

City of North Saint Paul
February 18, 2020
Adopted City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Scott Thorsen
Council Member Candy Petersen
Council Member Jan Walczak
Council Member Tom Sonnek
Mayor Terry Furlong

Staff: City Manager Scott Duddeck, Deputy Clerk Mary Mills, Finance Director Jason Zimmerman

III. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as presented.

IV. TOPIC(S)

A. Gas Franchise fee discussion.

Finance Director Zimmerman shared an annual summary of what the gas franchise fee revenue has been. He noted that the current gas franchise fee is a percent based fee, not a flat fee. It is quite volatile. Because it is a certain percent of revenue it depends on how cold the winters are. As a precursor to budget preparations the City is looking at all revenue streams and expenditures to make appropriate adjustments going forward and bring stabilization to the budget. The City needs a more predictable number for budgeting purposes. A flat fee is more logical. The gas franchise revenue goes into the General Fund. It was previously earmarked for equipment replacement, and now is used for right-of-way infrastructure. With the elimination of special assessments, costs for capital improvements are now levy driven. Discussion will continue to define what is the purpose for a gas franchise fee, what fund it should be dedicated to, and is this a revenue growth opportunity so we don't have to borrow more through the levy. Staff will gather further information and bring to a future budget workshop.

B. Joint Powers Agreement for IT services discussion.

City Manager Duddeck reviewed the memo from the Roseville City Manager. The City of Roseville currently operates all IT functions for 35 member cities. With the recent resignation of several key personnel within the City of Roseville the future of the IT functions is unknown. It has been recommended that the cities utilizing the program create a Joint Powers Group to keep costs lower and keep an operating IT group with shared facilities. Member cities will need to determine if they are joining the JPA or venturing out on their own for IT services.

Several items to consider are server costs, infrastructure and user licenses, maintaining consistency and cost, security. The JPA would be open to all Minnesota cities, not just the metro area cities. Each city currently pays for the services they use, thus the cost to each city varies depending on their usage. A decision needs to be made by each city by April 1st to be able to move ahead with an agreement. This change would take place on January 1, 2021. Each city has a number of votes determined by their cost and utilization.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Jason Zimmerman gave a brief update on the toilet rebate program. To date 19 rebates have been applied for.

City Manager Duddeck shared a recent data request related to a project proposal and city code for PUDs (Planned Unit Development). Council Member Sonnek noted that there seems to be a general misunderstanding of how the PUD overlay supersedes specific code requirements. It was confirmed that there are no public hearings at the upcoming council meeting for the PUD on 7th Street. The public hearings had taken place at the Planning Commission meetings.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Sonnek, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the workshop meeting at 6:18 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Scott A. Duddeck, City Manager/Clerk