

***REGULAR ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 7, 2023
MINUTES***

The Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Acting Mayor Jamie Barthel, March 7, 2023, 7:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Acting Mayor Jamie Barthel and Ted Butler

Councilmembers absent: Mayor Shari Bukkila, Rick Engelhardt, Randy Nelson

Also present: City Administrator, Jim Dickinson
Director of Public Works/City Engineer, David Berkowitz
Others

A quorum of Councilmembers was not present. No official business could be voted on.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RESIDENT FORUM

No one came forward to address the Council.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Due to the lack of a quorum, Acting Mayor Barthel announced they would move right to Discussion, Item 5.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 21, 2023, Regular Meeting

Due to the lack of a quorum, this item will be considered by the City Council at its March 21, 2023, meeting.

CONSENT ITEMS

Item 2 Approve Payment of Claims

Item 3 Award Bid/22-43/Lift Station #1 Piping Improvement & Valve Vault Addition

Item 4 Approve Water Enterprise Fund Budget Adjustment/Well #6 Rehab

Due to the lack of a quorum, these items will be considered by the City Council at its March 21, 2023, meeting.

HOLD PUBLIC HEARING/ORDER PLANS & SPECS/23-11A THROUGH 23-11L/23-15/PRAIRIE RD. NW & 23-16/ANDOVER BLVD. NW/2023 MILL & OVERLAY

The City Council is requested to hold a public hearing and order plans and specifications for Projects 23-11A through 23-11L, 23-15 Prairie Road NW and 23-16 Andover Boulevard NW for the 2023 mill and overlay project. Director of Public Works/City Engineer David Berkowitz reviewed the information with the Council. He shared the City is planning to complete 17 miles of roadway work, with 14 locations in the City needing mill and overlay. The City will also be replacing damaged curbs. The estimated total cost is just under \$2.9 million. He shared more detailed cost estimates and project descriptions for specific areas within the City. Mr. Berkowitz explained that mill and overlay projects involve a contractor grinding down the first layer of blacktop and overlaying a new surface over the top. Roads should receive mill and overlay work every 15-22 years, and many roads being prioritized for work this year are 19-22 years old. The City hopes to preserve its existing roads so they will not need to be fully replaced. The plan is for construction to begin in mid-June and end in late-August or early-September, 2023. He explained the process for paying assessments after the project is complete, then opened the discussion to questions.

Councilmember Butler asked Mr. Berkowitz to elaborate on his comment that the City does not sealcoat anymore. Mr. Berkowitz shared he has worked in the City for almost 27 years. Sealcoating back in the day worked well and stayed on the pavement for many years. Over the past 15 years there have been issues with sealcoating. Something between the bind in the sealcoat and the oil in the existing pavement creates shallow potholes and roads fall apart quickly. He explained that no one has figured out how to fix the issue so the City stopped sealcoating. The mill and overlay process is a good alternative since it takes care of surface issues and provides structural support to roads.

Acting Mayor Barthel asked if the City can assess the School District for their portion of the street. Mr. Berkowitz responded saying yes. Acting Mayor Barthel asked if it is just federal buildings that can't be assessed, mentioning the post office, Mr. Berkowitz replied yes. He also asked if school, County, and State property can be assessed to which Mr. Berkowitz replied yes.

Mr. Berkowitz explained the City's assessment process for sections of pavement that are frequently used. If a road has extra depth or width to accommodate heavy traffic, the City covers that extra portion so residents who live on busier roads aren't paying more than residents who live on quieter streets.

Councilmember Butler asked how long the City's assessment process has been in place.

Mr. Berkowitz shared in 2003 the City was not assessing for road projects but they realized it would not be sustainable from a funding standpoint. In 2006, at the direction of the City Council,

the assessment manual was amended. The City added a section called “Roadway Reconstruction and Overlay Construction Assessment Policy” for street reconstruction projects. It did not include overlays. In 2015, the City amended it to add overlays with assessments covering 25% of the total project cost.

Acting Mayor Barthel opened the discussion to public comments and questions, reminding the public that since there is no quorum, it is not an official hearing but all comments will still be recorded. Residents will have to wait for Council comments and feedback until the March 21, 2023 meeting.

Michael Ries, 14279 Prairie Road NW, agreed there is a lot of damage on Prairie Road, but he would argue full reconstruction of that road is required. There is rutting due to people speeding and many heavy vehicles traveling on that road. There are also many new housing developments going in, adding traffic to the road. He would prefer not to give money toward the mill and overlay project because he believes the road will crack again in 1 or 2 years.

