

Study Meeting #21
Monday, July 31, 2006, 7:00 p.m.
Bloomington Civic Plaza
1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington, Minnesota 55431-3027

Call to Order

Mayor Gene Winstead called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Mayor Winstead, Councilmembers R. Axtell, S. Elkins, A. Grady, S. Peterson, and V. Wilcox (arrived at 8:17 p.m.).

Absent: Councilmember K. Nordstrom.

STUDY ITEM #1
Group Insurance
Benefits

Kent Michaelson, Director of Human Resources along with Jeff Azen, the City's insurance consultant from the Stanton Group presented a preview of the agenda item that will come to Council for approval in the fall relating to the selection of the City's group insurance providers. He explained that the City is required by law to go out for Request for Proposals (RFPs) for group insurance providers every five years. He stated the Council approved the specifications for the RFPs on May 15, 2006, a 14-member committee has reviewed the RFPs, and contracts will be awarded in August to take effect on January 1, 2007. The premiums will cover life, long-term disability, dental, and health insurance. His slide presentation covered the following:

- Estimated Annual Premium for each type of group insurance coverage.
- Medical Insurance Rate Increases (HealthPartners only). *(It was stated that HealthPartners has made no money off of the City's plan in either 2005 or 2006. According to the HealthPartners bid, there would be a 9.9% increase in the overall cost of the plan for 2007 with rate caps of 12.0% in 2008 and 13.0% in 2009. The cost of claims plus administration should basically equal the premiums that are collected. If the City has a very good claims experience, a decrease in premiums could result. Council was asked to look at this as a 5-year program.)*
- Maximum Employer Contribution. *(Employer pays almost 90% of all premiums. In 2006, the employer contribution amount was set at \$820 per month.)*
- Health Carrier Percentage Change Comparisons: HealthPartners (HP), Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BCBS), Medica Choice and Medica Elect.
- 2006 HealthPartners Enrollment: Single, Two-Person, and Family enrollment in the following plans - Classic, Open Access (\$20 Copay), Open Access (\$30 Copay), and the Empower Plan.
- 2007 HealthPartners % Change: *(Overall Percentage Increase – 9.9%).*
- The Next Steps.

Council expressed the following comments/concerns:

- Should the City consider going out for bids every three years instead of every five years? *(Staff replied that the City could go out for bid every three years but that about the second time around of going out for bids after three years, bidders might not even respond to the City's RFP and the catch up in premiums would be much greater.)*
- What about a self-insured plan? *(It was stated the City will eventually end up there.)*
- Would it be to the City's benefit to choose BCBS if employees could continue to go to their current clinics and doctors? Wouldn't switching carriers set the stage for some competitive bidding in 2010? If the City stays with HP, how does the Council sell this to the public?

**STUDY ITEM #1
continued**

Michaelson replied that all of the groups indicated a desire to stay with HealthPartners but couldn't guarantee that all of the doctors and clinics available through HealthPartners would still be available through BCBS. He stated most of the bargaining units do not want to make a switch to BCBS.

Axtell commented that the difference in premium would be over \$100,000 if BCBS was chosen.

Grady inquired why BCBS and Medica would want to rebid in another five years if HealthPartners is awarded this bid again.

Winstead stated that since Council desires more information to compare the plans, it would be a good idea to bring this item back for more discussion at the August study meeting.

Michaelson stated he would go back to the committee to pass along Council's feedback to see if those groups are still firm on their direction.

Winstead added that the City would like to take advantage of the bidding process, as it would benefit the City as a whole as well as the employees.

Michaelson summarized that the committee is looking to change life insurance carriers to go with Minnesota Life, which the City has had before, but desires to continue coverage with Delta Dental and its current long-term disability carrier.

There was Council consensus to go with all of the insurance providers as presented except for the health insurance provider for which the Council requested additional information from staff for discussion in August so that a contract can be awarded by Council in late September.

**STUDY ITEM #2
Approve Human
Services Request for
Proposal Process
Recommendation**

Mark Bernhardson, City Manager inquired if Council had any problem with the list of agencies provided by the Human Services Division and if the RFP process could be stretched from two years to three or five years.

Lorinda Pearson, Human Services Manager explained that the City has been using an RFP process to select these service agencies since the early 1980's and it's been very successful and efficient to go through the process every two years. The seven agencies recommended are the same ones the Police Department and other City departments deal with annually.

Winstead inquired if there was any concern that granting contracts for five years would become an entitlement with an agency rather than a grant.

