



MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
November 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 pm.

Present: Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Jahn Dyvik, Mike Feldmann, and Gina Joyce

Staff Present: City Administrator: Scott Weske; and Public Works Director: Sean Diercks

Absent: Council: Deirdre Kvale

APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Joyce, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: all.

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

No one was in attendance to address the City Council during Open Correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Presentation by the Long Lake Garden Club

Anita Secord, Long Lake Garden Club, reviewed the mission of the Club, their membership, and highlighted various projects they had worked on around the City such as the Brown Road City monument sign. She outlined the needs they see for the lakeside City monument sign and the difficulty in mowing and keeping the area weeded because of the incline at that location. The Club would like to ask the City do something about the incline and possibly have a landscaping company come in to terrace and level it off a bit.

Council member Dyvik questioned whether the area could be terraced without having to remove any of the trees.

Secord believed that it could be terraced without affecting the trees.

Public Works Director Diercks commented that he would propose making the area smaller and noted that there are a lot of utilities in the area that should remain undisturbed. He would suggest the landscaped area be brought down to something more easily manageable. He added that the work the Long Lake Garden Club has been able to do looks great.

Secord reiterated her request for the City to do something about the incline at the lakeside monument.

Mayor Miner recalled that Council member Dyvik had been part of the original design meetings and asked if the issue had ever come up.

Council member Dyvik replied that it had not, but he was not sure if they were envisioning the backside looking like it does. He agreed with the suggestion made by Public Works Director Diercks to let that come forward a bit and focus on a smaller area. He observed that he loves the trees as a backdrop to the monument.

Council member Feldmann asked how hard it would be to bring the mulch down.

Secord suggested that they could put in something like a lilac bush.

Diercks clarified that his idea was to pull up the existing edging and bring down the landscaped area to a more manageable section, rake the mulch out or let it grow up, throw some seed in, and see what takes.

Council member Dyvik mentioned the importance of putting down landscape fabric in order to help keep the weeds down.

Diercks pointed out the need for caution because the area is in County right-of-way and not the City's, but noted that he suspects they won't actually say anything.

Council member Dyvik agreed, observing that the Council has left town now and things have not happened in the way they had originally sold the plans to the City.

Diercks suggested planting a native prairie mix like they had done at Wurzer Trail.

Secord recommended that the City get a landscaper to come in and give them some ideas and opinions on what would work well in the space, as the area is a gateway into the City and is very visible.

Council and staff discussed some of their personal plants that could be donated for future plantings.

Secord continued reviewing the other projects the LLGC has worked on including around Fire Station 1 and the Martha Lane/Symes Street path. She noted that one of their ideas was possible wreaths for the monument signs.

Council member Dyvik asked where the wreaths would be placed on the monuments and expressed concern about them covering the lettering on the signs.

Secord gave a few possible locations for placement of wreaths on the monuments and stated that she could obtain pricing if the Council was interested.

Mayor Miner inquired whether there was anything left in the budget for 2023 for purchasing wreaths for the monument signs.

Diercks suggested that the Council budget for this expense in 2024. Public Works may already have some garland that could be placed on the monuments for this year.

Weske noted that he knows there are a lot of holiday décor items packed in boxes in storage and agreed that there may be some things that are still in good shape that could be repurposed for use in this manner.

Council members directed staff to try to piece together some holiday décor for the monument signs from what they already have in storage.

Secord reported that plans to host the Long Lake Christmas Home Decorating Contest once again are underway and she is looking for one more contest judge. The LLGC would also like the Council to consider various club promotion opportunities such as a pamphlet, a tab on the City's website and Facebook page, or signs that show the plantings are maintained by the Long Lake Garden Club. She was also wondering about the idea of the Club having a float in the Corn Days Parade. She reviewed various supply needs the club has and explained that one of her big goals is to get a shed with a combination lock rather than a key so everybody would be able to have access when needed.

Diercks added that staff had considered the possibility of using the warming house for this purpose.

Mayor Miner recalled that the building has a key lock rather than a combination and asked if that may be able to be changed out.

Diercks responded that City Clerk Moeller would have to make that determination because she was 'keeper of the key' for that building.

Mayor Miner asked City Administrator Weske to have a conversation with City Clerk Moeller and see if they can figure out a solution that will work for the Garden Club.

Secord shared a project the LLGC had undertaken at the request of the Woodlands and reviewed some opportunities they have recognized for future projects throughout the City. She added that the City may be able to advertise for a volunteer seasonal Public Works 'employee' to assist with watering on the weekends, similar to what is done to become a Police Reservist. She reflected on the importance of watering.

Mayor Miner asked if the Public Works crew enjoyed the watering duties or if they were opposed to coming in on weekends to take care of the watering.

Diercks explained that they are on-call anyway.

Secord noted that they would not have to pay anything if watering was handled by a volunteer.

Diercks pointed out that Wayzata Boulevard W can be a very busy street and he expressed concern about a volunteer getting killed while they were watering plants.

Secord suggested that the Long Lake Chamber of Commerce with landlords and business owners could help with beautification efforts for the downtown areas. She recommended having a business holiday decorating contest with a traveling trophy and ribbon. She stated that she would like to find a way to create some Long Lake pride. She noted that another idea would be to partner with the Boy Scouts for various service or Eagle Scout projects. She shared ideas she had for possible fundraising or donation programs, including something like a mural competition. She noted that there are grants available for this type of work, but suggested that the City may want to hire a grant writer to assist in that process. She reported that overall the LLGC members had put in a total of 113.75 volunteer hours in 2023, not including her administrative time. She shared the idea of having a big community garden with picnic tables but recognized that would be a large undertaking for some time in the future.

Mayor Miner thanked the members of the Long Lake Garden Club, and expressed appreciation to Ms. Secord for her work with the Garden Club and for the City.

Secord assured the Council that she wanted to serve the City and continue to help Public Works Director Diercks and his team however she can.

OTHER BUSINESS

Budget Progress Update – Council member Dyvik reflected that the City had been spending quite a bit of money during the second half of the year. While it has all been on really good things, he asked if the Council could receive a report on how they are doing with actual budget numbers before they approve the budget for next year. Weske replied that he could get updated budget information for the Council and noted that for 2024, there had been a \$1,000 increase planned into the Park budget for materials for the LLGC. Dyvik clarified that he was not specifically talking about the Park budget, but rather the budget overall because there have been a lot of unanticipated 2023 expenses.

Future Fire Services Open Forum – Council member Joyce asked if the Council should consider scheduling another public forum type meeting regarding the Fire Department situation in order to promote community awareness. Mayor Miner indicated that while there may not be enough information available right now to do so, the idea was a good seed to plant for the Council to think about for the future.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Weske
City Administrator