Scott Foyt, 14424 Prairie Road, agreed with Mr. Ries’s comments about the misuse of the road, noting there are only ten driveways/residents who will be assessed for the work on Prairie Road but nearby developments have driveways that face inner roads, so they are being assessed for those. He doesn’t believe the assessment policy is fair, since some communities are paying more money than others to maintain their roads. He hopes the City staff can come up with an alternative plan. He asked about a specific road wondering if it is a County or City road, from Hanson Boulevard to Crosstown Boulevard. Mr. Berkowitz explained it is a City street from Hanson Boulevard to 161st Avenue, which was a turnback by the County. Residents are responsible to pay for it and have it reconstructed. Mr. Foyt shared that thousands of cars use that road but only some residents have to pay for it. He is fine with paying his fair share, the average of what everyone else is paying, but he doesn’t want to put up with traffic and pay more for reconstruction.

Jean Carlstrom, 14941 Butternut Street NW, suggested the City consider limiting the number of trash haulers or assigning haulers to certain locations to save roads from heavy weight. Her neighborhood has 4 haulers, involving 8 trucks using the same road. She shared a comment from her neighbor who said last time the road was done, it wasn’t done well. Ms. Carlstrom also suggested the City add a map with a key labeling neighborhoods when the City is presenting information about where projects will be done, so residents have a clearer picture of what they are looking at.

Brian Holbrook, 15612 Hummingbird Street NW, shared a comment regarding traffic. The road near his house is a major road for a neighborhood nearby and school buses. He suggested considering beefing up the road so it will take longer to wear down.

Doug Meister, 541 Andover Boulevard, asked if there has been a thought of making Prairie Road more of a thoroughfare instead of a two-lane road since there has been so much traffic and new houses are going in nearby. He suggested tearing out the current road and redoing it with turn

lanes, possibly 4 lanes, depending on whether the City has appropriate easements.

Scott Foyt, 14424 Prairie Road, asked about the estimated total cost of the project, the City's portion, and the assessment portion. He also asked how the City arrived at the assessment portion.

Mr. Berkowitz shared the statements made were recorded and will be taken into consideration. He then addressed Mr. Meister's question about improving Prairie Road to a larger section. He explained that for the new development going in, a traffic study was done. As of 2018 the ADT on that northern section of the road is 3,800 cars. To go from a two-lane undivided highway to a divided highway you need 10,000+ cars, so the current road structure is meeting the current needs. But intersection improvements are a good point, and they need to look at Prairie Road and Andover Boulevard so the City will keep an eye on it.

Mr. Berkowitz explained the City has been working toward improvements adding roundabouts in certain areas that are currently a problem. Anoka County has been aggressive with adding roundabouts as well. The City knows there are intersection challenges and are working on securing funding.

Mr. Berkowitz addressed Mr. Foyt's question about assessments, explaining the City identifies construction and design costs, then breaks the numbers down into a front footage basis, looking at what the road is costing per front foot. If you are on one side of the road you pay for that portion. For Prairie Road specifically, the 10 properties along that road are paying 6.7% of the total project. Rear and side yards don't get assessed, the City covers those portions.

Mr. Berkowitz addressed Mr. Ries's comment on the roadway condition of Prairie Road, saying the City can take another look if there are major concerns. The City relies on its Public Works personnel and staff Engineers to assess road conditions. He stated that a total reconstruction of a road is three times more expensive, the City can't afford a total reconstruction at this time, and a mill and overlay will help for now. He explained the City tries to do the best they can with the funds they have. If there are rutting issues, those would need to be fixed before overlay is done.

City Administrator Dickinson shared the City has looked at limiting the number of trash haulers, but it is a very controversial topic. There is an expensive amortization process for cities that wish to limit their number of haulers. He explained that haulers have protection in place put through at the legislative level.

Acting Mayor Barthel asked if the City can ask the County to keep an eye on Prairie Road and stop violators who are speeding or driving larger than allowed vehicles on the road during road restrictions.

Mr. Berkowitz clarified Mr. Ries's comment was that there are heavy cars in general using the road all the time, not just during road restrictions. But yes, the City can work with the Sheriff's Department on that, as road restrictions go into effect Friday. He explained that during regular times, it's difficult to restrict who can use the road since it is a public street.

Acting Mayor Barthel shared that the Sheriff's office could at least monitor during road restrictions and monitor speed.

Mr. Dickinson thanked everyone who showed up and for the discussion. He ensured residents that tonight's conversation would be recorded like any minutes for a regular City Council meeting. The minutes won't be official minutes but the discussion will be added to a Staff report and seen before the next Council meeting. He noted that even though there was no quorum tonight, the City staff and City Council wanted to hold the meeting anyway to give everyone an opportunity to speak.

Mr. Berkowitz shared he appreciated the comments. He addressed Ms. Carlstrom's suggestion about including maps with the letters informing residents of projects and explained that the letters going out tomorrow morning won't have a map since the letters are ready to be sent. But the City will include maps with future letters and add them to the website so information is more clear.

Councilmember Butler and Acting Mayor Barthel thanked everyone for coming and apologized again for the lack of a quorum.

Due to the lack of a quorum, this item will not be officially considered by the City Council until its March 21, 2023, meeting.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

None

MAYOR/COUNCIL INPUT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Acting Mayor Barthel adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Haas, Recording Secretary

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