

Public Works Committee
Tuesday, March 15, 2016 @ 6:00 PM
Hall of Fame Room – 381 E Main St.

Members Present: Alderpersons Tom Majewski, Paul Lawrence, Tom Selsor and Mayor Olson

Absent: Sid Boersma

Staff: Street Superintendent Karl Manthe, Planning Director Rodney Scheel and Vickie Erdahl

Guests: Stoughton Utilities Director Robert Kardasz and Parks and Recreation Director Tom Lynch

Call to Order: *Majewski* called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

- 1) **Communications:** *Manthe* stated that he had done a press release to announce that the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was found in the northwest corner of Stoughton. After further inspection the arborist found that it is all over the city and parks.

Currently the arborist is identifying the trees and their sizes to produce a cost analysis to remove the trees, stumps and replace in order to develop a plan to show the fiscal impact it will have on the city.

In the last two years, 144 smaller trees have been treated. However there is another disease, ash yellows, that is being monitored and may affect even the treated trees.

When discussed with the Mayor a tentative approach was to remove the hazard trees first, plant some smaller trees which grower faster and have some size before all the trees are removed.

Also discussed was to have a component for city resident to work with the contractors hired by the city for removal of private trees on their properties.

Selsor stated that perhaps staggering the removal of trees so that entire areas aren't bare.

- 2) **Activity Reports:** *Manthe* reported that crews have been removing trees in construction areas, Sweepers are already out cleaning up debris from winter and the new trash & recycle cans have been put out downtown, however, there has already been an issue with tenants using the containers for personal trash disposal.

- Crews had a couple snow events to take care of with plowing and salting streets, and cleaning sidewalks.
- Crews continued safety pruning, trimming branches hanging over streets and sidewalks and removing parkrow trees on streets scheduled for reconstruction.
- With the mild weather, potholes have started popping up. Crews have been out patching streets with cold patch throughout the city. The new "hotbox" unit for heating the asphalt keeps the asphalt more workable during cold days.
- Administrative Assistant is busy keeping inventories current for cemetery, trees and signs, processing invoices, e-waste sales, computerizing employee timesheets, and addressing customer inquiries.
- Fleet Maintenance Manager continues to maintain city wide fleet to make sure it is available for daily tasks. Fleet Manager has kept us up and running with ours and all city department needs.
- Crews started placing out new trash receptacles containers along Main Street. The new receptacles containers will separate recycling and refuse. We have been experiencing a lot of additional trash being placed in current trash receptacles from apartments and businesses that should have their own private arrangements.
- Crews cleaned, washed and waxed trucks and equipment during the month.

- Crews assisted with setup and takedown of elections. Crews got a late start to the setup due to a morning snow event.
- The Parks Department has been working on trimming trees/underbrush along trail system, purchasing new equipment, and cleaning city owned sidewalks during snow events.
- Other routine tasks completed during the month include; dumping trash barrels downtown and cemeteries, cleaning fleet and garage, check traffic signals, monitor water levels at Fourth Street Dam, garage safety inspections (fire extinguishers, eye wash stations, exit lights, fall protection).

Old Business:

3) Recommendation to Paint Both Tennis & Pickleball Lines at Veterans Park Court:

Manthe stated that after much discussion, the recommendation was to paint both tennis and pickleball lines on the Veterans Park Tennis Court in the spring and monitor the usage with a security camera. The camera could also aid in the decision about the height of the fencing.

Parks and Recreation Director Lynch stated that he had received a grant from the Bryant Foundation to repair the tennis court. Mr. Lynch also stated that pickleball will be louder and that there was a basketball court near Mandt Park that could be converted as it is infrequently used and away from any houses that would be susceptible to the noise.

Selsor suggested painting only pickleball lines and monitor for usage. If it was only a pickleball court, this would alleviate the safety concern of balls in the road and in the neighbor's yard to the north of the park. The lot lines of this property were measured and actually the owners were encroaching onto the park property.

Staff was directed to write a letter to the neighboring property (Sylvia Lawrence) making her aware of the decision to paint the court for pickleball after her attending meetings and voicing concerns.

Motion by Lawrence, seconded by Selsor to direct staff to paint the court as a dedicated pickleball court provided that the Bryant Foundation Grant money was not specific to be used only for a tennis court. Motion carried 3-0.

