

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring Lake Park City Council Worksession was held on June 03, 2024 at the Able Park Building, 8200 Able Street NE, at 5:00 PM.

1. CALL TO ORDER

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Ken Wendling
Councilmember Barbara Goodboe-Bisschoff
Councilmember Lisa Dircks
Mayor Nelson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Councilmember April Moran

STAFF PRESENT

Administrator Daniel Buchholtz

OTHERS PRESENT

Erik Skogquist, Mary Wells, Chris Larson, Alex Guggenberger

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Anoka County Assessor's Office Presentation/Q&A (5:00pm)

Mr. Guggenberger stated that Anoka County is proposing to provide assessment services for Spring Lake Park starting in 2025. He said the county assessor's office is responsible for contracted assessment services in 12 of the 21 cities/townships in the county and has statutory oversight responsibilities countywide.

Mr. Guggenberger highlighted that Anoka County employs 17 full-time appraisal staff, which will be expanded to 18 in 2025. He provided a detailed monthly breakdown of assessment responsibilities, noting that the county assessor would handle key functions such as final sales ratio analysis, value notices, and sales verification, while local assessors would be responsible for tasks like informal reviews and new construction permit reviews.

Mr. Guggenberger stated that Anoka County is proposing a modified 3-year contract, effective January 1, 2025, and terminating on May 15, 2028, ensuring all parcels are viewed within the contract period, exceeding the statutory requirement of at least once every five years. He mentioned that this approach would ensure maximum equalization as quickly as possible. He said the proposed rates are consistent with other assessment service contracts held by Anoka County. He noted that the total proposed cost for assessment services is \$39,428, reflecting a 0.73% increase from Spring Lake Park's 2024 budgeted amount.

Mr. Guggenberger emphasized that Anoka County staff is dedicated solely to serving the residents and property owners of Spring Lake Park and Anoka County. He noted that the county

offers comparable parcel counts per assessor compared to competitors and is committed to providing the highest level of customer service.

Mr. Guggenberger stated that Anoka County's working hours are from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm, Monday to Friday, with before/after-hours appointments available in special circumstances. He said attendance at requested city meetings is included at no charge. He noted that advanced notice is given to property owners during quintile assessments.

Mr. Guggenberger concluded by mentioning that the proposal includes no-cost assessment services in 2024 to ensure a smooth transition between contracts.

Councilmembers asked questions of Mr. Guggenberger regarding the details of the proposal. The City Council thanked Mr. Guggenberger for his presentation.

B. Skogquist/Wells Presentation/Q&A

Erik Skogquist presented the proposal for contract assessing services to the City of Spring Lake Park. He began by introducing himself and his colleagues, Mary Wells and Chris Larson.

Mr. Skogquist explained that contracting assessors offers several advantages for the city. He emphasized their familiarity with the community, ensuring consistent staffing so that taxpayers and city staff see familiar faces. He said this consistency allows for tailored services that better reach and educate residents. He noted their extensive experience working collaboratively with cities and highlighted their ability to offer services at a lower cost compared to other options. He noted that their services are not confined to standard business hours, as they are available for after-hours appointments.

Mr. Skogquist detailed the basic services provided, which include in-person visits to properties to ensure data accuracy, conducting quintile reviews (assessing 20% of all properties annually), and evaluating new improvements. He said the team is committed to responding promptly to calls, emails, and texts from property owners, realtors, appraisers, and city and county staff. He stated they are experienced in negotiating tax court petitions to ensure the fairest property values at the lowest cost and handle all aspects of land splits, combinations, and eCRV/sales processing.

He continued by describing the setting of land values and final total values, updating data in county software, and fulfilling all reporting requirements mandated by the county and state. He noted that their services also include full representation at all levels of Board of Appeal and Equalization meetings, with the local level being the Open Book meeting.

Mary Wells highlighted the additional value-added services provided. She said the team's core values focus on education and customer service. She stated that they strive to explain processes in common language and provide informative articles for newsletters. She noted they also attend town hall or neighborhood meetings to maintain a presence in the community. She said services are localized and tailored specifically to Spring Lake Park, with communications

originating from the city rather than the county. She noted a further benefit of providing value and tax estimates for new development proposals.

Mr. Skogquist emphasized the strong working relationship they have maintained with Anoka County assessors for the past 15 years, built on mutual respect. He stated that the county supports local assessors and that all assessors have access to the same software and reports. He said they also work closely with the County Attorney on tax petitions.

Councilmembers asked questions of Mr. Skogquist and Ms. Wells regarding the details of the proposal. The City Council thanked them for their presentation.

C. Council Discussion of Proposals

Councilmembers discussed the merits of each proposal.

CONSENSUS of the City Council was to select the proposal from Mr. Skogquist and Ms. Wells and to direct staff to place the contract on the agenda for the next City Council meeting.

3. REPORT

No reports.

4. ADJOURN

Mayor Nelson declared the meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Robert Nelson, Mayor

Attest:

Daniel R. Buchholtz, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer