through Stoughton.

Majewski stated that the city was considering a river bank restoration and asked what if there was no dam . would it help with erosion. *Majewski* asked what would happen if the dam gates were left wide open year round and not follow DNR orders. *Connors* replied that it would be the cities prerogative on how they handled the situation and water flows through the dam. The situation would depend on how the community uses the river for recreational activities.

5) **Request to Hold a Downtown Farmers Market on the first Saturday Morning (10:00 am – 12 Noon) of each month (May-September):** *Marlene Widra* had made this request for the market to the Public Works Committee as the group would be using public property and wanted to know what needs to happen in order for the Farmers Market to be held on the first Saturday of the month.. The groups tentative start date would be in June of 2015.

Stephen Lawrence spoke on behalf the group. He asked if the City was interested in the partnership and would it be possible to block off a street instead of being on the sidewalks or provide electricity. The group is also looking into some private properties and also exploring having the Farmers Market every Saturday morning.

Lawrence stated the group is in the process of preparing a 501C 4 (tax exempt) and have talked with numerous vendors in a 10-12 mile radius of Stoughton which have shown interest in being involved. Also stating that someone would talk with the Farmers Market that is currently being held on Friday AMs in the parking lot of Dollar General and make them aware of a new farmers market and what they are seeking.

Kevan Bard spoke regarding what the market group was working on: finding vendors to sell local grown products, rules / policies are being developed; small nominal fees are being looked at and would like one city staff to sit on the board. *Bard* would like this event to bring more foot traffic to the downtown and each year add more vendors.

Widra stated that the Yahara Co-op supports the Farmers Market to come to the downtown.

Gullickson suggested that the market be held on Thursday evenings to draw from the crowd that attends the concerts at the gazebo in Rotary Park.

City staff will provide the group with a street closing permit and a temporary use permit for the groups review. They will be attending the March meeting with more information.

- 6) **Review City of Stoughton Building Use Policy:** This issue was discussed at a staff meeting in November 2014 and warranted further discussion as numerous concerns were expressed at that time and it was decided that the policy needed to be reviewed to address the issues.

McGlynn stated that she had brought the issue to the Leadership Team with concerns at the Senior Center and other buildings which she noticed a lot of inconsistencies on how things were handled . such as: Security of /in the buildings, no city staff on site, keys being exchanged from the original designee, monitoring use of equipment, area clean up, etc. Each building comes with its own set of concerns.

Swadley suggested checking with the school district. They recently went through the process of building usage due to the same concerns the city is now expressing and see how they resolved the issues.

Mayor Olson stated that taxpayers feel they should be able to use the buildings as they are paying taxes to support them and should not have to pay a fee. There are also groups who think they should be exempt in general.

A question was asked whether there had been a conversation with CVMIC and how they advised us to handle the situation. They stated we should do what we can to protect ourselves.

More meetings will be held to discuss the concerns and the policy will be discussed at the next Public Works meeting in March.

- 7) **Coopers Causeway Resolution:** *Manthe* stated that Ridgeway St was changed to Coopers Causeway in 2005; however, it was not recorded by Dane County Land Information. This resolution will change the name officially.

Motion by Swadley, seconded by Selsor to recommend to Common Council to approve the official name change of Ridgeway St to Coopers Causeway (R-24-2015). Motion carried 5-0 (with Mayor voting yes).

- 8) **Future Agenda Items:** Farmers Market, Building Use Policy, DOT . Kettle West

Moved by Selsor seconded by Swadley to adjourn meeting at 7:40 pm. Motion carried 5-0. Respectfully submitted by Vickie Erdahl, Admin. Asst. 2/18/15