



City Council

Workshop

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

Monday, April 17, 2023

6:30 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mara Bain	Mayor	Present	
Sam Husnik	Councilmember	Absent	
Hanna Valento	Councilmember	Present	
Leif Erickson	Councilmember	Present	
Blake Roberts	Councilmember	Present	

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

Comments:

Doug Ramseth, Resident, commented on the reconstruction of Eureka Avenue. He expressed concern about the number of cars along the west side of Clear Lake. He noted the number of cars, the number of people fishing, and the number of children in the area. He also commented on the erosion of the shoreline. He noted the future reconstruction of Highway 97 and his concern about any traffic that may reroute using Eureka Avenue. He asked Council to consider putting Eureka on the road construction plans for 2023.

Mike LaMere, Resident, commented on the reconstruction of Eureka Avenue and stated he echoes the same comments as Doug Ramseth.

City Administrator Casey commented that the City submitted three (3) projects to the State for bonding and that Eureka Avenue was the top priority. He also noted that the bills have been introduced into legislature, he had meetings with both the House and the Senate Representatives for Forest Lake, and the City is in a waiting process at this point.

5. Discussion Items

a. CSAH 33/Everton Ave Project Update and Cooperative Agreement Discussion

Comments: City Engineer Goodman introduced information about the CSAH33/Everton Avenue project along with Washington County Commissioner Fran Miron. City Engineer Goodman



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commented on the projects that are in partnership with the County and he also commented on the future new environmental center.

Ryan Hoefs, Project Manager for Washington County, provided a presentation overview beginning with a jurisdictional transfer of Everton Avenue (CSAH 33). He noted the first open house regarding the project was in July 2020 and the online engagement occurred in February and March 2021. He also commented that in October 2021, the County met with residents who reside along the corridor, and in October of 2022, the Right-of-Way process began. He noted that the property appraisals were received in January 2023. Ryan discussed the public engagement results and the community driven project goals. He also discussed the reconstruction lane expansion, additional turn lanes, and pedestrian improvements.

Ryan further discussed the construction staging and phases of the projects designed to reduce access disruptions and detours. He provided more detail on the Right-of-Way process and the property appraisals noting that there are eleven (11) properties that will be impacted. He also noted that property acquisition will take place through November 2023.

Ryan discussed project costs, the cooperative cost and cooperative maintenance agreements, the scheduled timeline from 2013 to 2024, and where the project is currently in the final design with final plans and specifications, Right-of-Way acquisitions, permitting, and project bidding. He noted that construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2024.

Mayor Bain asked about the trail that is part of the design. There was conversation about the location of the trail and the intersection where the trail crosses to the other side of the Everton Ave. Mayor Bain expressed concern about safety and City Engineer Goodman commented about logistics of traffic in the area and where the trail will cross near Menards.

Councilmember Roberts asked about traffic controls and cost shares. Ryan Hoefs commented about private access of Menards and cost shares with them. Mayor Bain asked about the intersection at Broadway as well and crosswalks and signals. Ryan Hoefs commented about flashing arrows and signals at the intersection. There was further discussion regarding crossings at the intersection and significant improvements to pedestrian facilities.

Mayor Bain commented on the scheduled timeline and the next official Council action. Ryan Hoefs responded that in September or October 2023, the County will be back to Council for additional action, noting there will be public engagement sessions prior to that meeting. City Engineer Goodman commented on State Aid and Enterprise funds for the project.



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b. Street Paving Updates

Comments: City Administrator Casey provided information on the Capital Improvement Plan for Street Paving. He noted there are 130 Miles of Road with 105 miles that are paved. He also noted that 55.4% of the roads are rated at a six (6) or below and that the City Staff would like to see a minimum score of five (5) or below for all roads indicating that some of the roads are rated at a one (1) or less. He also commented that replacement and repair of streets are significantly underfunded and that prior to 2020 no road improvements were made with property tax which is highly unusual. He indicated the City budgeted \$50,000 per year in 2020 and is currently at \$200,000 per year noting that a more realistic number should be approximately \$1,000,000 per year. He also cited the amount of franchise fees at \$770,000, municipal state aid at \$900,000, state maintenance aid at \$335,000 and the general obligation bond from 2019 at \$4,000,000. He also cited the expenditure categories of state aid maintenance, local street maintenance projects, state aid cooperative agreements, and reconstruction projects.

Administrator Casey provided several solutions including levy increase, issuance of bonds, combination of levy and bonding, sales tax, and special assessments and indicated Staff has two (2) proposed options for funding. Finance Director, Kevin Knopik introduced Scenario 1 and the state aid maintenance fund. Ryan Goodman, City Engineer, commented on where the state aid maintenance fund comes from noting it is derived from the gas tax. He also commented on more people biking, and working from home using less gas. He provided further explanation of how state aid funds are awarded.

Finance Director Knopik discussed how an increase in the levy would impact the CIP for just mill and overlay projects, not major road reconstruction projects. He also looked at the impacts on the budget to include major reconstruction of road projects. Ryan Goodman, City Engineer, commented that the reconstruction projects include trail facilities as they exist today, not the addition of new facilities. Finance Director Knopik noted that the projects cited in the presentation are listed as priority by Staff and cited the percentage increases to the levy highlighting the increase in 2024.

Finance Director Knopik provided information on Scenario 2 showing the same increases as Scenario 1, along with the addition of funds for unfunded local street maintenance projects to reach the \$1,000,000 range. He provided a side by side comparison of the two options showing the percentage increases year-by-year.

Councilmember Roberts asked questions about the use of state aid funds and if it's typical use of the funding. City Engineer Goodman indicated that only 26.1 miles are designated as state aid routes in the City of Forest Lake, and that state aid funds cannot be used on roads that are not designated as state aid routes. Councilmember Roberts mentioned sales tax and use of those funds rather than burdening the residents. City Administrator Casey indicated there are many cities asking for sales tax right now. He also briefly explained how to implement sales tax noting that it will take



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approximately three (3) years to implement and can potentially generate just over \$1,000,000 for the City and 40% of that will come from other than residents. Mayor Bain indicated that a sales tax implementation would potentially take closer to five (5) or six (6) years with the necessity of public education to increase understanding of why the tax can be put in place. She also expressed concern over implementation of a sales tax noting the need for immediate action. There was further discussion on funding sources as well as the impact to the levy.

City Administrator Casey mentioned the Parks Plan, City buildings, and the Downtown Plan that will be added into the estimates at the May Workshop. He indicated this will also impact recommendations to Council regarding budget discussions. Commissioner Roberts asked for opportunities for community engagement on the budget. Mayor Bain also requested opportunities for the residents to give feedback to Council.

Councilmember Roberts asked about Eureka Avenue a previous Council Meeting discussion about closing the road permanently. City Administrator Casey noted that public reaction was unfavorable to doing that. There was further discussion regarding Eureka Avenue and the challenges it presents. City Administrator Casey noted that the DNR, City of Columbus, and Clear Lake Lake Association should be consulted regarding any closures, noting the coordination of making changes to Eureka Avenue.

6. Adjourn

Motion to: Adjourn

Comments:

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Leif Erickson, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Hanna Valento, Councilmember
AYES:	Bain, Valento, Erickson, Roberts
ABSENT:	Husnik