

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA  
St. Francis Area Schools District Office 4115 Ambassador Blvd. NW  
July 1, 2024  
5:00 p.m.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The City Council Work Session meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Joe Muehlbauer.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Joe Muehlbauer and Councilmembers Kevin Robinson, Crystal Kreklow, and Sarah Udvig.

Also present: City Administrator Kate Thunstrom, Deputy City Administrator/City Clerk Jenni Wida, Assistant City Attorney Dave Schaps (Barna, Guzy & Steffen), and Public Works Director Paul Carpenter.

**3. AGENDA ITEMS**

**A. 23211 Pederson Resident Utility Discussion**

Public Works Director Carpenter reviewed the Staff report in regard to a resident's request for water utility, as their current well is failing at 23211 Pederson Drive. He reviewed the options available to mitigate this issue.

Robinson asked how the Phase #1 costs will be assessed to the homeowners. Carpenter explained that it would be a 60%/40% split. He shared the rough estimated numbers with a 10 year assessment being about \$250 a month per household.

Robinson shared that he asked Staff if these homeowners have been good stewards of the sewer systems. He noted that two of the homes do not have any sewer pumping recorded with the City, while the other two both have sewer pumping recorded in the last five years.

Kreklow asked if Staff has spoken to all four of the residents who are on this portion or Pederson. Carpenter said he has spoken to two different residents, the ones at 23211 and 23249, both of which are present this evening.

Kreklow shared concern if they move forward with option #1 before speaking to the other residents. She asked if the other residents would have an option to not move forward with the connection at their homes at this point. She asked if because one well is failing, if that means the others will likely fail too. Carpenter said it is hard to say as some wells can last longer than others.

Kreklow asked about the assessment rates. Carpenter explained that the rates will

be determined by the length of the assessment term. City Administrator Thunstrom added that the City has the ability to set the assessment length.

Kreklow asked if they will be able to work with these residents to come up with an assessment amount that is reasonable and affordable. Thunstrom said yes; however, the City will be fronting the cost of the project. She added that there is also interest associated with these payments so the longer it takes for someone to pay back the assessment, the more they will pay in interest.

Udvig asked if there are a lot of other properties that are going to find themselves in this same situation. Carpenter said he did not know that this area was an issue until the resident brought it forward. He noted that he is looking to see if there are any other areas of the City that may have a similar issue coming forward.

Thunstrom explained that they have looked at bringing this to other places. She noted that as they pull the trunk lines out, City ordinance does note that when a well fails they will have to connect to City water. She said that as they move up Highway 47 and down 241st and some of the other roads that already have future planned extensions, these properties will all face this same issue.

Mayor Muehlbauer asked if there were to move forward with either of these options how long it would be until these residents could connect. Carpenter explained that in order to move forward, it would be a 90 to 120 day process.

Mayor Muehlbauer noted that the most important thing is to get the residents with the failing system to where they need to be with water. He asked if there is any savings if the other homeowners in this area choose to hook up to water before their well fails. Carpenter said no.

One of the homeowners off of Pederson came forward and asked why the City ordinance was changed and they were not notified. Thunstrom explained that this is not a new ordinance and has been in place since Ambassador was constructed.

The homeowner shared that a few years ago one of the neighbors in this area was given permits to drill into their well before the pump went out. He noted that he, as well as the other residents on Pederson, do not want City sewer and water. He stated that the City should just give permits for new wells to be drilled to fix this issue. He shared that he has his septic tank pumped every three years and it is in perfect condition. He added that they also have no issues with their well water and does not see why they would need City sewer and water.

Mayor Muehlbauer shared that they have to be careful not to set precedents for this that would be difficult for future Councils and would require other taxpayers to pay for this type of project. He stated that the homeowner could apply for an ordinance change if they feel like the ordinance should be updated. He noted that they have to make a decision for this current situation with a water system that is

failing so they are in a tough spot. He shared that he is supportive of moving forward with the third option so they can get the homeowner at 23211 Pederson Drive connected to the water system as soon as possible.

Kreklow noted that this option would not resolve this issue as it is cost prohibitive. Mayor Muehlbauer said it would provide some relief as the City would be able to find a contractor for the project. He stated the relief they would be able to offer to this resident would be the cost savings of the City finding the contractor.

Robinson asked if the resident at 23211 Pederson has had their septic system pumped recently. The homeowner said they had it pumped in 2021.

Robinson said he would also be in support of option three to just help the resident with the failing well.

Mayor Muehlbauer asked what causes a failing septic system. Robinson said it would be a lack of maintenance.

Carpenter said he can get some bids from contractors for the Council and bring this information back so they can discuss assessments.

Council consensus was reached to move forward with the third option of using the City to find a contractor for the resident at 23211 Pederson so he can hook up to City water.

#### 4. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mayor Muehlbauer adjourned the City Council Work Session at 5:25 p.m.

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Jennifer Wida, City Clerk

Minutes Prepared by: TimeSavers Secretarial