Pearson restated that the recommendation is to go with a two-year process and that it would be evaluated after two years to coincide with Imagine Bloomington. She stated a two-year process is more efficient for all of the agencies as well as for the City, as agencies only have to submit a Letter of Intent with a mini report rather than go through the entire RFP process every year.

Council consensus to approve funding for the following Human Services agencies for the 2007-08 Budget with the balance of the contract money to be used for Imagine Bloomington initiatives in the area of aging and diversity: Bridging, Incorporated; Cornerstone – Community Services and Intervention programs; District 271 – Even Start Program; HomeLine; Meals on Wheels; Senior Community Services – HOME (CDBG funding); Senior Community Services – Senior Outreach; and VEAP – Social Services and Emergency Services.

**STUDY ITEM #3
Recommendations
from the
Administrative
Study Group on
Non-Smoking Issues**

Karen Zeleznak, Public Health Administrator provided the staff report explaining that this is Phase 2 of the tobacco-free recommendations for Bloomington park and recreation areas and that the Council is requested to decide if they want to allow smoking on golf courses, and if so, how to enforce it. Her presentation provided the following:

**STUDY ITEM #3
continued**

- Purpose of this discussion.
- Map of smoke-free parks (Metro communities)
- Map of smoke-free facilities in MN including county parks.
- A review of Bloomington's Ord.: No. 2001-19, amended in 2001, which states there is no tobacco use at City-owned swimming pools, aquatic facilities, and City-owned athletic playfields including spectator areas during organized youth athletic events.
- A summary of tobacco-free park and recreation policies in the Metro Area.
- A summary of the interview Randy Quale conducted with the Metro Park & Recreation staff regarding tobacco-free policies. [Most cities have policies, not ordinances, and utilize complaint-based enforcement. In Edina, when someone is witnessed smoking on the golf course, they are handed a business card that explains the rules. (Randy Quale provided a sample.)]
- A review of the recommendations from the Administrative Study Group, the Advisory Board of Health (ABH), and the Parks, Arts & Recreation Commission (PARC). They made recommendations on whether or not to expand the following non-smoking areas on City-owned parks and recreation property: golf courses, Bloomington Ice Garden, spectator areas at adult events, rental picnic shelters, conservation areas and trails, personal vehicles, and cultural programs. All three groups agreed on making all areas smoke-free except for golf courses, which the Administrative Study group didn't want smoke-free but the ABH and PARC did.
- Staff recommends that if the ordinance is amended, it be implemented on November 1, 2006.

Council provided the following feedback on the presentation:

Axtell commented that he's witnessed smoking and the drinking of beer while watching adult softball games at Dred Scott and is concerned that if the City passes an ordinance, there won't be any enforcement.

Winstead stated that it appears most cities are self policing their policy.

Axtell stated he would be opposed to prohibiting smoking on golf courses.

Zelesnak stated when staff initially looked at the smoking issue in regard to recreational areas, their sole focus was around youth, where they congregate and gather, and where youth look to adults as role models.

Elkins stated he hasn't witnessed very many smokers out on the golf course.

Randy Quale, Parks & Recreation Manager stated that staff doesn't classify the littering of cigarette butts in the City's park system a major problem. They are a bigger nuisance at the beach.

Grady inquired if golfers would go to a private golf course if the City passed a smoking ban on Bloomington golf courses or are they reasonably priced to maintain their customer base even with a ban.

Winstead stated Bloomington's two golf courses are a real value as far as quality and cost is concerned.

With regard to smoking, it was stated that the sport of golf is different from others in that there are no spectators out on the golf course and it's easier for golfers to smoke while playing golf than doing other sports, i.e. tennis, softball, etc.

Council was given the following choices: Ban smoking and enforce it, institute a light ban with no enforcement, or allow it.

Grady and Elkins stated their support for PARC's recommendation, which is to ban smoking on the City's golf courses.

**STUDY ITEM #3
continued**

Axtell stated he supports the Administrative Study Group's recommendation of not banning smoking on City golf courses.

Due to Council members having differing views on whether or not to allow smoking on the City's golf courses, Bernhardson stated staff would bring back two ordinance options for Council action during a public meeting; one reflecting PARC's recommendation and one reflecting the recommendation of the Administrative Study Group.

Council expressed concern with passing an ordinance with no enforcement behind it but didn't indicate a desire to allocate a lot of resources to pay for the enforcement either.

