

**CITY OF BAYPORT  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**October 1, 2012**

**4:30 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Pursuant to due call and notice, Mayor St. Ores called the workshop meeting to order at 4:36 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor St. Ores, Councilmembers Connie Carlson, Dan Goldston, Mark Ostertag, and Michele Hanson

Others Present: Administrator Mitch Berg, Assistant City Administrator Sara Taylor, Public Works Supervisor Mel Horak, Dave Mckenzie, SEH, and Rick VanWagner, MnDOT

**BUSINESS**

Discuss the installation of railroad crossing gates at Central Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street North: Administrator Berg reviewed the events that have transpired to date on this matter, noting that in February 2010, these two crossings were selected to receive funding assistance from MnDOT to install crossing gates, due to potential train congestion and safety hazards associated with multiple tracks and blind spots in these areas. VanWagner noted they were able to secure additional funding, and therefore committed to funding 100% of the project cost, instead of 90%, as originally thought, with ongoing gate maintenance to be provided by the railroad. Discussion followed on the gate sensors and potential for further delay at the crossings, limiting access for emergency responders. Representatives from SEH and MnDOT stated that the new gate sensors can be programmed and adjusted to prevent unnecessary delays, and that the installation of the gates should not add more than 30-40 seconds to the waiting period to cross the tracks. VanWagner indicated because a city funding match is no longer required, the state and the railroad would be entering into a two party agreement to install the sign. As a result, MnDOT is mandating installation of the gates, which are anticipated to be installed in about 18 months. The City Council requested MnDOT conduct a public forum to inform residents about the project, as well as provide a general article summarizing the project for an upcoming city newsletter.

Discuss maintenance of city parks: Administrator Berg noted that discussion on this topic was requested by Mayor St. Ores and Councilmember Hanson, in order to gain a better understanding of how the city prioritizes and accomplishes park maintenance. Administrator Berg and Public Works Supervisor Horak explained that due to budget constraints, staffing shortages, organizational development issues, aging infrastructure, and increasing workload, the department has been compelled to take more of a reactive approach, rather than a proactive approach to maintenance of the city's parks, cemetery, streets, and utilities. Discussion followed on the department's budget and staffing levels and it was noted that in 2004, the Parks Department consisted of four full-time employees, with lawn mowing contracted out, and an annual budget of approximately \$90,000.00. Due to budget cuts, in 2013 the department will have three full-time employees, with a budget of \$58,000.00, with an increase in workload and responsibilities. The City Council directed staff to explore costs associated with hiring a private contractor to complete certain public works tasks, such as lawn mowing and snowplowing. Further discussion on this topic will resume at an upcoming budget workshop.

Discuss the addition of department head reports to the regular City Council meeting agenda: Mayor St. Ores noted that this was something she would like to implement, to better familiarize the City Council and public with staff and department activities. Administrator Berg noted that the city's personnel policy identifies the positions of city administrator, police chief, fire chief, public works supervisor, assistant city administrator/planner, and finance officer as department heads. Mayor St. Ores stated she would like a short update from regular staff attendees at monthly meetings, with a quarterly update from the finance officer and building official.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The workshop was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.