4) Downtown Snow Removal Discussion: *Manthe* stated that the snow plowing procedure has been changed for the downtown area where the snow would be kept away from the ramps. A letter will go out each year, with instructions, to the business owners on how to dispose of their snow. Public Works and Public Safety will be having a joint meeting this fall and invite the business owners to explain the new procedure and keep the lines of communication open.

5) Review Street Tree Ordinance 10-2: At the February meeting *Scheel* had presented the committee with multiple questions/suggestions that he felt needed to be clarified or defined better in order for him to draft the changes to the ordinance. The Tree Commission responded to with input to *Scheel's* questions as part of the discussion. Some situations questioned were - when buildings are removed and made into a parking lot, does just a change of business qualify for a tree planting or actual change of ownership were examples the examples stated. An observer asked if just spot replacements were done or added, wouldn't it make the street look choppy?

Conclusion: *Scheel* will begin drafting the ordinance with the following parameters' to start

- 1) is sent to the Planning Dept. to consider or review, 2) downtown will be exempt (area will be defined), 3) development of a site and 4) parking lots.

The new draft will be presented at the April meeting.

New Business:

- 6) **Approve February 16, 2016 Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Lawrence seconded by Selsor to approve minutes. Motion carried 4-0 (with Mayor voting yes).

- 7) **Discussion on Moving Overhead Utilities to Underground during Street Construction Projects:** *Utilities Director Bob Kardasz* spoke to the committee regarding the involvement of the Wisconsin Public Service Commission which reviews and grants permission to do projects such as moving utility lines underground. Costs for these types of projects are quite high even when starting with an area that is undeveloped. Kardasz also demonstrated what needed to be done to move lines underground when doing street reconstruction using Van Buren Street as an example as this street is under major reconstruction this year. There is limited public space to bury the wires and also many obstacles under the surface.

Stoughton Utilities do try to place some wires underground usually in the utility easements in the back yards of home but stated this isn't always an option as the homeowner would cover the cost and it's hard to get permission to be on private property. Kardasz stated that the failure rate with each method is about the same and he prefers above ground because of the accessibility to get to and repair the wires.

Tree trimming was discussed as members of the Public Work Comm. stated that the trees look horrible because having to be trimmed away from the wires which are one of the reasons this issue was placed on the agenda.

- 8) **Annual Municipal Stormwater Report:** *Scheel* had provided the committee with a link to review the annual stormwater report. Currently the City of Stoughton is meeting the 40% that is required for phosphorus. The city is doing more regional such as detention ponds which aid in the filtering of water and sediments. *Manthe* provided the stormwater numbers from the street department activities that aid in meeting the cities requirements.

- 9) **Discussion on Jefferson Street Pedestrian Bridge (Peteville):** *Majewski* asked for this issue to be brought to the fore front as the bridge still needs more work. *Manthe* provided the bridge inspection report from 2014 noting that it will be inspected again this year.

Manthe also stated that past discussions for the bridge included – 1) building a bridge to handle both vehicle & pedestrian traffic which would allow an additional entrance into the area, 2) Building a cover over the existing wooden bridge, 3) changing it to a steel structure – similar to the bridge @ Coopers Causeway. To do the suggested changes listed under 1 and 3, the costs would be substantial – potentially a million dollars.

Majewski stated changing the bridge may not be well accepted as this is an historical bridge and is unique. He would like to bring a proposal to Council for a fix as the bridge will not get better without some type of repair. A grant could be pursued and questions were asked about if there were any city easements by the bridge. At some point in the past the easements were given to the property owners. The Mayor stated the property owners could be approached to see if they would be interested in giving the easements back to the city and that you don't know the answer until you ask.

Majewski asked if a list of grants or funding options could be researched and be brought to the next meeting.

- 10) **Charging for street openings to Utilities:** *Majewski* was inquiring how these fees were handled. After a short discussion on how costs were divided among the streets, stormwater

and utilities for sewer & water from the construction company Mr. Majewski was satisfied with how the fees were processed.

11) **Future Agenda Items:** Street Ord. 10-2, Pedestrian Bridge

Moved by Lawrence, seconded by Selsor to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm. Motion carried 3-0. Respectfully submitted by Vickie Erdahl Administrative Assistant – 3/18/2016