Wilcox commented on the abuse he witnessed this year of the policy that states no beer can be brought into the Firemen's Tournament. He stated they had two police officers present at the beer garden to make sure no beer was taken from the beer garden and out of the park and but saw lots of coolers of beer being brought in and consumed on most of the softball diamonds.

Council requested staff draft an ordinance be brought back in the fall expanding non-smoking areas on City-owned parks and recreation property per the recommendations of the Administrative Study Group, the ABH and PARC that includes a couple of different options with regard to golf courses.

**STUDY ITEM #4
2007 Collector Street
Striping Program**

Shelly Pederson, City Engineer reviewed the policy and indicated the proposed segments and highlighted two changes on a map to the proposed segments. She summarized staff's recommendations for the proposed striping on the following streets selected in conjunction with the Pavement Management Program (PMP):

W. 86th Street from Penn to 35W: Existing four lanes with restricted parking in some sections and timed parking in others with varying widths. *(Recommended for the program to restripe to three lanes but meetings with neighborhood will be necessary due to the parking issues.)*

W. 110th Street from Xerxes to Thomas: Small section on the reconstruct schedule. Two-lane configuration proposed from Xerxes to Overlook. *(Recommended to match the two-lane configuration to the east.)*

W. 90th Street from Penn to 35W: This one is on the sealcoat program. *(Is not recommended at this time due to a desire to leave any streets over 10,000 ADT as is at this time.)*

W. 106th Street from Morgan to Humboldt: Bridge work was scheduled for 2006 along with some work on the deck with sealcoating on either side of the bridge. There are no parking issues. *(It is not recommended for any restriping at this time, as this one also has over 10,000 ADT and the lanes need to match up with both sides of the bridge.)*

Pederson stated under the policy, these are the only four stretches due for a reconstruct or sealcoat in 2007.

Winstead commented that he is comfortable with the way the roads have turned out. He'd like to see the ones under 10,000 ADT get done and that Council should decide if it's logical to do another segment before it's due on the program in order to achieve continuity within a segment. He would like to keep the program moving forward faster with logical extensions.

Bernhardson commented that the restriping to date has been driven with a traffic calming objective in mind. Now, with the Alternative Transportation Plan in mind, there are three key issues: The public input process for streets with 10,000 ADT and less, continuity (staff can provide the costs relating to any particular stretch), what to do with streets over 10,000 ADT, and how to deal with non-collector streets and the public issues relating to parking.

**STUDY ITEM #4
continued**

Elkins stated his desire to see this integrated with the Alternative Transportation Plan. He stated 86th Street has been mentioned as a good bike route. It seems to work well up to the range of 15,000 to 18,000 ADT on streets with very few curb cuts. He stated County roads shouldn't automatically be taken off the list, as some stretches of Penn and Nicollet would be good candidates.

Peterson agreed that Nicollet would be a very good candidate.

Chad Smith, Traffic & Transportation Engineer reminded Council that traffic will just end up moving from one street to another.

Grady stated the City doesn't have the money to do the extra streets and that they need to be done when they come up on the PMP Program, as it would make sense to look at the streets that could be done in a contiguous fashion – even if it means flip flopping a couple of streets on the PMP schedule.

Wilcox stated that it appears traffic is increasing on West 86th Street and therefore inquired if it makes sense to decrease the number of lanes.

Pederson stated that staff will provide Council with a history on 86th Street and will look at the traffic trend to determine the average ADT.

Bernhardson summarized that there are four streets - two due for reconstruction and two due for sealcoating.

Grady indicated her agreement with staff's recommendation.

Elkins stated he agonizes over 90th Street and that he'd like the Traffic & Transportation Advisory Commission (TTAC) to look at the stretch from Penn to Nicollet.

Bernhardson asked the Council if they wanted the roads on the reconstruct list done in 2007 and whether they wanted to revise the policy. He added it would be several months to a year before everything is brought together into an Alternative Transportation Plan.

There was Council consensus to proceed with the restriping of the two streets due for reconstruction in 2007 as recommended by staff (West 86th Street from Penn Avenue to 35W and West 110th Street from Xerxes Avenue to Thomas Avenue) and directed staff to proceed with work on the policy revision project while working concurrently on the Alternative Transportation Plan.

Pederson reported that they hired a full-time traffic engineer – Amy Marohn and that she'll be transitioning from Traffic Calming Coordinator into her new position.

Additional Comments

Council members were reminded to meet at Civic Plaza at 6 p.m. to join City staff in participating in National Night Out on August 1.

Adjourn Meeting

Mayor Winstead adjourned the meeting at 9:18 p.m.

Barbara Clawson
Council Secretary