

Maple Grove City Council work session

meeting minutes

August 15, 2022

Call to order

Pursuant to call and notice thereof, a City Council work session was held at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, August 15, 2022 at the Maple Grove Government Center/Public Safety Facility, Hennepin County, Minnesota. Present was Mayor Mark Steffenson, and Councilmembers Karen Jaeger, Phil Leith, Judy Hanson, and Kristy Barnett. Absent was none. Present also was City Administrator Heidi Nelson, Chief of Police Eric Werner, Fire Chief Tim Bush, Finance Director Greg Sticha, Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Stifter, Community and Economic Development Director Joe Hogeboom, Public Works Director/City Engineer Ken Ashfeld, and City Attorney Justin Templin.

Mayor Steffenson called the meeting to order at 5:39 p.m.

2023 General fund budget discussion

Finance Director Sticha advised of upcoming dates as they relate to the 2023 budget process. He noted that the preliminary levy would need to be set at the City Council meeting on or before September 19, 2022 and that the preliminary levy would be certified to Hennepin County by September 30, 2022. He also indicated that the Truth in Taxation hearing would be held on December 5, 2022 and the final budget and levy would be adopted on December 19, 2022.

Finance Director Sticha provided a brief overview of the initial 2023 budget requests, noting there were two new FTE requests for next year. He explained that the Fire Department was requesting one additional full-time fire inspector position and Parks and Recreation requesting an additional full-time parkkeeper.

Finance Director Sticha stated that there were proposed personnel changes that come with less of a budgetary impact, such as the Police Department looking to reclassify one police captain position to police commander, and making a part-time staff member in the Finance Department full-time in order to provide 16 hours of service to passports. Additionally, the Police Department was requesting an embedded social worker position, which is a Hennepin County program.

Fire Chief Bush spoke to the residential and commercial growth in the city. He noted that hiring a full-time fire inspector would allow for another fire educator within the department as well as someone who could do inspections. He advised that the position would be committed to providing rental housing inspections, which would be an efficient use of resources given the current workload of the housing coordinator/rental inspector.

Discussion continued about future needs of the Fire Department.

Police Chief Werner discussed the request for an embedded social worker position explaining that the position is needed to assist the Police Department in responding to mental health crisis calls-for-service. He noted that the position is part of the Hennepin County program that was developed in 2019 to provide long-term resources to city residents beyond the initial police response.

Hennepin County program manager and retired Wayzata Chief of Police, Mike Risvold, spoke in more detail about the program. He commented on the fact that embedded social workers are employees of Hennepin County and explained the 40% funding contribution by the County for the position. He noted that there are currently twenty Hennepin County cities that have an embedded social worker and seven additional cities plan on joining the program in 2023. Mr. Risvold noted it is not uncommon for one individual experiencing a mental health or other social service crisis to make as many as 200 calls to 911 per year. He discussed the efficiencies that result when an embedded social worker is able to provide follow-up and coordination in response to those types of 911 calls placed by someone in a mental health or social service crisis. Additionally, the embedded social worker would be available to assist with code enforcement issues in the community, many of which are mental health or social service situations.

Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Stifter discussed the need for an additional parks maintenance worker to address the maintenance needs in the expanding park system, including Fernbrook Fields and the Gleason Fields project as well as the high level of use at Central Park. Discussion continued regarding the other personnel changes proposed for 2023. The City Council was supportive of all of the suggested staffing requests and changes.

Finance Director Sticha noted that the city's current compensation and classification plan was created in 1999. He explained the city was in the process of completing a compensation and classification study and staff budgeted \$250,000 in contingency funds in 2022 to cover the costs to implement the plan. He noted an additional \$250,000 was budgeted in 2023 to assist with the financial implementation of the study.

Finance Director Sticha explained that annual street reconstruction projects have grown in costs from \$6M to \$9M to now being around \$10M to \$15M. While some costs associated with these projects are paid for by special assessments, there are costs funded by the city's road reconstruction levy. In addition, he discussed other inflationary and operational expense increases as well as identifying cost savings or budgeted revenue adjustments.

Finance Director Sticha discussed the creation and implementation of a five-year General Fund staffing and levy projection. He stated that staff will be reviewing the first version of this long-range financial planning tool document in great detail. He also noted that the document will be reviewed with the City Council multiple

times each year for the purpose of providing direction and changes during the budget process.

Finance Director Sticha stated that staff anticipates the requested increases discussed tonight will result in the levy being set at 4.91% for budget year 2023, which impacts the average home by an approximate increase of \$40 per year. He provided three scenarios and their estimated impact of the 2023 tax levy on residential property.

City Council consensus was to go with Scenario 3. Finance Director Sticha stated the budget would be presented at the City Council meeting on September 6, 2022 for council consideration.

**Main Street project
update – planter
boxes**

Community and Economic Development Director Hogeboom provided an update on the Main Street project. He noted that the original plan was to refresh and spot repair the existing eight planter boxes on Main Street, but after closer inspection, the planter boxes have been found to be structurally unsound.

Community and Economic Development Director Hogeboom presented three options to the council.

- Option 1: Replace four planter boxes and permanently remove four planter boxes with a projected cost of \$175,000 and one to two weeks for installation.
- Option 2: Replace all of the planter boxes with a low curbed edge which costs approximately \$60,000 and would take about one week to complete.
- Option 3: Replace all eight of the planter boxes with eight new planter boxes. Cost is approximately \$344,000 and would delay the schedule three to four weeks.

Consensus of the City Council was to select Option 1.

**Other items as
deemed necessary**

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Steffenson at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Nelson
City Administrator